

## **December 2020**

As we enter this festive season once again may we reflect on the true spiritual meaning of Christmas – the birth of the Christ Child that first Christmas so long ago. May we celebrate this holiday event with an optimistic view to the future, but always cognizant of the protocols required of us in overcoming Covid-19. Yes, there is a cloud hanging over us, but let us be stalwart and determined to not let the Grinch steal the spirit of Christmas.

On two different occasions Carol and I chose to tour the streets viewing Christmas decorations. Oh, so many homes, trees, lawn ornaments all lit to brighten, to lift our spirits. The downtown business decorations and lights provide such a glowing welcome. I don't recall ever seeing such a resolute determination to light up our city -truly exceptional! And then there is OK Tire - Mr. Mitrenga and his supporters doing their Friday night tour with their amazing double-long unit of Christmas attire. The music, the decorations, the lights are truly a sight to behold. Our citizens have been undaunted in their resolve to add joy and good cheer for the residents of our city.

With our necessary Covid-19 restrictions in place there will undoubtedly be moments of loneliness, heartache and despair. Families unable to connect, social gatherings discouraged or very limited and family traditional events on hold. But, we must dig deep into Pandora's Box and attach ourselves to HOPE. As history has proven, "this too will pass."

This Christmas my family, including my seven-month old granddaughter, will not be coming home. I, like you, will have a challenging Christmas.

I am home for the holidays and, as in the past, if I can in any way assist or bring comfort to you please phone me at 306-728-4409.

Merry Christmas - Happy New Year!

## **November 2020**

I would like to thank the citizens of Melville for allowing me the privilege to serve another term as the Mayor of the City of Melville. This I will do to the best of my ability. I want to recognize, with appreciation, the members of our new council. I very much look forward to continue to work with council as we set the course for good governance and further growth and development. I wish to acknowledge all those who stood for office at the November 9th election and thank them for their willingness to let their names stand.

The November 11th Remembrance Day Service paid tribute to the heroic defenders of our nation by laying down their lives so that we may enjoy the many freedoms afforded us. The event also allowed us to honor our veterans for their commitment to our democratic way of life. We commend the Melville Legion Branch for initiating a commemorative Remembrance Day event despite the impact on Covid-19 restrictions.

Our City Staff have been working diligently to provide services for our citizens while attempting to follow SHA health guidelines. Providing for essential services, resolving minor sport procedures, working with the SJHL, facility disinfections and a host of other duties and procedures that consume their day. Citizens, we must do our part. Please respect and respond to the established Covid-19 protocols. Congratulation to Chris Bruce - Director of Community Planning for receiving the Provincial Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association Award for his exceptional community development leadership. Well done Director Bruce!

Hats off to Irene Pilon and her dedicated team at Caleb Village who donate their time and knitting skills in order to supply Teddy Bears for less fortunate children around the globe.

Did you know that Canada experienced the 1914 Typhoid Fever and the 1918-19 Spanish Flu? We, too, will overcome the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic.

## **October 2020**

One of my first priorities as an incoming new mayor in 2006 was that I would try to communicate with our citizens by writing a monthly "Mayor's Corner." This I have consistently done for the last fourteen years. It was my hope that this effort would be valued. I thank the Melville Advance and the City of Melville Website for their cooperation in enabling me to communicate my message to our citizens. As noted in my previous message in September we are in an election mode. Provincial elections were held on October 26th and Municipal elections will be on November 9th. We are very fortunate in our country to have the opportunity to determine leadership for the next four years in our various jurisdictions. You are encouraged to have your say in this democratic process by casting your ballot. Our city has met on different occasions with the Council of Kahkewistahaw First Nations, now the owners of the Babcock Wilcox plant, to discuss future operational options. This facility has great potential which we hope will be beneficial to both Kahkewistahaw and our community through job creation and increased economic activity.

A special celebration occurred on September 22 when a park located at Prince Edward and 3rd Avenue was renamed "Norm Konechny Park" in honor of Deputy Chief Konechny's 50 plus years of dedicated firefighter service to Melville and District.

Did you know that in 1947 the former St Peter's Hospital located at 7th Avenue East was the first recognized accredited hospital in Saskatchewan?

## **September 2020**

There is certainly a flurry of political reorganization activities ranging from rural and urban municipal elections, to school board and provincial elections as well as the possibility of a federal election. Elections are a part of our democratic process allowing for individual participation in determining leadership placement. We have the opportunity to have our say – Please VOTE in the upcoming elections!

Slowly and cautiously our province has moved to open our economy while steadfastly messaging Covid-19 precautions and care – discouraging inter-provincial travel, utilizing the "bubble" relationship model and keeping that distance.

With the start of school we empathize with teachers, students and parents as each have momentous challenges to face – teachers tasked with establishing a safe climate for learning, students learning in a restricted environment, parents weighing an in-school learning opportunity opposed to on-line instruction. We do not envy the difficulty the dilemma imposes on each.

With the record-breaking cold snap of September 8th, we realize that any further flower, garden or crop growth has ended and that we will hopefully experience a speedy harvest before yet another season sets in.

We welcome many aspiring young SJHL hockey players to our Millionaire Camp on the September 11th weekend. We wish Coach Rooney, the Millionaire executive and all our players the very best as we hopefully prepare for a season of exciting hockey.

Did you know that our Melville Fire Department, under the leadership of Fire Chief Mogenson, has attended in excess of eighty children's birthday parties to present the birthday child with small tokens regarding fire awareness? During this difficult time of restricted birthday gatherings a fire truck complete with sirens and lights has brought many delighted smiles to each child.

## **August 2020**

Many years ago a respected colleague of mine made reference to decision-making during difficult times. "Heavy the head that wears the Crown" and this leads me to think of all the different individuals and groups that today must make very difficult decisions and choices.

I think of Prime Minister Trudeau and the Government of Canada, of Premier Moe and our Members of the Legislature, of Doctor Tam and Doctor Shahid, of the education decision makers throughout our great country as well as community leaders and always the parent or parents who now are forced to make difficult choices. Hopefully, decisions are being made in our best interest and the interest of our country, province and community with the hope that this pandemic will be curbed. Our resolve is tested by adhering to spacing, to exercising isolation, to considering the use of masks, to working from home or to being subjected to job lay-off situations. Personal limitations to travel, shopping, learning and attending events are part of our new daily reality. Decisions made are often not easy to accept. They may impose personal and family hardship, not by malicious intent, but solely focused on seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

I believe each of us has a role to play during this difficult restrictive time. We can offer our concerns to the decision makers, we can suggest solutions, we can look to our neighbors for support or in return offer them support.

As we move forward into this next month with the start up of various activities in our community may we do so cautiously and carefully ever mindful of the part we play in these uncertain times.

Did you know that 75 wartime homes were built in Melville to accommodate returning World War II Veterans?

## **July 2020**

This month I would like to present an overall picture of projects, events and activities that are occurring in our city during this Covid-19 pandemic.

First, it was a council decision to retain all our staff and furthermore to secure employment for our swim pool staff despite pool closure. We have been able to employ our staff to take on projects that had been previously shelved because of other work priorities. Tasks such as painting curbs, picnic tables, cross walks and trimming hedges have been attended to.

Travel safety measures have been dealt with by the placement of "Stop" and "Yield" signage throughout the city. Flashing lights in park and school zones have also been installed to enhance child and pedestrian safety.

On a grander scale we are beginning to redo sewer-water-pavement issues on 3rd Avenue East, attending to landfill and recycling needs, as well as supporting the Coop development as they move forward in their construction process.

Congratulations to Anteneh Miller on receiving a \$3000 Sask Power- Sask Weekly Newspaper Association Junior Citizen Award. We wish Anteneh well as he pursues future studies.

The rains of July 12th were most welcome unlike the winds of July 13th. The major storm on July 13th caused havoc throughout the city leaving citizens, as well as the city crews, dealing with a great deal of clean-up.

The Canada Day parade on July 1st turned out to be a most unique community celebration. As the many parade entrants wound their way through the streets of Melville they were applauded by citizens from their front yards and balconies. Thanks to Events Manager, Jennifer Mann, for her efforts in making this such a success.

Did you know that Melville received city status on August 1, 1960, becoming Saskatchewan's 11th city?

## **April 2020**

It was "The best of times, the worst of times." These first few lines in A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens may once again apply to our current Covid-19 Pandemic world situation. This historic quotation has been utilized by countless leaders and statesmen in addressing difficult situations throughout recent history. Our present situation causes us to ponder if we are not, as was true of other calamities of the past, reliving this astute observation which was penned prior to the French Revolution.

First and foremost a most sincere "Thank You" to all our citizens who are so steadfastly supporting mandated procedures issued by the World Health Organization and the many levels of world governments in overcoming this pandemic. While each and everyone of you are doing your part to stymie this disease, I also recognize the difficulties, hardship and sacrifices families undoubtedly experience.

Then I speak of sacrifices, I note how differently we were required to celebrate Easter, how we are required to forgo physical neighborly visitations, how we curb verbal communications during necessitated shopping events.

Thank you to all those, who through their generous acts of kindness are attempting to bring smiles to faces and attempting to strengthen hope for a more pandemic free future.

It is with great pride and appreciation that I, as Mayor of our community, marvel at the commitment and energy of our front-line and professional health care workers who place themselves at the forefront of this demanding crisis.

Take Care Everyone!

### **March 2020**

Upon completion of our five year construction phase we finally have a new water treatment plant and a new water source which will supply quality water to Melville and Area. Water is, and will be, the mainstay of a community – Future water quantity and assurance can now serve as a building block in growing our community.

The City of Melville has concluded its budget deliberations and has approved a 2.73% capital and operation budget increase. The budget will provide for infrastructure improvements including water, sewer and roadway upgrades. Plans are underway for a new swimming pool as well as the replacement of aging equipment. Melville ranks 7th lowest of 16 cities in overall budget increases.

Parkland College hosted a strategic planning session in Melville on March 5 which included City of Melville representation and also different community organizations. Melville is fortunate to have the head office of Parkland College in our community. Various programs and training opportunities are provided at this site.

The Chamber is once again hosting its annual Trade Show at the Merv Moore Complex and the Gun Show at Melville Community Works on March 27-28-29. Our community commends the Chamber for this progressive initiative, and we look forward to balmy weekend weather and community participation.

Kinsmen Telemiracle was, once again, a resounding success both in talent recognition and financial achievement. The event success and provincial support will translate in providing for the many in need. Our local service club who continues to do vital work in our community recently celebrated the 100th anniversary of Kin Canada.

Congratulate to Ken and Lorie Somogyi on hosting over 100 Millionaire baseball and hockey billets over the years. What wonderful community hosts and welcoming ambassadors to our fine city.

As you may have noticed the Mayor's old dodge has expired. I will continue to offer a friendly wave from an updated set of wheels.

Did you know that Melville Donor's Choice has been in existence for 47 years in its effort to support vital organizations in our community? Thank You Donor's Choice!

### **February 2020**

The overwhelming success of the ten day Provincial Curling Championship, thanks to the Melville Curling Club, our many volunteers, community sponsors and HCUC staff is truly an opportunity for celebration!

The energy and enthusiasm generated and exhibited by our community was truly inspiring – And what about those two choirs who welcomed the curlers so admirably? Well done all!

CN Rail as part of their "CN Railroaders in the Community" grant program provided the Melville and District Food Bank with a donation of \$25,000. This donation and recognition of our community need is greatly appreciated!

SUMA – the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association is undergoing a re-branding identity and from now be known as the Municipalities of Saskatchewan. Some 20 resolutions were presented. One resolution that received unanimous approval was the resolution recommending the removal of PST from all municipal construction projects with the hope of achieving economic stimulation as well as reducing the financial burden on communities.

Congratulations to three of our Melville Millionaires – Berk Berkeliev, Luke Nkwama and Zack McIntyre who were selected to perform in the Manitoba-Saskatchewan hockey showcase.

Hats off to Deputy Fire Chief Norm Konechny for 50 years of fire-fighting service to our community. His committed longevity to fire-fighting is to be highly commended.

Congratulations to Kin Canada for 100 years of cross-Canada community service. Kin Canada encompasses the continued efforts of Kinsmen, Kinettes and Kin clubs in our country.

Did you know that the current mayor's office once served as the judges' chambers with the third floor opera house being the courtroom?

## **January 2020**

As we move into a new decade, we undoubtedly move into new challenges and opportunities. Our world is quickly changing and our city must be both visionary and progressive in planning our future. Always key to our vision was to grow Melville. We will, very shortly, have a long-term sustainable water system, a major business development along our highway frontage and will continue to advance "quality of life" opportunities in our city.

Our community is very much anticipating the Provincial Curling Championships to be held at Horizon Credit Union Centre January 24- February 2, 2020. This event, the result of the hard-working Melville Curling Club, includes the Provincial Scotties Women's and the Provincial Sasktel Tankard Men's Curling competitions. Our community was selected to host this first ever combined event, the result of hosting previous successful provincial curling competitions. Our city extends a warm welcome to all curlers and fans during this exciting ten day curling event.

Just prior to the New Year the Royal Canadian Legion Army Cadets #2517 received the Saskatchewan Premier's Commendation Award. This special recognition award was well received and well attended by supportive parents and community members.

Melville City Council members will, once again, be attending the 115th Saskatchewan Urban Municipal Association annual convention February 2-5, 2020. An approximate 1000 delegates are expected to be in attendance at the Regina event. Development sessions, resolutions, sector meetings and the opportunity to meet with the provincial cabinet in a "Bear Pit Session" are part of our four day agenda. Did you know that the 1915 Melville Millionaire Hockey Team were the Senior Amateur World Champions winning the Allen Cup?