

# Going Places

Saskatchewan's Tourism Industry Newsletter

Summer 2017

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TOURISM  
Saskatchewan  
CANADA



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## Cover Image

Little Deer Lake, Lac La Ronge  
Provincial Park  
Dave Reede Photography

## Bookmark NEW Industry Website

The new industry website, [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com), is your one-stop site for the latest news and information from Tourism Saskatchewan and the province's tourism sector. You will find information on partnership opportunities, upcoming events, education and training programs and more.

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## Have you updated your Tourism Profile?

Tourism Saskatchewan's consumer website, [TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com), receives nearly 1.5 million visits annually. The website is an effective marketing tool and influences travellers as they research and plan their vacations.

Extensive customer research of key Saskatchewan tourism markets revealed that an overwhelming majority of travellers use online sources to find information and assist with their trip planning. Web, mobile and social media are now the most used and preferred information and search methods. Customers expect accurate, up-to-date information, and businesses that maintain their online profile have a competitive edge.

Saskatchewan tourism operators, including businesses, attractions, accommodations, campgrounds, communities, etc., are currently being offered FREE listings on [TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com).

Ensure that your Tourism Profile is up-to-date. For changes to current web listings, contact

Tourism Saskatchewan at 1-877-237-2273 or [information.updates@tourismsask.com](mailto:information.updates@tourismsask.com).

Event organizers are encouraged to submit dates and details about festivals, community celebrations and tourism events in 2018. Simply use the submission form located at [TourismSaskatchewan.com/things-to-do/events/submit-an-event](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com/things-to-do/events/submit-an-event).

For more information about Tourism Profiles, contact Kathy Rosenkranz at 306-787-2312, [kathy.rosenkranz@tourismsask.com](mailto:kathy.rosenkranz@tourismsask.com).

Tourism Saskatchewan's new and improved industry website, [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com), is another beneficial resource for operators and businesses. Turn to Tourism Trends on pages 16-17 for an introduction to the website's features, easy-to-navigate structure and opportunities available to industry.



SaskPower Windscape Kite Festival



## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

I have the good fortune of working with a team of talented professionals. One of my most humble colleagues is Carol Lumb, Director of the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC). Before I moved to Saskatchewan, I was aware of Carol's reputation as a force behind establishing occupational standards and making tourism a fulfilling career choice. It was such a pleasure to see Carol honoured with the Tourism HR Canada Leadership Award in June.

The award presentation was made at the annual Tourism Professional Recognition Dinner, which celebrates the achievements of individuals who have completed certification in a tourism occupation or earned Journey person status. These people understand hard work and dedication. Many juggle more than one job. Some are already certified in one occupation and driven to pursue training in another area. They all have in common a commitment to high standards, professionalism and great customer service.

Satisfying customer needs and expectations requires listening to them and communicating via the channels they use most. Tourism Saskatchewan has undertaken comprehensive research to identify our customers. We have knowledge of who they are, where they live and what motivates them to travel. We know what influences their choices and where they are accessing information. A digital-first approach to our consumer marketing puts compelling Saskatchewan stories, striking images and authentic experiences directly in front of travellers. Our consumer website, [TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com), is an important resource for travel planning and receives nearly 1.5 million visits annually. We encourage Saskatchewan tourism operators and businesses to take advantage of free listings on the website.

With a comprehensive content strategy in place and efforts strategically focused on online visual storytelling to entice travellers, the next logical step was a makeover of our industry website. We proudly launched the new and improved [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com) in August (see details about the project on pages 16-17). The site is straightforward, easy to navigate and takes the guesswork out of searching for information about our programs and services.



*Tourism Saskatchewan staff, joined by Saskatchewaner Andrew Hiltz (Row 3, centre)*

In closing, I want to share some advice from Saskatchewaner Andrew Hiltz, who is an unabashed ambassador for our province. Andrew recently delivered a presentation to the entire Tourism Saskatchewan team and offered insights into his inspiration and experiences that have taken the most surprising situations and turned them into captivating stories. For me, these tips stood out: 1) be curious; 2) be original; 3) push yourself; and 4) learn from your mistakes.

*Mary Taylor-Ash*

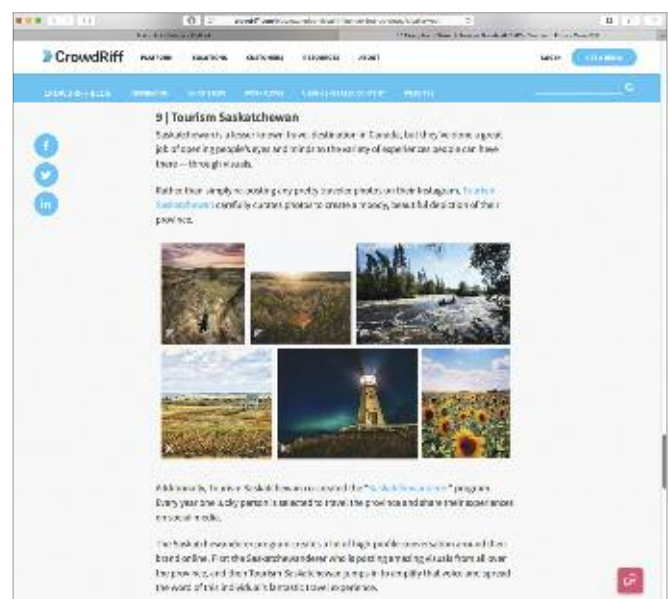
## Tourism Saskatchewan ranks in CrowdRiff Top 10 list

Tourism Saskatchewan was recently acknowledged among some heavy hitters included in a blog published by CrowdRiff on August 24. Titled *10 Examples of Visual Influencer Brands All DMOs Can Learn From*, the blog listed Tourism Saskatchewan with Destination Canada, Visit Iceland, Explore St. Louis, Destination British Columbia and five other destination marketing organizations recognized for impressive visual storytelling that captivates travellers.

CrowdRiff is a top-rated visual marketing platform and important partner for Tourism Saskatchewan. It is a great source for user-generated content and fresh images that can enhance travel articles, social media posts, website stories and more.

Photographers benefit from the exposure, and visitors to [TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com) enjoy a richer visual experience. Interactive galleries can also be created that increase the amount of time people spend on the site and generate more calls to action. A flexible rights management system enables Tourism Saskatchewan's digital marketing team to obtain the rights to impressive images from across the province.

For the full Top 10 list, visit [CrowdRiff.com/blog/examples-visual-influencer-brands-dmos/#/gallery/popular](http://CrowdRiff.com/blog/examples-visual-influencer-brands-dmos/#/gallery/popular).





## Tourism Talks hosts Carrot River operators



*Tourism Talks in Carrot River area on June 8*



*Mary Taylor-Ash welcomes operators*

Tourism Saskatchewan hosted the third assembly in its Tourism Talks series on June 8 at Pasquia Regional Park. Twenty-three tourism operators and representatives from the Carrot River area accepted the invitation for the day-long event. CEO Mary Taylor-Ash welcomed attendees and shared Tourism Saskatchewan's objectives for the gatherings that are designed to foster industry relationships and partnerships; support growth through education and collaboration; and increase awareness of local tourism products.

A successful formula has been established for Tourism Talks. The day begins with Tourism Saskatchewan staff presentations on the various services and programs available to industry. A group activity follows, with industry delegates listing local tourism assets. At every assembly, participants have been surprised by the number

of tourism experiences identified. The exercise demonstrates the benefits of collaboration and inspires cross-promotion among neighbouring businesses and communities.

After lunch, rotating roundtable discussions extend the conversations about Tourism Saskatchewan's programs. Staff who are in attendance have expertise in marketing, product development, funding opportunities, and education and training programs. They welcome questions from delegates. In many instances, these face-to-face conversations lead to follow-up discussions that assist operators with a specific need or introduce them to additional opportunities that may enhance their business.

Tourism businesses and community leaders in Carrot River and area were involved in Tourism Saskatchewan hosted BrandCamps with

Roger Brooks in 2014 and 2015. The process led to the development of a community brand – *Saskatchewan's Outback* – that was unveiled in 2016. The brand has been proudly embraced by the community and positioned the region as having its own unique character. The invitation to join the "outback club" is tempting and visitors can anticipate exciting wilderness adventures and remarkable hospitality.

Tourism Saskatchewan extends its appreciation to operators who attended the Tourism Talks event, as well as to Maggie Doerksen, Carrot River Economic Development officer, who helped with organizing the day. Special thanks goes out to chef Karinne Seiferling and staff at The Spot, where a delicious midday meal and networking opportunities were enjoyed.

## Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference motivates delegates

For the second year in a row, Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference delegates gained valuable takeaways from the day-long forum, held on June 14 at the Hilton Garden Inn Saskatoon Downtown. Sessions and presentations addressed the central theme "*Reaching Up – Coaching, Mentoring and Inspiring Others.*"

The conference opened with a compelling keynote address by Kendal Netmaker, acclaimed Indigenous entrepreneur. Netmaker described his personal journey and the friendships that motivated him to pursue sports, complete a university degree and launch his own company.

Shana Ring, President of Destination Leadership, led a session on the Coaching-Mentoring-Managing Distinction. Using her company's EXPEDITION Coaching Program paradigm, Ring led participants through an exercise that revealed how the workplace coaching process supports a learning environment that fuels creativity and problem solving.

A panel session titled *Innovative Trends in HR* featured Jim Bence, President, Saskatchewan Hotel and Hospitality Association; Nicole Norton Scott, Executive Director and Registrar, Saskatchewan Chartered Professionals in Human Resources; and Shauna Bear, Vice President of Human Resources, Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority. A networking component saw delegates roll up their sleeves to dig into the latest evidence-based trends in human resource management.

Tourism HR Canada President Philip Mondor led the Educators Forum, which examined human capital weaknesses, talent gaps and deficiencies



*Shana Ring shares coaching and mentoring advice Kicking off the day with prizes*

that challenge the tourism sector. Participants gained a better understanding of how a looming under-supply of qualified tourism and hospitality workers will affect their ability to serve markets. The session included a discussion on the roles played by secondary and post-secondary education in preparing the next generation of workers for skilled and professional careers in tourism. It also examined the challenges that businesses must overcome to attract and retain talent.

Tourism Saskatchewan acknowledges the generosity of conference lunch sponsors, Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority, Saskatoon Hotel Association and Affinity Credit Union; break sponsor, Regina International Airport; and Educators Forum sponsor, Saskatchewan Polytechnic through its School of Hospitality and Tourism.



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Saskatchewan is renowned for its hospitality and for welcoming visitors into the fold and treating them like family. My board colleagues and I experienced this firsthand when we travelled to southwest Saskatchewan in July.

The Cypress Hills Destination Area is vast and its tourism assets plentiful. Outside of our scheduled board and committee meetings, we had one day to meet with as many tourism operators as possible and make new discoveries in this corner of the province.

Travel memories are shaped by the people whom you meet along the way. There are several individuals who made our visit special: Gail Kessler, CHDA Executive Director; Wayne Smith, Prairie Dog Tours; Royce Pettyjohn, Town of Maple Creek; Tina Cresswell and Dave Turner, The Star Café & Grill; Greg Hisey, Ghostown Blues Bed & Breakfast; Amy Arnal, T-rex Discovery Centre; and Shon Profit and Stephen Girard, Café Terra and Whitemud Clay & Pottery Studio. I also want to acknowledge the more than two dozen tourism operators who attended our industry networking breakfast or welcomed us at their businesses.

Prior to our visit in July, Tourism Saskatchewan sent several staff and a film crew to Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park and Grasslands National Park area to capture footage for the next chapter in its brand storytelling series. Turn to page 8 for production photos and a preview of the RCMP-themed story that will be unveiled next spring.

A new southwest experience that was piloted this summer, the T-rex Discovery Centre's Bone to Pick(nic), evolved out of Tourism Saskatchewan's experiential tourism AWEshops. Details and a photograph from that event are on page 13.

In closing, I want to welcome the Honourable Steven Bonk to his new role as Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan. We extend our best wishes and look forward to working with Minister Bonk.

*Norm Beug*

## Board of Directors tours southwest Saskatchewan

Members of Tourism Saskatchewan's Board of Directors enjoyed a taste of southwest hospitality during a two-day visit to the Cypress Hills Destination Area (CHDA) in July. Their base camp was The Resort at Cypress Hills, where meetings were held. On the morning of July 17, the group boarded a Prairie Dog Tours shuttle and headed to Maple Creek. Gail Kessler, CHDA Executive Director, was a welcoming and enthusiastic tour guide.

Twenty-two CHDA members accepted Tourism Saskatchewan's invitation to an industry breakfast, held at The Star Café & Grill. Owners Tina Cresswell and Dave Turner went above and beyond, ignored the "Closed on Monday" sign and personally prepared and served a mouth-watering meal.

Following breakfast, board members were welcomed at the Trans-Canada Visitor Centre. Royce Pettyjohn, Manager of Community and Economic Development, led a walking tour of Maple Creek and shared his intimate knowledge of area history. The tour featured stops at a number of local tourism businesses.

A visit to Ghostown Blues Bed & Breakfast was the first item on the afternoon agenda, followed by a scenic drive to Jones Peak. Ending the day in Eastend, the party toured the T.rex Discovery Centre and Whitemud Clay & Pottery Studio, and enjoyed the unique culinary delights of Café Terra.

## Steven Bonk named Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan



On August 30, Steven Bonk was sworn in as Minister of the Economy and Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan and for Innovation and Trade. He was elected to the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly in April 2016, representing citizens in the Moosomin constituency, and served as Legislative Secretary to the Economy (Export Development) prior to his cabinet appointment.

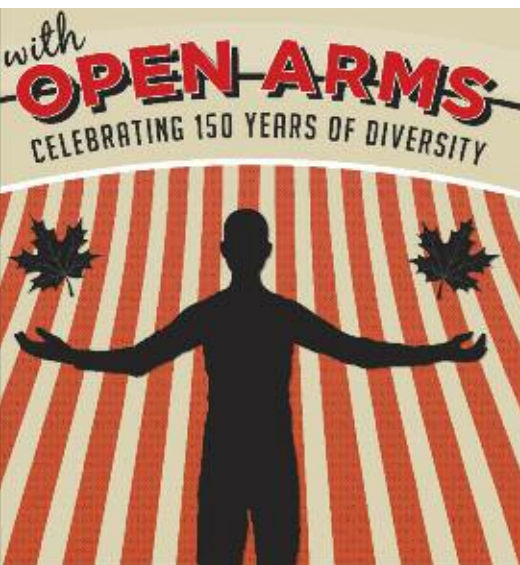
Minister Bonk has extensive experience in the domestic and international agri-business fields, and worked on four continents as a consultant in agricultural management and policy development. While living in Europe, he was managing director of livestock-based enterprises and helped companies address challenges stemming from the transition to a free market economy.

Active in the Wolseley community, Minister Bonk serves on several local committees and also sits on the international committees of both the Canadian Western Agribition and Canada's Farm Progress Show.

*The Honourable Steven Bonk*



## Saskatchewan festivals stage community projects commemorating Canada 150



Yorkton Film Festival youth film competition

2017 Regina Folk Festival

Two of Saskatchewan's signature annual tourism events, the Yorkton Film Festival (YFF) and the Regina Folk Festival (RFF), added unique features to their line-up this year. The enhanced programming stemmed from successful proposals to the Government of Canada's Community Projects initiative commemorating the 150th anniversary of Confederation. The funding that was received supported the YFF's *With Open Arms – Celebrating 150 Years of Diversity* project and the RFF's collaboration with four other Western Canadian festivals to host a *Canada Far & Wide: Grands Esprits* super group concert.

Over the course of its 70-year history, the Yorkton Film Festival has garnered an esteemed reputation as a national leader in film and video. The four-day annual festival attracts filmmakers and artists from across Canada. More than 250 films are submitted and screened each year, with the winning entry in each of the 25 categories taking home a coveted Golden Sheaf Award.

"The awards are meaningful and carry weight because of the rigorous adjudication process," Randy Goulden, YFF Executive Director, said. "Juries consist of film industry professionals from across Canada, who value the festival and ensure that the awards maintain the impressive standards that have been set."

More than half of festival attendees are from out-of-province. Many are repeat visitors to Saskatchewan, where they have invested or participated in film projects. The YFF is a key contributor to the \$38 million in economic spinoffs that benefit Yorkton and area each year. One of the most valuable outcomes of the festival is the positive word-of-mouth that is spread beyond Saskatchewan's borders.

The YFF is more than a four-day celebration, and is recognized throughout the Canadian film industry for its year-round programming, screenings and professional development opportunities. The *With Open Arms – Celebrating 150 Years of Diversity* project invites youth filmmakers to create short films that highlight Canada's diverse and inclusive culture. Its two categories include a competition for students in Grades 9 to 12 and a non-competitive showcase open to students in kindergarten through to Grade 12. Winning films from the first category are broadcast on Rogers City TV Saskatchewan and given screenings at the festival and other YFF activities. Showcase films are also shown during YFF events.

A spring intake resulted in more than 40 youth films that were introduced at the festival, held on May 25-28. Young filmmakers from across

Saskatchewan and as far away as Toronto, ON and Sherbrooke, QC submitted entries. **A second call for entries has a deadline of November 30 for new submissions.** Category criteria and information are available at [yorktonfilm.com/youth-film-competition](http://yorktonfilm.com/youth-film-competition).

"Youth have their own stories and thoughts about diversity that are so different from adults," Goulden said. "*With Open Arms* provides incentive and a platform for sharing those stories and having thoughtful conversations about issues that matter. The project has engaged communities, schools and organizations across Canada, including the Calgary Military Museum and partners as far east as Stratford, ON. Workshops have been completed in schools in both official languages."

The Regina Folk Festival has an equally proud history and kicked off its 48th celebration with an added evening of performances, as part of the collaborative *Canada Far & Wide: Grands Esprits* project. The RFF teamed up with the Calgary, Canmore, Winnipeg and Vancouver Folk Festivals to curate an inspiring tribute to the Canadian songbook.

A core group of artists travelled to each festival and performed with a variety of guest artists. Fans who gathered in Regina's Victoria Park on August 10 enjoyed a line-up of re-mixed Canadian classics, as well as unique interpretations of personal favourites performed by RFF artists, including Saskatchewan musicians Blake Berglund, Kacy and Clayton, and Saskatoon rapper Eekwol.

"By working with counterparts in four other cities, a resounding collective voice transmitted powerful messages," Sandra Butel, CEO, said. "Through the power of songs and magic of music festivals, this project invited all of us – organizers, artists and audience members – to come together in a more positive way to create a better, more inclusive Canada."

Butel and her six-member staff team, along with more than 750 volunteers, embrace the responsibilities of staging impressive Canadian and international talent, and hosting a weekend audience of 20,000-plus in an urban park setting. Within weeks of the annual festival, a 10-month RFF Concert Series is in full swing, bringing some of the top names in Canadian music to a variety of Regina venues. The RFF Outreach Program runs concurrently with the Concert Series and takes featured artists into participating Saskatchewan elementary schools to perform or lead workshops. The program brings the gift of music to young people who may not have exposure to live performances, and is a fulfilling experience for the students, teachers and artists.

# Partnering with Destination Canada to attract travellers from the United States

A goal of Tourism Saskatchewan's *Strategic Plan 2017-2020* is to "align strategies to improve destination competitiveness." Cultivating win-win stakeholder partnerships is a fundamental tactic.

Tourism Saskatchewan has a long-standing relationship with Destination Canada (DC), which "provides intelligence, tools and resources that help the Canadian tourism industry reach international markets." Recent partnered activities have included DC's National Angling Program, which positions Saskatchewan in front of U.S. markets that have a keen interest in fishing and outdoor adventure.

Jonathan Potts, Tourism Saskatchewan's Executive Director of Marketing and Communications, recently attended DC's North Star 22 meeting in Winnipeg. The assembly is a component of regularly scheduled meetings that DC hosts for provincial and territorial marketing organizations. The title, North Star 22,

reflects the commitment of partners to work collaboratively on reaching visitation and traveller expenditure targets by 2022.

Potts recognizes positive outcomes of these meetings – greater alignment in strategic thinking among the partners and a more unified approach to marketing Canada, to name just two. "DC's renewed focus on the U.S. market has been a plus for Saskatchewan. Visitors from the U.S. are our highest yielding market," Potts said, emphasizing the strength of Saskatchewan's fishing and hunting products and the potential to lure more visitors from south of the border. "DC listened to partners who advocated for a program to market to U.S. anglers, and the National Angling Program has helped put Saskatchewan directly in front of travellers whose passion is fishing."

The Government of Canada's New Tourism Vision commits to stabilized funding for the national marketing body and to collaboration

among the provinces and territories "in order to grow and increase the competitiveness of Canada's tourism sector." The long-term funding enables DC to expand its focus, resume marketing in the U.S. and plan ahead with its partners.

"Being able to leverage more dollars and take advantage of new opportunities, particularly co-operative marketing programs and the Millennial Travel Program, enables Tourism Saskatchewan to enhance its existing programs," Potts said. Noting the similarities in international markets that are strong for Canada and Saskatchewan (U.S., Germany, UK and China, to a degree), he sees opportunities ahead for Tourism Saskatchewan to work with DC, with counterparts in other provinces and with local partners. "Collaborating with Tourism Saskatoon and Parks Canada on the Millennial Travel Program was fulfilling, and contributed to compelling Saskatchewan stories and great exposure," Potts added.

## New National Hunting Program on track for 2018

Building on the success of the National Angling Program, DC is supporting a National Hunting Program, scheduled to launch in the new year. Tourism Saskatchewan, Travel Manitoba and Northwest Territories Tourism will participate in joint promotions targeting U.S. hunters. The program will be

managed by NewBase, a global media and advertising firm that works with more than 4,000 media vendors worldwide. NewBase employs a sophisticated programmatic platform (using software to identify effective and efficient placement), along with traditional advertising through its wide network of channels. The Saskatchewan component will target white-tailed deer, black bear and game bird hunters. Along with programmatic and social media advertising, the campaign will include exposure on outdoor media sites, including Outdoor Sportsman Group, Carbon Media and Ducks Unlimited.

## TOP FIVE TIPS FOR MARKETING SASKATCHEWAN FISHING ADVENTURES TO U.S. ANGLERS

Saskatchewan boasts some of the best freshwater fishing in North America and is an angler's dream destination. Tourism Saskatchewan's outfitted fishing market strategy provides recommendations for retaining valuable customers, attracting new clients in strong U.S. markets, and promoting outfitting business's best features. Here are five tips for enticing anglers with a Saskatchewan fishing adventure.

### 1. STICK TO THE MESSAGE

There is little evidence of interest among existing or potential U.S. markets for activities unrelated to fishing. First and foremost, these guests are coming here to fish. Focus your efforts and messaging on Saskatchewan's wealth of lakes and waterways, the abundance of fish and variety of species, and the likelihood of reeling in the catch of a lifetime.

### 2. HIGHLIGHT SASKATCHEWAN'S STRENGTHS

Saskatchewan scores high as a safe, secure destination, a quality that is important to travelling anglers. Friendly, helpful people, a relaxed pace and vast wide-open spaces are additional selling points for the province. Incorporate these messages into fishing advertising campaigns and promotional activities. Emphasize Saskatchewan's strengths – safe vacations, friendly people, room to breathe and unwind, great fishing and frequent trophy-size catches.

### 3. SHOW OFF SASKATCHEWAN'S NATURAL BEAUTY AND BIG FISH

Many U.S. anglers are unfamiliar with Saskatchewan's natural beauty and great fishing, and there are misconceptions about Saskatchewan having wilderness experiences as impressive as other destinations. Countering falsehoods with impressive photography may increase the number of first-time visitors. Let U.S. anglers know about Saskatchewan's pristine wilderness and abundance of trophy-size fish. Highlight your lodge, equipment and experience offerings through striking images. Hire a professional photographer or encourage visiting guests to share photos of their prize catches.

### 4. TARGET ADDITIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

There is a concern that as current visitors age, they will not be replaced by younger anglers. Find a balance between nurturing long-standing customer relationships and exploring strategies for attracting new clients. Promoting Saskatchewan to younger travelling anglers with mid-high incomes may draw new visitors to your business and help to boost tourism. Target them through media networks and social media channels popular with audiences interested in your products.

### 5. KEEP YOUR CUSTOMERS CONNECTED

Many anglers are concerned with maintaining connections with family and friends during their fishing trip. Advertising campaigns should stress that travelling to Saskatchewan to enjoy a wilderness experience does not mean completely losing internet/cellphone coverage. Lodges should be aware of this customer concern and, where possible, maintain services such as free Wi-Fi to satisfy expectations.



# Selling Saskatchewan

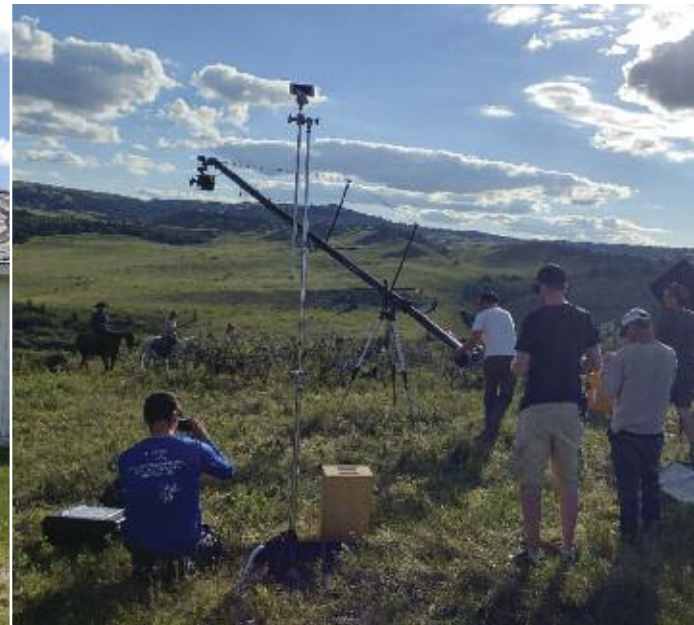
## Brand storytelling highlights the RCMP



RCMP Sunset-Retreat Ceremony



Production crew on location at Fort Walsh National Historic Site in June



The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officer in scarlet tunic is one of Canada's most recognizable symbols, second only to the country's iconic maple leaf flag. No place in Canada has closer ties to the force than Saskatchewan, where events in the southwest signalled the March West of the North West Mounted Police in 1874. Since 1885, Regina has been home to the sole training institute for recruits.

Today, the RCMP Training Academy, "Depot" Division, is a place where time-honoured traditions co-exist with the work of modern policing. It is also a popular destination for visitors, who can enjoy a full afternoon of activities, beginning with the Sergeant Major's Parade (Tuesday to Friday at 12:45 p.m.), followed by a tour of the historic chapel. The impressive RCMP Heritage Centre (open year-round) and colourful Sunset-Retreat Ceremony

(July 1 and Tuesday evenings until mid-August) are a designated Canadian Signature Experience.

The history and pageantry inspired a new segment in Tourism Saskatchewan's series of brand stories. Video, still photography and drone footage were captured in the Cypress Hills and the East Block of Grasslands National Park in June. Filming also took place during a Sunset-Retreat Ceremony in July.

## Saskatchewan experiences gain from Matador Network's visual storytelling

As Tourism Saskatchewan's relationship with Matador Network evolves, travellers are tuning in to a series of stories that share many reasons why Saskatchewan is an inviting, surprising and breathtaking destination.

Matador Network is the world's largest independent travel publisher and the most rapidly growing travel lifestyle brand on the internet. Its website, [matadornetwork.com](http://matadornetwork.com), demonstrates a commitment to superior standards in visual storytelling.

Searching Saskatchewan on [matadornetwork.com](http://matadornetwork.com) will bring up a page with more than a dozen stories. Look at some of the titles – *11 places you had no idea were in Saskatchewan*, *12 surprising facts about Saskatchewan*, *8 surprises you'll uncover in Saskatchewan*. There is an obvious formula – appeal to the travel audience's sense of

discovery and highlight a digestible number of experiences.

Click on an article. From the start, it is clear that only a few minutes are required to skim the story. A simple two or three sentence introduction is followed by listed entries on the subject introduced in the title. Each entry is brief, limited to two or three paragraphs, and includes a photograph relevant to the description and that screams, "Visit here!" In some instances, high-quality videos are included. They scream even louder.

There is a strategy to the positioning of elements. Striking images hold the viewer's interest and trigger anticipation for the next entry. Building suspense keeps the audience engaged. Saving the best for last is common practice.



Any operator, small or large, can benefit from reviewing the examples on [matadornetwork.com](http://matadornetwork.com) or other high-quality travel websites. There are simple, basic ingredients required for effective, visually appealing online content and storytelling: 1) concise copy (fact-checked and proof-read); 2) great photographs, relevant to the copy; and 3) quality video, if available and appropriate.

Matador Network travel writers, photographers and videographers were in Saskatchewan in the summer collecting content for upcoming stories. The partnership provides Tourism Saskatchewan with access to fresh, engaging material for sharing across social media channels.



## International Mystery Tour surprises U.S. guests

How many travellers would take a chance on a trip billed as simply an international mystery tour, with no destination identified? At least 50, as demonstrated by R & J Tours, a Minneapolis company that hosted its first mystery tour to Saskatchewan in August.

For people who love surprises, this type of travel package is ideal. R & J Tours regularly offers mystery tours in its roster, and the trips are a popular item.

Few hints are shared in advance. Guests know the cost, dates and time of departure. As for where they are headed and what they will encounter, clues are revealed along the way. And each stop has surprises in store.

Planning for the Saskatchewan mystery tour began in July 2016, when Tourism Saskatchewan's Travel Trade team hosted a representative of R & J Tours and helped scout locations. In follow-up conversations, an itinerary was discussed and Tourism Saskatchewan was able to provide recommendations for activities. By September, the company had the details in place and its International Mystery Tour was on the roster of 2017 summer tours.

The group set out from Minneapolis on August 10. Warm hospitality and delightful surprises greeted them at every stop along the way. Expressing its appreciation to the Travel Trade team, R & J Tours wrote, "Thank you for your help on our recent visit to Saskatchewan. You were a great resource to our group and we loved our time in your province."



*International Mystery Tour guests pose in front of the Saskatchewan Legislative Building*

## Building partnerships to gain a stake in China's travel market

Destinations recognize China as a lucrative travel market with significant potential for growth. Canada is seeing repeat visitors from China since receiving Approved Destination Status in 2010.

Tourism Saskatchewan has been working with Doug Treleaven & Associates, a B.C. firm, to gain access to top receptive tour operators (RTOs) serving Asian markets. In 2016, the company delivered China market training to a select group of Saskatchewan operators and organizations that included: Cypress Hills Destination Area, Lloyd Lake Lodge, Milton Lake Lodge, the RCMP Heritage Centre, Tourism Saskatoon and Wanuskewin Heritage Park. A readiness capacity audit was also conducted, and RTOs were interviewed to determine their awareness of Saskatchewan and its tourism offerings.

In July, Travel Trade Consultant Amy McInnis participated in sales calls, led by Doug Treleaven & Associates, with RTOs based in Calgary and Richmond that host tours from China. These face-to-face meetings provided a valuable

opportunity to forge relationships with RTO representatives and pitch Saskatchewan experiences to both group and independent travellers.

Earlier in the year, Tourism Saskatchewan met with 22 buyers from China who attended Rendez-vous Canada and sought knowledge about Saskatchewan. These buyers work directly with Canadian RTOs, including those recently visited by McInnis.

Tourism Saskatchewan will build on the relationships established, drafting sample itineraries for tour groups and planning familiarization tours for RTO staff to discover a taste of Saskatchewan hospitality.

## Apply to new Marketplace Fund by October 31

Tourism Saskatchewan has streamlined its programs that support attendance at key consumer shows. The new Marketplace Fund is a one-stop, application-based program that tourism operators, businesses, attractions, and destination and city marketing organizations can access. The promotion of Saskatchewan tourism products and offerings at these shows helps to increase awareness, visitation and travel expenditures, and grow the province's tourism sector.

The deadline to apply for funding is October 31. Proposals will be considered for marketplace events that align with Tourism Saskatchewan's key markets and have potential for significant economic impact. Program information and application forms are available at [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com). For information, contact Kelly Brezinski at 306-787-2219, [kelly.brezinski@tourismsask.com](mailto:kelly.brezinski@tourismsask.com).

## TRAVEL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Aviva Kohen (Tourism Saskatoon), Karen Burns Booth and Saskatchewaner Andrew Hiltz in the kitchen at The Hollows

### UK food and travel blogger treated to Saskatoon delights

Tourism Saskatchewan participated in a Destination Canada (DC) initiative that positioned 15 popular bloggers from the United Kingdom in Canadian cities for one week in June. The UK City Plus Bloggers Project was a partnership between DC, Air Transat and Canadian Affair (the leading UK tourism operator in Canada), and involved a number of provincial and city marketing organizations. An objective was to heighten awareness of Canadian cities and the dynamic urban experiences offered, as well as their close proximity to adventures in the great outdoors. In the spirit of Canada 150, a goal of 150 unique activities was set for the group of visiting bloggers.

Tourism Saskatchewan and Tourism Saskatoon collaborated on planning an itinerary and hosting blogger Karen Burns Booth, an award-winning travel writer whose passion is discovering a destination's authentic flavours, foods and recipes. She became familiar with several Saskatoon restaurants, micro-breweries and distilleries during her week in the city. Highlights of her stay also included day trips to Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Batoche National Historic Site and Fort Battleford National Historic Site, where she enjoyed a performance of the RCMP Musical Ride.



Capturing Amazing Race Canada action

### Amazing Race Canada contestants discover their prairie stamina

Tourism Saskatchewan supported a 2017 season episode of *Amazing Race Canada*, filmed in July. Contestants battled it out in Regina, Moose Jaw and near Rouleau, where prairie-themed and Canada 150-inspired activities tested their strength, endurance and patience. The episode aired on CTV on August 29 and had a viewing audience of nearly four million. Tourism Saskatchewan's investment saw a return of approximately \$3 million in advertising value.

CTV introduced new features to the show this season. As the action unfolds, viewers can participate in trivia quizzes and in-show polls, in real time. The addition of virtual reality places fans at the centre of some of the most intense challenges.



Touring Hanging Hearts Lake

### German media explore northern Saskatchewan

Tourism Saskatchewan, in partnership with Destination Canada, hosted travel writers from Germany on a familiarization tour (FAM) billed as Take a Ride on the Wild Side: Adventures in Northern Saskatchewan. The guests included Thomas Hauer, Jörg Michel, Laura Engels, Detlef Berg and Birgit Letsche, who contribute to a number of media outlets and publications. Barbara Ackermann, DC's German representative, was also on the tour. The group spent six days in the province, travelling as far north as Devil Lake and enjoying activities, such as guided fishing at Thompson's Camps and canoeing with Churchill River Canoe Outfitters. Touring the Prince Albert National Park area, they were hosted by Elk Ridge Resort, Treeosix Adventure Parks, Waskesiu Marina Adventure Centre and Sturgeon River Ranch. Archaeological tools in hand, the group participated in a dig at Wanuskewin Heritage Park before heading to Saskatoon. Their week on the wild side culminated with an evening of classic rock n' roll at the Rock the River festival.

## Provincial park photo shoots focus on summer fun

Tourism Saskatchewan partnered with the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport on a provincial park photo shoot in July. The locations were Crooked Lake, Echo Valley, Katepwa Point and Rowan's Ravine Provincial Parks. Images were captured of visitors enjoying a variety of activities - fishing, camping, paddleboard yoga and more. Fifty new photographs were added to Tourism Saskatchewan's image library.



Rowan's Ravine Provincial Park



Crooked Lake Provincial Park



# In the Spotlight

Recipients of the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence earn their place in the spotlight by demonstrating exceptional work and a commitment to treating visitors to great service and experiences. Throughout the year, *Going Places* profiles those who took top honours at the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala in April 2017. In this issue, Tourism Saskatchewan salutes three award winners.



## **Skyxe Saskatoon Airport, Saskatoon, Service Excellence Award**

*Sponsored by the Saskatchewan  
Chamber of Commerce*

Skyxe Saskatoon Airport posted big numbers in 2016. It serviced over 1.45 million passengers, grew seat capacity by 5.2 per cent and achieved the Number 1 On Time Performance (OTP) ranking in Canada (for a second consecutive year) with over 90 per cent of flights departing on time. Skyxe Saskatoon Airport was also ranked the Number 1 Canadian airport by the Airport Service Quality Program (global benchmarking program), based on its customer service measurements. Following the completion of a \$53.4-million makeover in 2015, the facility unveiled a new look, diverse retail outlets, more food and beverage options, and enhanced parking programs. Skyxe Saskatoon Airport also launched a new staffing program that provides 24/7 customer service response. An ambassador program involves more than 50 dedicated volunteers, who offer assistance, welcoming smiles and local information on Saskatoon. Its re-branding also resulted in an enhanced social media program. In spring 2017, Skyxe Saskatoon Airport was recognized by Airport Council International as the Best Airport in Canada (under two million passengers). For more airport highlights, visit [skyxe.ca](http://skyxe.ca).

## **Royal Saskatchewan Museum, Regina, Gil Carduner Marketing Award**

*Sponsored by Phoenix Group*

The mandate of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum (RSM) is to further an understanding of Saskatchewan's natural history and Indigenous cultures. As a means of promoting Saskatchewan's rich fossil history, the RSM led efforts to select the provincial fossil, a new official emblem for Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Fossil Campaign included an educational unit and video contest targeted to teachers and classrooms, an exhibit and in-person vote at the museum, as well as an online poll encouraging citizens across the province to cast their vote. The campaign successfully reached a number of RSM target markets and led increases in visitation, website traffic and social media engagement. It also created future opportunities to enhance the visibility of Saskatchewan, the RSM in Regina and the T.rex Discovery Centre in Eastend as tourism destinations. Discover more about the RSM at [royalsaskmuseum.ca](http://royalsaskmuseum.ca).

## **Angela Schmitt, Redwillow Outfitting, Carrot River, Fred Heal Tourism Ambassador Award**

*Sponsored by Wanuskewin Heritage Park*

With a background in business and board governance, and experience in outfitting and organic farming, Angela Schmitt translates her knowledge and passions into a relentless drive to see tourism and economic development thrive in east central Saskatchewan. In addition to her role as co-owner of Redwillow Outfitting, Schmitt is a shareholder and board member of the Carrot River Inn, sits on local tourism committees and serves as East Central Representative for the Saskatchewan Outfitters Association. In 2007, she spearheaded the establishment of the Carrot River Economic Development (CRED) committee. From that group, a tourism and branding initiative emerged. A community brand – *Saskatchewan's Outback* – was established in 2015, with an official rollout in 2016. The brand has been embraced throughout the community, and Carrot River has seen increases in resident pride, business engagement and visitors interested in *Saskatchewan's Outback*.

## Gold Eagle Lodge named among Canadian Tourism Awards finalists

For the sixth year in a row, Saskatchewan will be represented at the Canadian Tourism Awards. The gala celebration will take place in Gatineau, QC on November 29. Gold Eagle Lodge, located in North Battleford, is in the running for the Air Canada Business of the Year Award. The property is a multiple Canadian Tourism Awards finalist and Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence winner. Tourism Saskatchewan extends congratulations to the team at Gold Eagle Lodge.



# In Development

## *History Alive! Vignettes* offer a fresh take on Saskatchewan stories



*History Alive! Vignettes on the steps and in the hallways of the Saskatchewan Legislative building, and inside historic Government House*

Tourism Saskatchewan's Event Hosting Program supports an extensive range of activities, from annual community festivals to national and international sport competitions to special projects that bring positive profile to Saskatchewan and boost tourism.

Under the program's Special Tourism Projects category, a three-year funding commitment supported the marketing of *History Alive! Vignettes* at two historic locations – Government House and the Saskatchewan Legislative Building.

A partnership between Government House, Heritage Saskatchewan, the Provincial Capital Commission, the Saskatchewan Legislative Building – Visitor Services and Tourism Saskatchewan enabled a series of short vignettes to be created and staged over a 10-week run (July to early-September). Settings and characters are out of the pages of Saskatchewan history, and the current season

interprets moments in the lives of first vice-regal couple Amédée and Henriette Forget, Premier Walter Scott and a host of figures who made their mark on the province. The performances are both entertaining and meaningful, and have enhanced the visitor experience at the two properties.

Original scripts were crafted through a collaborative process involving venue staff and an artistic team. Stories were methodically researched and drew inspiration from recorded facts and historical documents. For example, the journals of George Watt, original head gardener at Government House, provided a rare account during a period (1904-1915) that witnessed Saskatchewan's birth as a province and the construction of the grand legislative building.

Storytelling through live, theatrical performance engages visitors in a dynamic way and can spark an interest in exploring, understanding and appreciating history. "In addition to showcasing

clips from the past, the *History Alive! Vignettes* bring attention to the properties – Government House and the Saskatchewan Legislative Building, which are architectural achievements and were constructed at a time of optimism and change," Ingrid Cazakoff, Heritage Saskatchewan CEO, said.

Today, these buildings are sites where history continues to unfold and visitors are invited to make discoveries that form lasting memories. "The project had clear objectives to increase attendance and the quality of visitor experiences at the two properties," Cazakoff added. "Through our marketing efforts and the good work of the staff at both venues, attendance has grown year over year. The vignettes are a value-added feature to encourage visitation, share the Saskatchewan story and nurture appreciation of our living heritage."

## New spring intake deadline for Event Hosting Program

The new deadline for the Event Hosting Program spring intake is February 28, 2018. Communities or organizations hosting tourism events are encouraged to apply for funding. Visit [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com) to review category criteria and submit an application. If you have questions about the Event Hosting Program or application process, contact Tyler Lloyd at 306-787-5525, [tyler.lloyd@tourismsask.com](mailto:tyler.lloyd@tourismsask.com).

An improved online application process allows for updates and additional information to be added to proposals. The online portal enables tracking and monitoring as applications move through the adjudication process.

The following are just some of the national and international tourism events that Saskatchewan will be hosting in 2018. Tourism Saskatchewan is proud to support these and other showcases.

### Tim Hortons Brier, Regina, March 3-11, 2018

Regina will set the stage for the 2018 Tim Hortons Brier, March 3-11 at the Brandt Centre. The Brier sees the top men's teams from each province compete for the national title and the chance to represent Canada at the 2018 World Men's Curling Championship in Las Vegas.

### MasterCard Memorial Cup, Regina, May 17-27, 2018

The Regina Pats played in the first Memorial Cup championship, so it is fitting that the team will host the cup's centennial celebration in 2018. Top teams in the Western Hockey League, Ontario Hockey League, and Quebec Major Junior Hockey League will face off at the Brandt Centre.

### Canadian Pacific (CP) Women's Open, Regina, August 20-26, 2018

Regina's Wascana Country Club is the setting for this prestigious competition between some of the top players in the 2018 LPGA Tour. The tournament offers widespread exposure for Saskatchewan. Broadcasts on The Sports Network and The Golf Channel are anticipated to reach viewers in more than 200 million households.



## T.rex Discovery Centre visitors dig Bone to Pick(nic)



*Bone to Pick(nic) guests tour the T.rex Discovery Centre*



*Fossil excavation at Southfork Quarry*



*Feeding fossil hunters at Pine Cree Regional Park*

One of southwest Saskatchewan's flagship attractions is the T.rex Discovery Centre in Eastend. Operated by the Royal Saskatchewan Museum (RSM), the facility is known as a centre of excellence for palaeontological research, and houses the world's largest, complete *Tyrannosaurus rex* skeleton. Scotty the T.rex was discovered near Eastend in 1991. Bones were excavated, cast and a model reconstructed for display at the new museum, which opened in 2003. Its visitor season runs from mid-May until Labour Day.

In 2016, the RSM participated in an experiential tourism AWEshop that Tourism Saskatchewan hosted for a group of Cypress Hills Destination Area operators. AWEshops provide a fertile

environment for unique new tourism experiences to take root.

A new take on fossil hunting evolved into Bone to Pick(nic), which was piloted in the summer. The sold-out event on July 12 combined a behind-the-scenes tour of the T.rex Discovery Centre with a hike to the fossil-rich Southfork Quarry and a chance to work alongside RSM palaeontologists.

Digging for bones worked up an appetite, so the hungry fossil hunters were treated to a prairie cuisine picnic at nearby Pine Cree Regional Park. Café Terra, in Eastend, prepared the delicious picnic lunch and guests appreciated the special touches, including the take-home pottery bowls,

locally sourced and handmade at Whitemud Clay & Pottery Studio.

Bone to Pick(nic) appealed to the desire for discovery, offered a rare, bucket list adventure and was a day that created delightful memories for all of the guests. Continuing with the AWEshop process, Tourism Saskatchewan will work with the T.rex Discovery Centre and RSM to evaluate the success and identify additional projects and experiences that will enhance Saskatchewan's tourism landscape.

## Options available for managing online reputation

In 2016, Tourism Saskatchewan introduced a pilot project to assist industry operators with managing their online reputation and responding to customer reviews posted on influential websites, such as Google, Facebook and TripAdvisor.

The project marked the start of a partnership between Tourism Saskatchewan and Vendasta, a Saskatoon-based, internationally acclaimed reputation management firm. Participants in the project benefitted from the company's expertise and from access to its reputation management software platform. This do-it-yourself (DIY) platform is designed to make it easy for operators to completely self-manage their online reputation.

Tourism Saskatchewan's Product Development department continues to work closely with Vendasta, building on the outcomes of the initial project to develop an additional option. A do-it-for-you (DIFY) service is now being piloted. The service enables operators who prefer a hands-free

approach to work directly with Vendasta's digital agents. These professionals will monitor and respond to customer reviews on behalf of the business. In collaboration with the client, they will devise effective social media messages and content, and post on appropriate channels.

Upon completion of the pilot project, a selection of service packages will be developed. Both the DIY and DIFY options are cost-efficient methods for tourism businesses to manage and enhance their online presence.

To inquire about the program, contact Mark England at 306-933-7493, [mark.england@tourismsask.com](mailto:mark.england@tourismsask.com) or Bob Kadis at 306-933-5903, [bob.kadis@tourismsask.com](mailto:bob.kadis@tourismsask.com).

Download Top Five Tips for Responding to Online Reviews, available on [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com/advice-and-resources](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com/advice-and-resources).

# STEC News

## Tourism professionals receive recognition

Five leaders in Saskatchewan's tourism sector were honoured at the 24th annual Tourism Professional Recognition Dinner, held in Saskatoon on June 14.

Tourism Ambassador Awards were presented to individuals who continually demonstrate exceptional commitment to professional development in the workplace. The peer-nominated awards are available in each of the Canadian tourism sector's five industries: accommodation, food and beverage services, recreation and entertainment, transportation and travel services.

Sandra Butel, Artistic Director and CEO of Regina Folk Festival (RFF), was named a Tourism Ambassador for her contributions to the recreation and entertainment industry. She was among the earliest tourism professionals in Canada to achieve *emerit* Event Co-ordinator certification, and has continued to contribute to the profession by training and mentoring others. In her role with the RFF, Butel leads a team of full- and part-time employees and more than 750 volunteers.

Diane Cohoon, who retired from the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC) in April, was honoured for her work in the food and beverage services industry. A restaurateur before joining STEC, Cohoon was one of the first servers and bartenders in Canada to become certified. She went on to complete certification in four tourism occupations and earn Journeyperson status. She also became a certified adult education professional and Tourism Trainer. Her highlights with STEC included assisting with the development of training tools and employee evaluation at The Plaza Hotel in New York, providing training to instructors in the Philippines and facilitators from Central America, and establishing an Online Cook Upgrading Program, the first of its kind.

A joint Tourism Ambassador Award in the accommodation industry was presented to Jim Bence, President and CEO of the Saskatchewan Hotel and Hospitality Association, and Ashwant Dwivedi, President & Chief Executive Officer of the Vancouver-based Canadian International Training & Education Corp (CITREC). Bence and Dwivedi received joint recognition for their collaboration to provide valuable tourism work experience in Saskatchewan to recent hospitality program graduates from the Solomon



*Tourism Ambassador Award recipients  
Diane Cohoon and Jim Bence*

*Carol Lumb was presented the Tourism HR  
Canada Leadership Award by Philip Mondor*

Islands. Working in complementary roles in the accommodation industry, each equally deserves this award for their contributions to professional development, training and certification.

Philip Mondor, President of Tourism HR Canada (formerly the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC), made a special presentation that evening to Carol Lumb, Director of STEC. Lumb was honoured with the Tourism HR Canada Leadership Award for her long-standing commitment to advancing progressive human resource practices in Canada's tourism sector. She was acknowledged for her commitment as an advisor to the CTHRC since its inception in 1991. The STEC team, under Lumb's leadership for 27 years, is recognized nationally and internationally for achievement in the creation and delivery of tourism career training programs.

## Service Best customized to enhance University of Saskatchewan's core services

When the University of Saskatchewan's Consumer Services personnel set out to find a program to enhance service delivery, they contacted the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC), which has a record of success with customizing its Service Best program to meet the needs of clients. That reputation is one reason why Consumer Services approached STEC about training Residence, Retail, Parking and Culinary Services staff at the university.

"We were looking for a program to enhance our service, and the Service Best program really hit that goal," Quinton Zook, Director of Consumer Services, said. "Having a program tailored for both front-line and management level staff, the ability to develop their own in-house facilitators, and on-going support from STEC were important considerations. The fact that it is a Saskatchewan

product was a big piece as well, as were the great referrals from other companies that use it."

"Service Best provides an ideal solution because it has been designed from the ground up to help workers in hospitality and retail service environments, and recognizes that everyone has internal as well as external customers," Kari Burgess, STEC Account Representative, said.

STEC customized training resources to meet the client's needs and assist in-house Consumer Services trainers to deliver the program to staff. Items such as customer connections maps were modified to help learners/employees better understand their internal and external customers. The participant manual was also customized, adding an introduction by Consumer Services to make it more relevant.



Training was launched in June, with 13 managers completing Service Best Management. In July, three staff members completed Facilitator Skills Development training and began offering Service Best workshops to front-line staff. Half of the 400 employees completed the program before the September start of the academic year. Training for remaining staff resumes in the fall, with annual sessions planned to ensure that new employees complete Service Best.

Feedback from participants has been encouraging. "They really value this training," Zook said. "When I came to the institution, a big focus for me was developing our people. You can't just expect people to have the skills when they show up. You have to teach the skills."



# Collège Mathieu and Tourism Saskatchewan bring customer service training to Saskatchewan Francophone communities

In June, Collège Mathieu and Tourism Saskatchewan signed an agreement to offer customer service training to Francophone tourism employees. Collège Mathieu will deliver Service Best and WorldHost Fundamentals workshops throughout Saskatchewan, beginning in early 2018.

"This partnership strengthens and enriches the links between our organizations in terms of Francophone education accessibility," Francis Kasongo, Director of Collège Mathieu, said. "Both organizations will benefit from increased exposure to our clientele, but above all, they will contribute to raising the expertise level of employees working on the forefront of the tourism industry." Kasongo added that local businesses will also benefit from having employees trained to maximize customer experiences and ensure visitor satisfaction.

Tourism Saskatchewan's education department, the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC), will train course facilitators, who will then deliver WorldHost Fundamentals and Service Best at locations throughout Saskatchewan.

"We are so happy to be building on the excellent work that Collège Mathieu undertakes to prepare people for employment," Carol Lumb, Director of

STEC, said. "This agreement improves Tourism Saskatchewan's connection with Francophone businesses and employers, and provides an opportunity for new workers to learn in their native language. Francophone communities are an important part of the cultural fabric of our province and its diverse workforce. These communities make Saskatchewan an inviting destination."

"Collège Mathieu has the expertise and experience in serving Francophones," Kari Burgess, STEC Account Representative, said. "They have a great relationship with Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan (CÉCS), a provincial Francophone economic development agency. The college is a bridge to French-speaking immigrants working in front-line occupations."

WorldHost Fundamentals is a beneficial program for workers who are new to the province, and for established employees interested in learning more about tourism. Service Best will be directed to those who are already employed in the tourism sector, and to businesses and staff wanting to engage more fully with their customers. Both programs will be included in Collège Mathieu's essential skills training.

## TOP FIVE TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS

If you excel at what you do and others see you as a leader and subject-matter expert, you may be asked to share your knowledge at conferences, workshops or training sessions. Dynamic presenters or facilitators develop a range of skills to help them connect with audiences. Here are some tips for preparing and delivering presentations that hit the mark.

### 1. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Before you commit to an invitation, research the host organization and be clear on the nature of the event. If possible, find out who will be attending, what they already know about the subject matter and what their expectations may be. Tailor your materials and presentation to address the audience's needs.

### 2. BE PREPARED

On a practical level, prepare a checklist of all your materials, supplies, handouts and equipment. Review everything the day before, and set up early the day of your presentation or workshop. Your confidence and preparedness will make an impression on the audience. Good command of the subject matter is essential, but you should also have a plan for responding to off-topic questions or inquiries that may require follow-up.

### 3. PROVIDE RELEVANT INFORMATION

Address your audience's needs. Be specific about why everyone is attending and what you plan to accomplish. Explain how the points that you are making provide benefits to your audience, drawing on familiar examples from everyday experience. Link your presentation to audience members' occupations.

### 4. CONNECT WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

Take those important opening moments to immediately connect and make a positive impression. Validate your audience by asking if there are specific outcomes or questions to address. Make eye contact and position yourself so that you can see faces. Watch for signs of approval, boredom, doubt or disagreement. Understand that your own body language speaks volumes. Gestures, facial expressions and posture communicate your ideas and feelings as much as words.

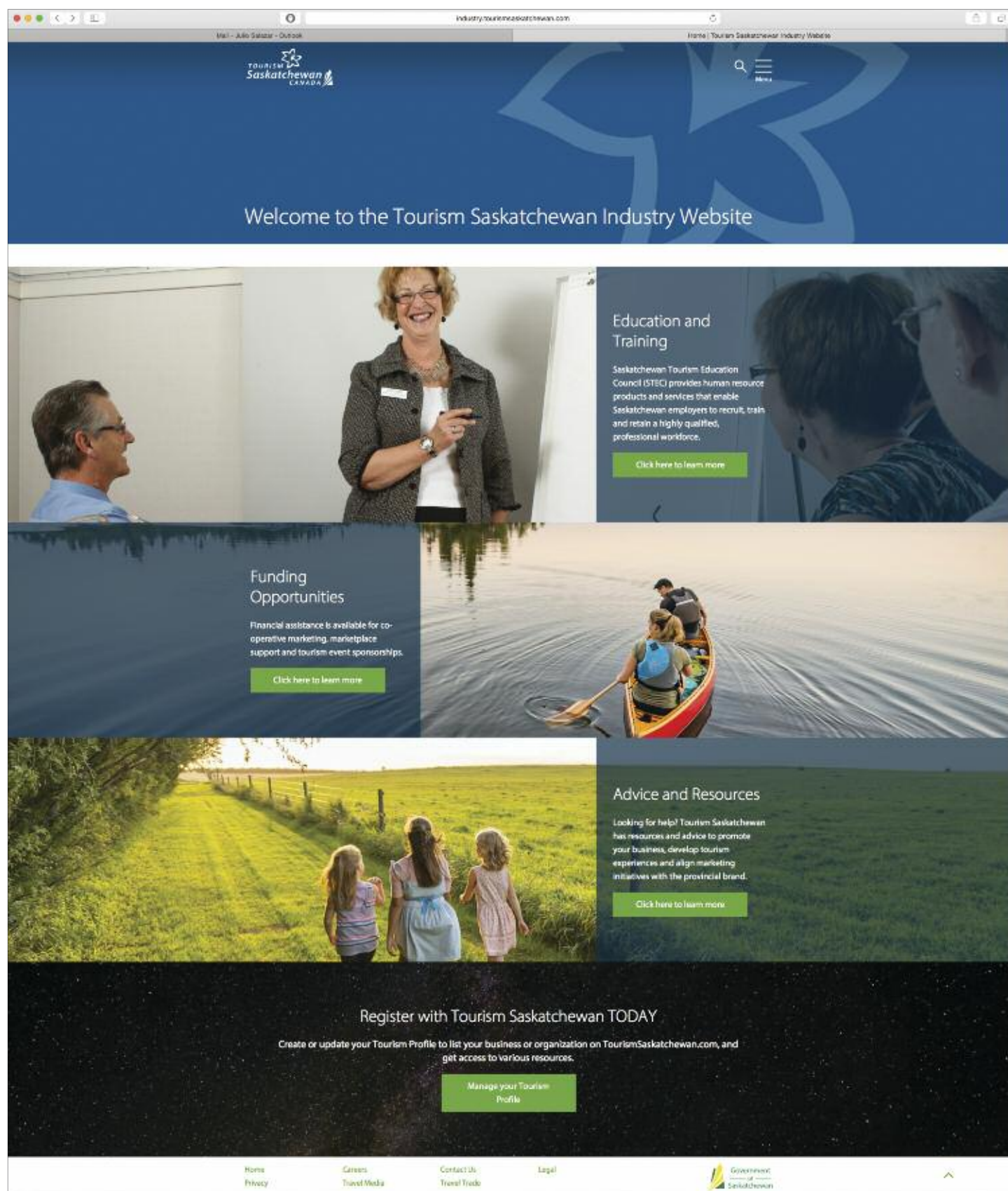
### 5. ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS

Plan icebreakers and group activities to energize workshops. Introduce exercises that enable your audience to practice a skill that addresses each critical learning point. Avoid lecturing and maintain an atmosphere that fosters discovery and knowledge sharing. Guide your audience to find answers on their own and to tap into their own resources, as well share ideas and knowledge among peers. Invite questions and encourage others to take on simple leadership roles. Keep discussions open, and continuously assess and adapt your delivery.

The Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC) delivers Facilitator Skills Development training, which builds confidence and teaches dynamic presentation skills. For information, call STEC toll-free at 1-800-331-1529.

# Tourism Trends

Industry website makeover scores high on resources and opportunities for tourism businesses



For years, [IndustryMatters.com](http://IndustryMatters.com) was the go-to resource for information about programs and services delivered by Tourism Saskatchewan. These days, busy tourism operators want fast, convenient access to tools and information that will help increase visitation, grow business, recruit and retain valuable employees, and more. To meet these demands, the website required a comprehensive makeover. Tourism Saskatchewan set the wheels in motion for an in-house review and restructuring of its industry website in January 2017. The new and improved [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com) was launched on August 17.



The project aligned with priorities identified in the organization's strategic plan for 2017-2021. Specifically, the upgrade supported priorities focused on strengthening Saskatchewan's tourism experiences by building a strong workforce and enhancing the event hosting landscape; and on engaging stakeholders by providing information and services based on research, trends and industry needs.

The ability to conduct much of the work in-house kept costs down, while staff enthusiasm remained high. "There is a strong commitment to industry that runs through every department, and is evident in the relationships that have been formed and the conversations that take place daily between staff members and operators," Elizabeth Braitenbach, Manager of Communications, said. "By listening to industry and examining well-designed sites of other provincial and destination marketing organizations, we determined, through a team effort, a structure that would serve the industry well and a timeline for a seamless transition."

An advantage was that [IndustryMatters.com](http://IndustryMatters.com) contained a lot of beneficial information – "bursting at the seams" was a common description. Its pages and pages of details, while valuable, warranted a thorough housecleaning. Outdated and duplicate items were removed. Content that was still relevant was refreshed, re-categorized and transferred to the new website, where it continues to benefit tourism operators and stakeholders.

The purpose of [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com) is to provide industry with easy access to:

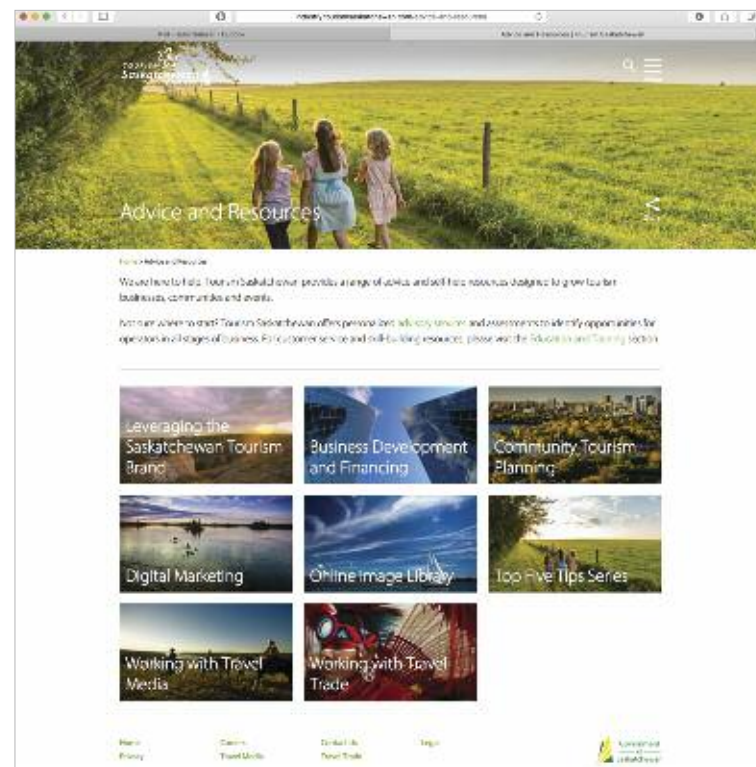
- information about programs and services offered by Tourism Saskatchewan
- advice on how to improve tourism operations
- information about funding programs, along with application forms
- education and training products
- a platform for event registrations and invoice payments

Visually, [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com) complements the consumer website, [TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com). Its framework is based on the guiding question, "What do you want to do?" Categories and pages are structured to enable users to search for information intuitively.

"It was important to approach the project from an industry perspective and understand what operators are frequently looking for and how they search for information. The new site organization achieves this," Grant McDonald, Director of eBusiness and Technology, said. "By streamlining resources, and leveraging the branding and design of our consumer site, we were able to complete a sizeable project within a tight timeframe. By migrating the content to the same technology platform as our consumer website, we can build on features and capabilities that are already in place. This makes enhancements easier to plan and implement. Several new features will be introduced in the next year or two."

Up front, visitors can search three categories specific to the most common demands for information related to:

- Education and Training – one click and the user has access to programs and services offered by the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC)
- Funding Opportunities – click on this for a menu of co-operative advertising, event hosting and marketplace support programs



- Advice and Resources – click to access a larger menu of programs and services in areas of marketing and product development

A menu in the top right corner of every screen also links to the three main categories, and directs users to tools that enable them to pay invoices or manage their Tourism Profile (see the reminder on page 2 to update your Tourism Profile and take advantage of FREE listings on [TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com), currently offered to Saskatchewan tourism operators).

Resources, such as conference presentations, along with registration information and agendas for upcoming industry events can be found under Industry Events and Presentations. Nomination forms for the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence are also posted in this category. Under Business Recognition Programs, users can find information about earning Employer of Choice designation.

A search feature, also in the top right corner, is another option for finding information about desired topics. At the bottom of each page are links to job postings, travel media and travel trade resources, and Tourism Saskatchewan contact information.

Going forward, upgrades will continue to enhance the site and improve functionality. Additional features, such as an industry login portal, will provide greater convenience and accessibility to more services.

Tourism Saskatchewan encourages operators to take advantage of the features and information that [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com) offers. Feedback is welcome. Comments or questions may be directed to your local Field Representative, or emailed to Elizabeth Braitenbach, [elizabeth.braitenbach@tourismsask.com](mailto:elizabeth.braitenbach@tourismsask.com).

# Around the Province

## Breathe . . . leap . . . and make every moment count

*Submitted by Saskatchewaner Andrew Hiltz*



*Paddleboarding on the South Saskatchewan River*



*Trophy catch at Besnard Lake*



*Skydiving over the prairies*

As my feet dangled outside of the airplane door, my first thought was, “I really should have tightened my shoe laces . . . I love these shoes. I hope they don’t fly off.”

Then I heard a voice, “Head back, arms in, deep breath . . . one, two, three!” And out we went.

You would think that falling out of an airplane would be a terrifying experience. After all, you are dropping from 12,000 feet above the ground, travelling 150 miles per hour with nothing but a backpack full of cords and a tarp to slow you down. As it turns out, all of the fear that I had associated with skydiving disappeared the moment I leaned forward and took the plunge.

My experience as the Saskatchewaner has been a lot like jumping out of a plane. I had no

idea what I was getting myself into, but I knew it was going to be awesome. I was a little bit scared, but even more excited. I knew the moment was going to fly by, like a jet over Mosaic Place, but I was ready to soak in every second of it.

In the past few months, I have lost count of how many phenomenal activities and events I have been able to take in. Summer highlights include a fishing trip to Besnard Lake, paddleboarding down the South Saskatchewan River and doing yoga with goats in Maple Creek. Along with these activities, I also managed to eat my way across the province and enjoy some of our best performers at events like Gateway Festival and Ness Creek Music Festival.

I am over halfway through my term as the Saskatchewaner and there is no doubt in my

mind that this province has as much to offer as any other destination in Canada.

For all of you out there who have yet to discover Saskatchewan, here’s my advice: tighten up your shoe laces, stick your feet out the airplane door, lean forward and take the plunge into the beautiful Land of the Living Skies.

Follow Andrew’s adventures:

Website – [saskatchewanwanderer.ca](http://saskatchewanwanderer.ca)

YouTube – [youtube.com/user/skwandererofficial](https://youtube.com/user/skwandererofficial)

Facebook – [facebook.com/skwanderer](https://facebook.com/skwanderer)

Instagram – [@saskatchewanwanderer](https://instagram.com/saskatchewanwanderer)

Twitter – [@skwanderer](https://twitter.com/skwanderer)

## Making Saskatchewan provincial parks more accessible

*Submitted by the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport*

Saskatchewan’s provincial parks are wrapping up another successful summer season. Camping continues to be an extremely popular activity in the parks, and Canada 150 celebrations helped to make the summer of 2017 one to remember.

To celebrate the anniversary, Saskatchewan provincial parks offered two days of free entry, a special geocaching program and the opportunity to “Picture Yourself” in a Saskatchewan park. Oversized picture frames were built at each park and provided the perfect spot for family photos and selfies. The frames were very popular with park visitors and will remain in place – if you missed the frame in your favourite park this year, you will be able to snap a photo with it next year.

In addition to all of the Canada 150 activities, Saskatchewan provincial parks were proud to pilot a beach wheelchair program. Beach wheelchairs are lightweight, with aluminum frames and buoyant tires, and can easily travel over sand, as well as in water as deep as 30 centimetres.

There are 10 beach wheelchairs, which can be made available to any Saskatchewan provincial park and are free for use by park visitors. To reserve a beach wheelchair, visitors simply need to call the park they intend to visit a week in advance. Saskatchewan’s provincial parks are



*Park guest in a “Picture Yourself” moment; beach wheelchairs available in provincial parks*

special places, and projects like this help to make our beautiful lakes and beaches more accessible to everyone.

Though the summer season is winding down, camping opportunities are not. Most provincial parks offer camping into the fall, some parks offer reservations well into September and several have year-round camping. For more information on fall camping, visit [saskparks.com](http://saskparks.com).



# Here & There



## Sheila Kelly to receive Distinguished Service Award

The International Sports Heritage Association (ISHA) has named Sheila Kelly, Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame (SSHF), as recipient of the prestigious Schroeder Award. The W.R. "Bill" Schroeder Distinguished Service Award is the highest honour presented by ISHA and

is awarded to individuals for meritorious service of lasting nature in the sports heritage industry. Kelly has served as SSHF Executive Director for 28 years, and her influence has been felt at the local and international levels. Kelly has been instrumental in numerous sports museum and sports heritage research projects, and recently secured a formal agreement with the Saskatchewan Roughriders Football Club to house the entire SSHF collection. The official presentation of the Schroeder Award will take place on October 19 as part of ISHA's annual conference, hosted this year by the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in Knoxville, TN. For more information about the SSHF, visit [sasksportshalloffame.com](http://sasksportshalloffame.com).

## Lyric Theatre awarded National Trust for Canada prize

Swift Current's Lyric Theatre was one of eight winning projects that participated in the National Trust of Canada's THIS PLACE MATTERS 2017 national crowdfunding competition. The goal of the competition is to bring together community partners and community members to breathe new life into historic places across Canada. Lyric Theatre's project Spirit of the Lyric won the Big Projects Regional-West Prize of \$30,000. The money will go toward developing the space and restoring floors, windows and other architectural components. The improvements will enable the theatre to offer space for artists, musicians, teachers and students. Twenty-five participating project groups across the country competed for votes and donations from June 14 to July 20. The National Trust for Canada is a national charity that inspires and leads action to save historic places across the country. For more information, visit [nationaltrustcanada.ca](http://nationaltrustcanada.ca). To find out more about Swift Current's Lyric Theatre, check out [lyrictheatre.ca](http://lyrictheatre.ca).

## Carrie Ross named to the Provincial Capital Commission

The Government of Saskatchewan recently announced that Carrie Ross will lead the Provincial Capital Commission (PCC) as Executive Director. Ross has over 25 years of experience in senior management positions in the public, private and non-profit sectors, with particular expertise in tourism. She was on the initial management team of the RCMP Heritage Centre and continues to serve as Executive Director of Government House, a position she has held since 2009. Ross is a graduate of the University of Regina's Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy and is a Certified Tourism Industry Specialist. The PCC's mandate is to preserve and promote the history and culture of Saskatchewan, and ensure that the capital city continues to remain a source of pride for Saskatchewan citizens and a source of interest to visitors.

## Celebrating tourism worldwide on September 27, World Tourism Day

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) observes World Tourism Day annually on September 27. Each year has a different focus, and the theme for 2017 is Sustainable Tourism: a Tool for Development. In his official message, UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai drew attention to the 1.2 billion travellers who crossed international borders last year, a number predicted to reach 1.8 billion by 2030. The important challenge, he stated, will be enabling "this powerful global transformative force, these 1.8 billion opportunities, to contribute to make this world a better place" and to advance the five pillars of sustainable development: 1) economic; 2) social; 3) environmental; 4) cultural; and 5) peace.

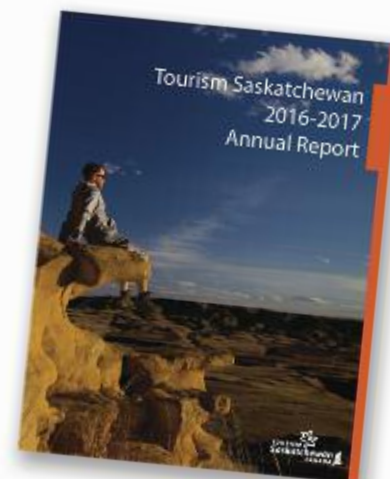
His simple, straightforward declaration provides meaningful food for thought: "This World Tourism Day, whenever you travel, wherever you travel, remember to respect nature, respect culture, respect your host." For the full message and to learn more about World Tourism Day, visit [wtd.unwto.org](http://wtd.unwto.org).



## Tourism Saskatchewan releases 2016-2017 Annual Report

Tourism Saskatchewan's 2016-2017 Annual Report was tabled in the provincial legislature on July 28, 2017. The report offers an overview of the fiscal year spanning April 1, 2016-March 31, 2017, and includes financial statements for that period. Highlights of the year are featured and the publication outlines results on committed strategies, actions and performance measures identified in Tourism Saskatchewan's Strategic Plan 2014-2016.

The 2016-2017 Annual Report is a public document and can be viewed on [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com). To request a printed copy, contact Belva Schlosser at 306-787-5488, [belva.schlosser@tourismsask.com](mailto:belva.schlosser@tourismsask.com).



# Mark Your Calendar

## PUBLIC EVENTS

### Saskatoon Farmers' Market

Year-round .....Saskatoon

### RCMP Sergeant Major's Parade

January 3-December 15, 2017 .....Regina

### Government House Historical Society Victorian Teas

March 4-December 3, 2017 .....Regina

### Regina Farmers' Market

March 4-December 16, 2017 .....Regina

### Nuit Blanche

September 30, 2017 .....Saskatoon

### Kindersley Goose Festival

September 21-24, 2017 .....Kindersley

### Beechy Western Days Indoor Rodeo

September 22-24, 2017 .....Beechy

### Estevan Business Showcase Expo

September 22-24, 2017 .....Estevan

### Highway 1 Studio Tour

September 23-24, 2017 .....Herbert

### Culture Days

September 29-October 1, 2017 .....Province-wide

### Kamsack & District Indoor Rodeo

September 29-30, 2017 .....Kamsack

### Premier Showcase

September 29-30, 2017 .....Saskatoon

### Unity Agricultural Society Fall Fair & Trade Show

September 29-30, 2017 .....Unity

### Borden & District Threshing Day

September 30, 2017 .....Borden

### Grenfell Agricultural Fair and Trade Show

September 30, 2017 .....Grenfell

### Nipawin Vanity Cup – Walleye Tournament

September 30-October 1, 2017 .....Tobin Lake

### 8th Annual Harvest Family Festival

October 1-8, 2017 .....Rosetown

### Flavours of Fall

October 5, 2017 .....Weyburn

### Wapella Dodge City Days Rodeo

October 6-7, 2017 .....Wapella

### Lancer Chokecherry Festival

October 6-8, 2017 .....Lancer

### Thanksgiving Indoor Powwow

October 7-8, 2017 .....Prince Albert

### Western Development Museum Christmas Craft Fair

October 13-14, 2017 .....Saskatoon

### Canadian Cowboy Association Finals Rodeo

October 18-21, 2017 .....Swift Current

### Harvest Feastival

October 24, 2017 .....Lloydminster

### Christmas in October

October 26-29, 2017 .....Moose Jaw

### Skate Canada International

October 26-29, 2017 .....Regina

### Fort Battleford National Historic Site

#### – Halloween Haunted Fort

October 28, 2017 .....The Battlefords

### Alien Bash

October 29, 2017 .....Watrous

### Western Development Museum Boo-Town

October 30, 2017 .....Saskatoon

### Government House Bump in the Night

October 30, 2017 .....Regina

### Assiniboia Mistletoe Art and Craft Sale

November 3-4, 2017 .....Assiniboia

### Saskatchewan Snowmobile Show & Sale

November 3-5, 2017 .....Saskatoon

### Focus on Christmas Trade Show & Sale

November 4-5, 2017 .....Prince Albert

### Humboldt Fall and Business Showcase & Tradeshow

November 4-5, 2017 .....Humboldt

### Mistletoe Craft & Gift Show

November 4-5, 2017 .....The Battlefords

### Lord of the (Sausage) Rings

November 9, 2017 .....Osler

### Illumination

November 17, 2017 .....Moose Jaw

### Wintergreen Fine Craft Market

November 17-19, 2017 .....Regina

### BHP Billiton Enchanted Forest Holiday Light Tour

November 18, 2017-January 7, 2018 .....Saskatoon

### Saskatoon Festival of Trees

November 26-December 2, 2017 .....Saskatoon

### Canadian Western Agribition

November 20-25, 2017 .....Regina

### Agribition Pro Rodeo

November 22-25, 2017 .....Regina

### Carlyle's Dickens Village Festival

December 1-2, 2017 .....Carlyle

### Sundog Arts & Entertainment Faire

December 1-3, 2017 .....Saskatoon

## INDUSTRY EVENTS

### The Tourism Congress

November 28-29, 2017 .....Gatineau, QC

### Canadian Tourism Awards

November 29, 2017 .....Gatineau, QC

## TRADESHOWS/MARKETPLACES/FAMS

### TRAVEL TRADE:

#### Canada Specialist FAM

September 30-October 4, 2017  
..... Saskatoon/Prince Albert National Park

### TRAVEL MEDIA:

#### GoMedia Pretour FAM

September 26-30, 2017 .....Southern Saskatchewan

#### GoMedia Marketplace

October 1-5, 2017 .....Halifax, NS

## STEC PROGRAMS/WORKSHOPS:

### Employer of Choice registration deadline

November 30, 2017 .....Province-wide

*Information subject to change.*

Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses  
to:

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S4P 2S5  
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[TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com)  
1-877-237-2273

