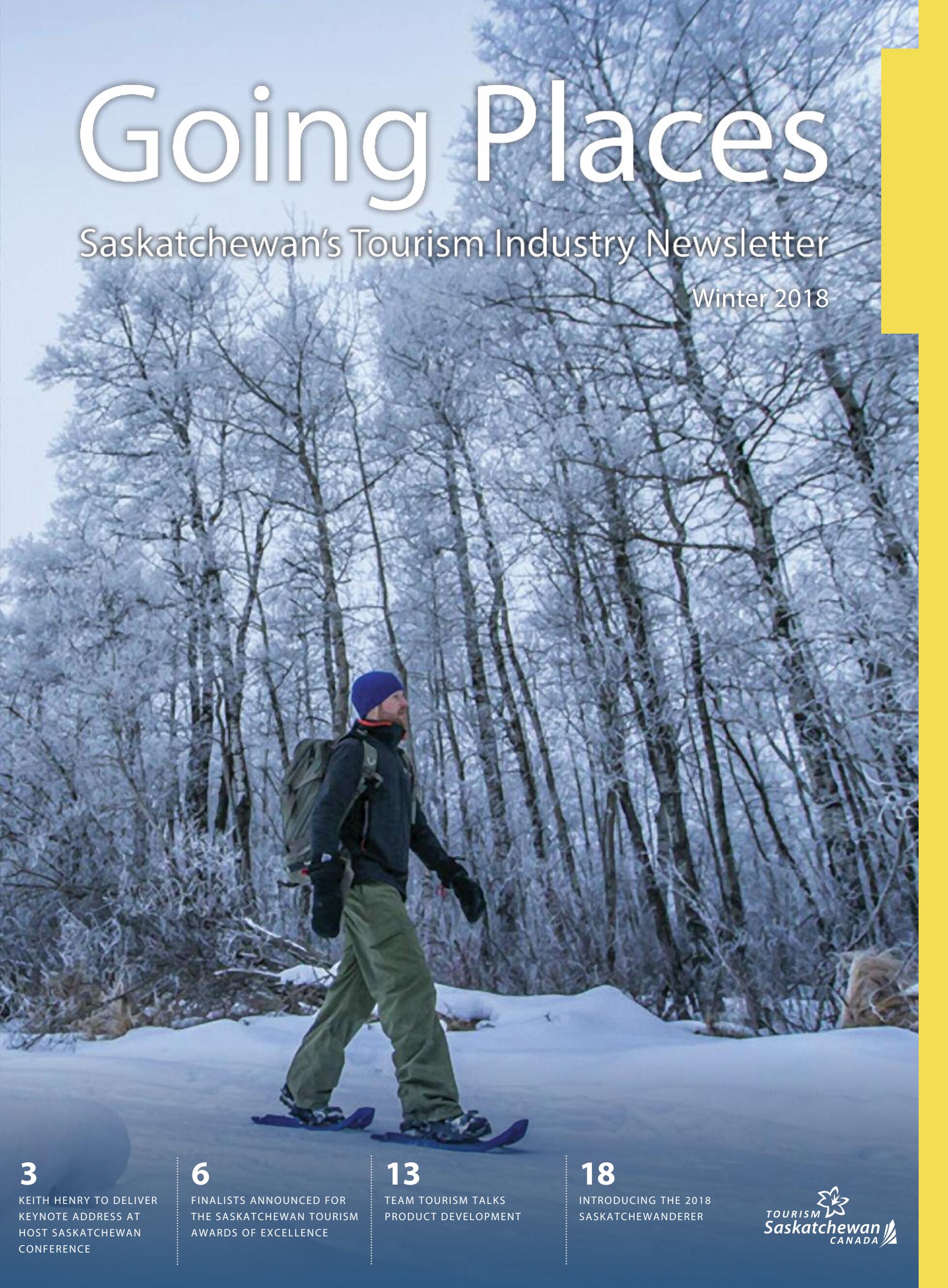


# Going Places

Saskatchewan's Tourism Industry Newsletter

Winter 2018



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## Cover Image

Greenwater Lake Provincial Park  
 Greg Huszar Photography

## Bookmark 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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## Gene Makowsky named Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan



Gene Makowsky, Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

On February 2, Gene Makowsky was sworn in as Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport and Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan and for the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority. He is part of the 17-member Cabinet appointed by Premier Scott Moe.

Minister Makowsky was first elected Member of the Legislative Assembly for Regina Gardiner Park in 2011, and re-elected in 2016.

A former Saskatchewan Roughrider, he played 17 seasons on the offensive line and helped lead the team to win the 2007 Grey Cup championship. During his tenure, he was twice named the Canadian Football League's (CFL) Most Outstanding Lineman and was a five time CFL All-Star.



## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Tourism is a highly competitive, rapidly changing industry. To better engage with visitors, Tourism Saskatchewan employs a digital-first approach to marketing. Our mantra is to be “always on” – featuring fresh, ever-changing content on our digital channels, telling stories in different ways and inspiring people to set their sights on Saskatchewan.

Getting people excited about visiting the province is just part of the equation. We must also be able to deliver on the promise and have experiences that travellers are seeking.

Our industry benefits from comprehensive research that identifies actions for increasing visitation and enhancing market-readiness among operators. Ultimately, Saskatchewan will be more competitive as a destination, and interest in our remarkable tourism resources and experiences will grow.

In 2018, Tourism Saskatchewan will be partnering with TEAM Tourism Consulting on formulating a tourism development strategy for the province (turn to Page 13 for more details).

This project will yield a roadmap for the development of tourism products, experiences and services that travellers want. It will identify

a vision for tourism growth and position our industry as a pillar for strengthening and diversifying Saskatchewan’s economy.

We have the good fortune of working with Jennifer Houiellebecq, whose understanding of the tourism industry in Saskatchewan led us through two strategic planning cycles. Jennifer and her colleagues have a string of accomplishments that stretches across continents – destination success stories in Ireland, England, across Canada and a host of countries reflect TEAM Tourism’s work.

Working with these professionals is elevating for our staff, and I am confident that Saskatchewan tourism stakeholders participating in upcoming consultations will, likewise, recognize the value of TEAM Tourism’s leadership and expertise.

This is truly an exciting time for our industry.

*Mary Taylor-Ash*

## Keith Henry to deliver keynote address at HOST Saskatchewan Conference



*Keith Henry*

Mark your calendar for the 2018 HOST Saskatchewan Conference on April 12 at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Regina. The new, day-long format offers delegates valuable networking opportunities and engaging presentations. That evening, industry will celebrate leadership and achievement at the 29th annual Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala.

Keith Henry, President and CEO of the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC), is the keynote speaker. He is recognized throughout Canada

and internationally as a leader in Indigenous tourism. Previously CEO of the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia, Henry was honoured with the World Indigenous Tourism Alliance Award. He has been a driving force behind the growth of authentic Indigenous tourism in Canada and has led many groundbreaking initiatives, including a national strategy titled *The Path Forward 2016-2021*. The strategy focuses on expanding market readiness of Indigenous tourism experiences, increasing jobs and growing revenue.

The conference agenda includes opening greetings at 10:00 a.m. by Mary Taylor-Ash, CEO of Tourism Saskatchewan. Jon Mamela, Chief Marketing Officer of Destination Canada (DC), will follow with an update

on the national tourism organization’s work and campaigns to market Canada as a travel destination. Mamela’s session, titled *Delivering Breakthrough Initiatives and Campaigns*, will highlight efforts that are seeing strong results and increases in international visitation.

Travel storytelling is the afternoon focus. Tourism Saskatchewan’s marketing professionals will offer tips on creating compelling content and turning on the switch from simply promoting your products to telling the story of your business.

Two dynamic presenters are on the agenda. Dalene Heck, part of the team behind the award winning Hectik Travels, works with travel brands and provides advice in areas of influencer marketing and social media account management. Internet expert Bill Eager will share digital strategies that engage audiences at the emotional level. In his presentation, Eager will lead delegates through exercises in best practices and creative thinking.

The Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala begins at 5:30 p.m. with a networking reception, followed by dinner and the award presentations (see page 6-7 for the list of finalists and an introduction to the 2018 class of Tourism Builders).

To register for the HOST Saskatchewan Conference, contact Nancy Hubenig at 306-787-9844, [nancy.hubenig@tourismsask.com](mailto:nancy.hubenig@tourismsask.com). The cost is \$179 (plus GST). This fee covers the daytime sessions and keynote luncheon, and includes a ticket to the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala.

# Developing Future Park Ambassadors through Education and Outdoor Recreation

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



Top: Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park  
Bottom: Fort Carlton Provincial Park

SaskParks works with teachers throughout the province to engage young hearts and minds in nature and outdoor recreation. Each year, thousands of students are welcomed to provincial parks to participate in curriculum-based education programs.

Combining education with outdoor recreation helps to develop future park advocates and leaders, who may promote Saskatchewan as a tourism destination in the years to come. Through day or overnight camping trips, students can discover geocaching, catch pond critters or paddle a canoe. They can head out on a guided hike to learn about the park ecosystem or stay up late and gaze at the stars, as part of an astronomy program.

Saskatchewan's historic parks enable students to experience packing buffalo robes, making rope, practicing North West Mounted Police drills and more.

Through the education programs, students learn about the land, culture and heritage within the parks, and the environmental, historical and cultural significance they hold. The outdoor

environment encourages learning and exploration, as well as curiosity and creativity.

Educational programs are available in 14 provincial parks and three provincial historic parks. In 2017, more than 12,000 students participated in educational programming. The programs have been designed to align with the provincial education curriculum.

Teachers value the opportunity to take the classroom outside for enriched hands-on learning. By giving young audiences a chance to explore nature firsthand, it is possible to capture their attention and deepen understanding of the richness and diversity of Saskatchewan's natural environment. Children are able to play, learn, make discoveries and enjoy adventures in the outdoors. The activities have a positive influence on quality of life and contribute to the development of future generations as outdoor enthusiasts and advocates.

Nature lovers are growing in Saskatchewan provincial parks! For more information, visit [saskparks.com](http://saskparks.com) and click on Outdoor Classroom.

# Saskatchewan hosts national recreation forum in May

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

The Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport and the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA) are co-hosting the first ever Gathering Strength: Framework for Recreation in Canada Forum, May 8-10 in Regina. The forum will assemble recreation practitioners, stakeholders and leaders to share successful strategies and practices related to Canada's recreation framework, completed in 2015 and communicated under the title *A Framework for Recreation in Canada – Pathways to Wellbeing*.

The document identifies a vision for recreation based on five goals: Active Living, Inclusion and Access, Connecting People and Nature, Supportive Environments and Recreation Capacity.

Recreational activities benefit the mind, body and soul, and contribute to society's well-being and quality of life. Recreation is how we, as humans, spend our free time, and the linkage between recreation and tourism is strong. The framework provides many collaborative opportunities in areas that include sport, physical activity and

health, arts and culture, tourism, heritage, urban and rural planning, Indigenous affairs and active aging.

Saskatchewan provincial parks offer a variety of recreation opportunities for people of all ages, physical abilities, experiences and backgrounds. The Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport is driven to support the five framework goals and recognizes Saskatchewan provincial parks as important places to connect people to nature and encourage active living. SaskParks works to ensure that provincial parks are accessible to all.

Gathering Strength: Framework for Recreation in Canada Forum will focus on creating dialogue and building relationships across the country. Among the many knowledgeable presenters are Robin Campese, SaskParks Executive Director of Visitor Experience, and Dawn Carr, Executive Director of the Canadian Parks Council. They will share information on an action plan developed through a partnership between the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association and the Canadian Parks



Council. The plan aims to connect people with nature and to conserve Canada's impressive network of parks, including city, provincial and national. This session will share the *Parks for All* story and key actions that inspire and support the powerful benefits of parks.

To learn about recreation initiatives and much more, register for the first-of-its-kind 2018 Framework for Recreation in Canada Forum. Learn more at [gatheringstrength.ca](http://gatheringstrength.ca).



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Changes and new faces are common in tourism and keep our industry fresh and dynamic. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the Honourable Gene Makowsky, who was named Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan in February.

My board colleagues and I recently welcomed Kevin Dureau, from Regina, to our table. He brings enthusiasm, experience and skills that will benefit the organization. To outgoing, long-time board member, Dana Soonias, we extend best wishes and deep appreciation for his years of service.

We are also pleased to welcome our 2018 Saskatchewaner, Kevin Dunn. He hit the ground running and has already travelled many miles and gained a loyal social media following. Dunn fully embraced the season and packed as many outdoor winter activities as possible into his schedule. Read an account of his first weeks on the job and view photographs from some of his adventures on Page 18.

Tourism Saskatchewan looks forward to hosting industry at the HOST Saskatchewan Conference and Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala on April 12. The conference keynote speaker, Keith Henry, is a prominent leader in Indigenous tourism in Canada. His presentation will offer meaningful food for thought. Delegates will value the takeaways from afternoon sessions that will highlight travel storytelling and provide advice on how we get our message out to visitors.

More than 300 people gather to celebrate our industry at the annual Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala. The Award Selection Committee had a challenging task choosing 33 finalists from nearly 100 nominations. It is encouraging to see many new names on the list (shared on Page 6) and note that a commitment to excellence in the delivery of services and experiences is widespread in Saskatchewan.

I look forward to introducing the newest Tourism Builders, whose accomplishments are highlighted on Page 7. Ian McGilp and Bernadette McIntyre represent two very significant areas of tourism – industry development and events. They have shaped the tourism landscape in our province and certainly earned the title Tourism Builder.

On behalf of Tourism Saskatchewan's Board of Directors and staff, I invite you to join us in Regina on April 12.

*Norm Beug*



*Kevin Dureau*

## Kevin Dureau named to Tourism Saskatchewan Board of Directors

Tourism Saskatchewan is pleased to welcome Kevin Dureau as its newest board member. He joins colleagues Norm Beug (Chair), Cory Rideout (Vice Chair), Brian Hoffart, Lawrence Joseph, Jori Kirk, Sandra LeBarre and Irene Seiferling.

Dureau is the Director of Operations, HR and Business Development for the A1 Group. He is also Director of Business Development for Navigate Surgical Technologies, and a partner in On Course Marketing and in Check-It Solutions.

He was a member of the Saskatchewan Transportation Company board of directors and served on the governance committee. In addition to his commitment to Tourism Saskatchewan, he sits on the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame board of directors, with responsibilities on the inductee selection committee.

Tourism Saskatchewan extends its gratitude to retiring board member Dana Soonias, who served for more than seven years.

# FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR SASKATCHEWAN TOURISM AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE



Tourism Saskatchewan is pleased to announce the names of 33 finalists for the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence for 2017.

Nearly 100 nominations were received in the 12 award categories that acknowledge quality in marketing, service, business practices, human resource development and other areas.

The finalists and award recipients will be honoured at the 29th annual Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala, which will be celebrated on April 12 at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Regina. The gala will be held in conjunction with the HOST Saskatchewan Conference, which also takes place on April 12 (see Page 3 for conference details).

Two recipients of the Tourism Builder Award will also be honoured that night. The Tourism Builder Award recognizes individuals who have made tourism an important part of their life's work and have helped position Saskatchewan as a welcoming destination.

Tickets for the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala are available for \$120 (plus GST), or \$800 (plus GST) for a corporate table of eight.

The evening will start with a networking reception at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner service at 6:30 p.m. and the award presentations at 8 p.m.

To order tickets, contact Nancy Hubenig at 306-787-9844 or [awards@tourismsask.com](mailto:awards@tourismsask.com).

The Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence finalists for 2017 are:

## **Rookie of the Year Award**

*Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Roughrider Football Club*

FIBA 3x3 World Tour, Saskatoon  
Spiritwood Area Recreation, Culture and Sports Annual Bull Riding Competition, Spiritwood  
Waskimo Winter Festival, Regina

## **Service Excellence Award**

*Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce*

Black Fox Farm and Distillery, Saskatoon  
Ghostown Blues Bed & Breakfast, Maple Creek  
Gold Eagle Lodge, North Battleford

## **Tourism Employee of the Year Award**

*Sponsored by Harvard Broadcasting Regina*  
E Haffermehl, Aroma Resto Bar, Radisson Hotel Saskatoon, Saskatoon  
Calla Michell, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon  
Chris Standing, Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon

## **Tourism Employer of the Year Award**

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel & Conference Centre, Regina  
Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority, Saskatoon  
Tourism Saskatoon, Saskatoon

## **Gil Carduner Marketing Award**

*Sponsored by Phoenix Group*  
Saskatchewan Roughriders Football Club, Regina  
Town of Eastend, Eastend  
Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon

## **Fred Heal Tourism Ambassador Award**

*Sponsored by Wanuskewin Heritage Park*  
Grotto Gardens Country Market, Maple Creek  
Historic Reesor Ranch, Maple Creek  
Saskatchewan Craft Brewers Association, Saskatoon

## **Travel Media Award**

*Sponsored by Vendasta*  
Jim Byers, Toronto, ON  
Ashlyn George, Saskatoon  
Craig Hilts, Swift Current

## **Community Event of the Year Award**

*Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Arts Board*  
2017 Living Skies Come Alive International Fireworks Competition, Moosomin  
Gateway Festival, Bengough  
YXEats, Saskatoon

## **Marquee Event of the Year Award**

*Sponsored by CTV*  
Canadian Western Agribition, Regina  
Ness Creek Music Festival, Big River  
Pinty's Grand Slam of Curling, North Battleford

## **Business of the Year Award (Under 20 Full-time Employees)**

*Sponsored by Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority*  
Historic Reesor Ranch, Maple Creek  
Prairie River Cruises Ltd., Saskatoon  
Waskesiu Marina Adventure Centre, Waskesiu Lake

## **Business of the Year Award (Over 20 Full-time Employees)**

*Sponsored by The Western Producer*  
d3h Hotels Inc., various locations  
Grassroots Restaurant Group, Saskatoon  
Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority, Saskatoon

## Introducing the 2018 class of Tourism Builders

The Tourism Builder Award category was added to the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence in 2016. The honour carries on the legacy of past recipients of the Chairman's Lifetime Achievement Award and President's Award of Merit, and recognizes peers who have made significant and long-standing contributions to Saskatchewan's tourism sector.

Congratulations are extended to Ian McGilp and Bernadette McIntyre, who will be formally recognized as Tourism Builders at the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala on April 12 in Regina.



### **Ian McGilp, Saskatoon**

Ian McGilp began his career in tourism in 1984, as an employee in the Ministry of Tourism and Small Business. His experience in commercial banking, working with small businesses, local exhibitions and fairs, tour operators and visitor and convention bureaus, laid the groundwork for years of involvement in tourism development. When Tourism Saskatchewan was created in 1996, he moved into his role in industry development. McGilp was pivotal to the creation of a number of tourist attractions, tourism master plans and destination area projects throughout Saskatchewan. Manitou Springs Resort Hotel & Mineral Spa is one example of a successful enterprise that benefitted from his guidance. Devising creative solutions to funding challenges, he brought together corporate partners, businesses and the community to support the project. He was informally proclaimed "King of Redefinition" for establishing an innovative funding precedent that others would follow. The Lake Diefenbaker Tourism Destination Area plan was another ambitious initiative bearing his imprint. By the time of his retirement in 2012, McGilp was commonly known as the "Father of Industry Development" in Saskatchewan. He continues to assist tourism associations and operators, and share his special talent "to bring together the human and financial resources to make tourism development happen."



### **Bernadette McIntyre, Regina**

For more than two decades, Bernadette McIntyre has been a familiar face among sports tourism circles, both provincially and nationally. She is admired for taking the role of volunteer to extreme heights and dedicating countless hours to bringing national and international events, along with visitors, to Saskatchewan. Her commitment to various committees and events includes serving as president of the 1998 Scott Tournament of Hearts and 2006 Tim Hortons Brier; executive vice-president of the 2008 Scott Tournament of Hearts host committee; and chair of the 2013 Canadian Football League alumni committee and 2016 Canadian Wheelchair Curling Championship. She is active on bid committees and her efforts helped bring the 2017 Pinty's Grand Slam of Curling and 2018 Tim Hortons Brier to Regina. McIntyre was CEO of Wascana Centre Authority from 2008-2017 and worked tirelessly with Tourism Regina, the Regina Hotel Association, Regina Rowing Club and other partners to complete the Finishing Line Facility that enabled Regina to host national and international rowing, canoeing and kayaking competitions. Her leadership has instilled confidence in Saskatchewan's ability to host major events, as well as awareness of the province's impressive venues, accommodations, experiences and volunteers.

# Selling Saskatchewan

## Texas targeted with Saskatchewan fishing and hunting promotions



Scott Lake Lodge



Wollaston Lake Lodge

Saskatchewan and Texas have more in common than simply their size. Residents of both share a passion for outdoor adventure. Many Texans are avid anglers who are keen to go where the monster fish are biting. They are equally enthusiastic about hunting.

Tourism Saskatchewan is actively engaged in supporting Saskatchewan outfitters through the development of markets in the United States. Research by Southwick Associates in 2015 identified Texas as a market with growth potential, citing the state's sheer volume of anglers. Further exploration by Environics Analytics in 2017 yielded a better understanding of prospective U.S. customers and affirmed that Texas would be Saskatchewan's best choice in

the U.S. market for growing our fishing industry to its potential.

Tourism Saskatchewan's U.S. angling campaign launched in January, with a primary focus on Texas. Its secondary focus is on 14 other states, strategically selected for residents' strong interest in fishing.

A digital-first approach was employed across several marketing channels, and featured social media advertising through Facebook and Google AdWords, online advertising and a dedicated website. Partnerships with relevant media outlets included *Texas Fish and Game Magazine*, *Texas Outdoors Journal*, *In-Fisherman Magazine*, *Midwest Outdoors*, *Outdoor*

*Sportsman Group*, and a number of online suppliers. Participation in the National Angling Campaign, which involves Destination Canada and several provincial partners, bolsters Saskatchewan's reach in the U.S.

Tourism Saskatchewan, along with three Saskatchewan outfitters, attended Safari Club International (SCI) in Dallas, January 4-7. Support from the application-based Marketplace Fund assisted outfitters with attending SCI events in Dallas and Houston, along with 27 additional shows in target markets across the U.S. For more information on the funding program, contact Kelly Brezinski at 306-787-2219, [kelly.brezinski@tourismsask.com](mailto:kelly.brezinski@tourismsask.com).

## Follow Fishing in Saskatchewan on Facebook



The Fishing in Saskatchewan Facebook page is among Tourism Saskatchewan's suite of online resources that influence travel decisions. The account has more than 33,000 followers – a mix of Saskatchewan residents and avid anglers from across Canada and the U.S., intrigued by the province's abundance of monster fish.

Given Saskatchewan's sheer number of lakes, its impressive lodges and the enthusiasm for being out on the water (or ice), there is no shortage of compelling photographs, videos and stories. Many followers appreciate the opportunity to share their own adventures, attaching a photo of their proud moment reeling in the catch of a lifetime or lamenting the big one that got away. Content also includes articles, images and links to episodes produced by outdoor media networks.

Tourism Saskatchewan welcomes inquiries from industry interested in contributing content. Follow [Facebook.com/FishinginSaskatchewan](https://www.facebook.com/FishinginSaskatchewan), send a message or contact [digital@tourismsask.com](mailto:digital@tourismsask.com).

## In-Fisherman TV films largest lake trout catch in network's history



George Large, *In-Fisherman TV* co-host, and Adam Schreiber, Cree Lake Lodge co-owner

George Large, *In-Fisherman Magazine* associate publisher and *In-Fisherman TV* co-host, experienced lake trout fishing at its best while filming at Cree Lake Lodge in June 2017. Tourism Saskatchewan assisted with bringing Large and his crew to the province. This investment supports objectives of the National Angling Campaign, a partnership involving Destination Canada, Tourism Saskatchewan, Travel Manitoba and Northwest Territories Tourism.

Large estimated catching and releasing more than 30 lake trout, ranging in size from under two kg to over 14 kg (30 lb). Equipped with an 8-foot Abu Garcia rod and a Revo Toro Beast reel strung with 80-lb. Berkeley Braid Green line, Large endured a 20-minute battle before landing the catch of a lifetime. He safely pulled in a female lake trout that weighed an estimated 23.5 kg (52 lb.) and measured 114 cm (45 in.) in length, with a 53 cm (21-in.) girth. The adventure became *In-Fisherman TV*'s biggest on-camera lake trout catch-and-release in the network's 42-year history.

Describing the thrill of the moment and feelings of "absolute and unequivocal awe," Large said, "I am honoured that I was able to hold that fish in my hands and then let it go and watch it swim back down."

The episode aired on The Sportsman Channel and Wild TV in January and February, with an estimated reach of 38 million households.

## Canada's Best Fishing and Hunting map promotes Saskatchewan adventures

Tourism Saskatchewan has a new promotional item that has proven to be a conversation starter at outdoor adventure tradeshows.

*Canada's Best Fishing and Hunting* map measures 56 cm (22 in.) x 76 cm (30 in.) but folds neatly into a compact, 16-panel resource that offers quick facts and information about Saskatchewan's world-class fishing and hunting experiences. Impressive photographs highlight the province's pristine wilderness, healthy wild game and bird populations, and monster fish common to Saskatchewan lakes.

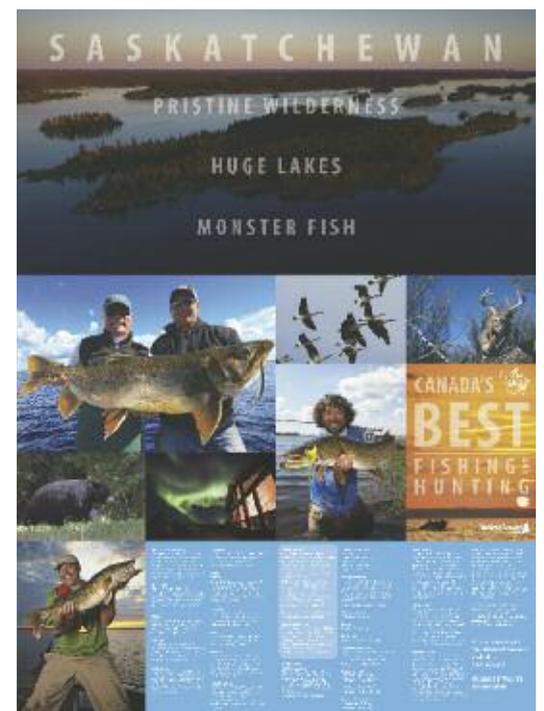
Informational copy includes season dates, species details, requirements for licence purchases, and rules and regulations concerning border crossing and firearms import.

Opposite to the promotional copy and photographs is a map that identifies the

locations of 146 Saskatchewan licensed outfitters. A corresponding index categorizes fishing and hunting outfitters (some appear in both sections) and lists available species.

Feedback from Saskatchewan outfitters influenced the decision to create a promotional piece that is easy to transport to tradeshows, offers quick reference to Saskatchewan's fishing and hunting experiences, and gives interested hunters and anglers a colourful take-away to assist them with their travel planning.

To order your copy of *Canada's Best Fishing and Hunting* map, contact Patti Peesker at 306-787-2420, [patti.peesker@tourismsask.com](mailto:patti.peesker@tourismsask.com). Copies of the 2018 *Official Saskatchewan Road Map* are also available for bulk order.



## Swiss and German tour agencies offer new Saskatchewan packages

Travellers from Germany are a key international market for Saskatchewan. Tourism Saskatchewan values a longstanding partnership with Denk! Zauber Marketing, which manages promotion in Germany, and ensures that Saskatchewan is visible to travel influencers and consumers. The firm delivers a variety of services, which include sales calls and education sessions with tour operators, publishing Saskatchewan stories in a tour operator newsletter, and representing the province at consumer shows in several German cities. Denk! Zauber Marketing also provides quarterly research reports on travel trends and industry forecasts.

German travellers prefer to book their vacations through travel agencies. They use online resources and social channels to research destinations, but trust the expertise of agents in planning and booking. Another interesting fact, one that bodes well for Saskatchewan, is that more and more Europeans are avoiding popular, overcrowded destinations and seeking places off the beaten path.

Tourism Saskatchewan has made valuable travel trade and agency connections through its presence at International Tourism Bourse (ITB), held annually in Berlin, and Rendez-vous Canada, which is Canada's signature international tourism marketplace and hosted by a different province each year.

"These events provide an opportunity for the one-on-one meetings with international travel professionals and tour operators. You have limited time, often just 12 minutes to make the pitch and answer their questions," Heidi Wesling, Tourism Saskatchewan Travel Trade Consultant, said. "Post-marketplace follow-up is often where the connections deepen. Organizing familiarization (FAM) tours for our travel trade contacts and giving them first-hand knowledge of Saskatchewan experiences moves us a step closer to having tours to the province added to their lineup for the season."

Wesling added that decisions take time and that each trade representative comes with a different agenda. Some may already have knowledge of Saskatchewan and are already committed to offering tours to their customers. The FAM may be an opportunity to fine tune some of the details and become acquainted with Saskatchewan tourism operators and businesses.

In the case of a new relationship or initial visit by a trade representative, Wesling stressed the importance of ensuring a positive first impression and having realistic expectations. In the event of a guest who is immediately "sold" on the Saskatchewan experience and promptly offers tours to the province – consider that a big win.

Wesling cited a 2017 FAM, which hosted representatives of Swiss and German agencies. Tourism Saskatchewan's relationship with Meso Reisen (Germany), was fresh and the company's product manager, Patrick Schreiber, was a first-time visitor to the province.

"Warm hospitality, impressive landscapes and great experiences factored in Patrick's decision to add new trips in 2018 that will entice German visitors to Saskatchewan," Wesling said. A two-week itinerary plots an Alberta/Saskatchewan route that explores southwest Saskatchewan and reaches as far north as Waskesiu.

Swiss agency Knecht Reisen also introduced a new Saskatchewan itinerary this year, adding to several other trips that entice international visitors to Saskatchewan.

For information about Tourism Saskatchewan's work with travel trade, contact Heidi Wesling at 306-798-3168, [heidi.wesling@tourismsask.com](mailto:heidi.wesling@tourismsask.com).

## TRAVEL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



### Amy Rosen savours a Saskatchewan food adventure

Acclaimed food writer and editor Amy Rosen enjoyed a taste of southern Saskatchewan during a four-day visit in January, supported by Tourism Saskatchewan's Travel Media Program. Rosen is an award-winning freelance journalist and was food editor of *Chatelaine* and *House & Home* magazines. She opened Rosen's Cinnamon Buns in Toronto in 2016.

Saskatchewan-based travel writer and photographer Jenn Smith Nelson accompanied Rosen, capturing moments with some of the province's innovative chefs and restaurateurs, and dishes that showcase their talents.

The itinerary introduced Rosen to culinary highlights in Regina (Skye Café & Bistro, The Hotel Saskatchewan Autograph Collection, The Capitol Restaurant & Cocktail Bar), Moose Jaw (Mitsu Sweet Café & Sushi), Mortlach (Little Red Market Café), Maple Creek (The Star Café & Grill, Redmond House Catering) and Shaunavon (Harvest Eatery and Fresh Market).

"Turning the idea of a road trip upside down, I decided to take one in the dead of winter, winding my way around southern Saskatchewan to see how these small towns survive the winter blues," Rosen said. "The idea was a culinary road trip, and what I was expecting to find was meat and potatoes diner food. Instead, I found anything but. The meals were vibrant, spicy and international, and the people were as warm as the jerk spicing I enjoyed at The Star Café & Grill in Maple Creek. From the pork belly-stuffed red fife steam buns at Harvest Eatery in Shaunavon to the Eggs Sardou at Little Red Market Café in Mortlach, not only was the food universally great, the chefs were also so enthusiastic, talented and kind. So now, I know how small town Saskatchewan survives the minus-40 weather!"

Rosen's article "Small-town Saskatchewan serves up a surprisingly exotic eating experience" was published on [theglobeandmail.com](http://theglobeandmail.com) on January 31.

# 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 two award winners.

## **Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame, Regina, Business of the Year Award (Under 20 Full-time Employees)**

*Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority*

The Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame, located in Regina, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2016. To mark the occasion, the organization developed several commemorative initiatives to engage the entire province. A travelling exhibit visited 45 communities in 58 days, traversing more than 10,000 km across the province. In 2017, the exhibit went beyond Saskatchewan's borders and appeared at the 2017 Jeux Canada Summer Games in Winnipeg. An original one-woman one-act play, *Diamond Girls*, premiered in 2016 and toured parts of Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario. The play depicts the experiences of Saskatchewan women who played in the All-American Professional Baseball League during the Second World War, and was relaunched in the fall of 2017. An anniversary gala, held on September 30, 2016 in Regina, paid tribute to more than 500 inductees – teams, athletes and builders – who have been honoured over the course of 50 years. Visit [sasksportshalloffame.com](http://sasksportshalloffame.com) to learn more about the organization's role in celebrating sports history and athletic excellence.



**SASKATCHEWAN  
SPORTS  
HALL OF FAME**

## **Park Town Hotel, Saskatoon, Business of the Year Award (Over 20 Full-time Employees)**

*Sponsored by The Western Producer*

The Park Town Hotel is an award-winning, independently owned and operated hotel, located in downtown Saskatoon along the banks of the South Saskatchewan River. The 172-room, seven-storey, full-service hotel boasts three food and beverage outlets, a cold beer and wine store, comedy club and nine rooms of conference and meeting space. The property attributes its long-term success to growth, expansion and a commitment to the customer experience. The Park Town Hotel has demonstrated its ability to stay relevant in an ever-changing market by expanding business and introducing new offerings to customers. It has a solid reputation for employee development and retention, and for empowering staff. More than 170 employees are committed to service excellence and to ensuring the customer experience is a memorable one. Their efforts result in repeat patronage and are a factor in the hotel's revenue increases year after year. To book your stay, visit [parktownhotel.com](http://parktownhotel.com).



## Remembering Bev Robertson

Saskatchewan's tourism industry recently lost a long-standing champion and dear friend. Bev Robertson, co-founder of The Bushwacker Brewpub in Regina, passed away on November 19, 2017. He became known as Saskatchewan's "craft beer pioneer" and paved the way for the more than 20 craft beer producers that currently dot the province.

Equipped with a background in physics and a taste for fine product, Bev began brewing beer in his home in the 1970s. Friends shared his interest and formed the Bushwacker Brewers. Bev co-founded the ALES amateur homebrewing club to help develop an interest in brewing at the grassroots level. The ALES have earned recognition as the top home brewing club in Canada and one of the best in North America.

Upon winning Best of Show for his Palliser Porter at a national competition, Bev had the confidence to take his passion to the commercial level. He worked with government representatives to foster understanding and support of the emerging craft beer movement. In 1991, Bev and his wife, Elaine, opened The Bushwacker Brewpub, which became a hub of activity in Regina's Warehouse District and a destination for locals and tourists. The brewpub consistently ranks as one of the top restaurants in Regina on TripAdvisor and has been recognized nationally and internationally for its in-house brewed beers. Three generations of the Robertson family are involved in the business.

Tourism Saskatchewan extends condolences to Bev's family and friends.



*Bev Robertson*

# In Development

## Convention hosting brings visitors and profile to Saskatchewan

Since Tourism Saskatchewan's Event Hosting Program was unveiled in 2013, more than \$4.5 million has been invested in tourism events, festivals and special projects that drive visitation and travel spending, and showcase Saskatchewan as a welcoming destination.

Enhancements to the program in 2016 opened the door for meetings and conventions to apply for funding. These non-leisure market events bring significant numbers of visitors to Saskatchewan each year. They account for more than \$27 million in annual travel spending that particularly benefits the accommodations, food and beverage, and transportation industries.

Applications submitted by meetings and conventions are evaluated under the National and International Events category. Successful proposals reflect sizeable numbers of delegates from outside of Saskatchewan. They also demonstrate an understanding of the importance of delivering positive visitor experiences and encouraging guests to explore the community and enjoy local attractions and hospitality.

Tourism Saskatchewan is proud to support the following:



### 87th Annual Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences Regina, May 26-June 1, 2018

The Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences is the largest multi-disciplinary academic gathering in Canada, and involves 70 scholarly associations that represent 160 universities and colleges. Anticipated attendance is 8,000 delegates, making this assembly the largest conference in Regina's history. Throughout planning for Congress 2018, the University of Regina and its partners have built interest and anticipation by emphasizing the qualities of the campus and city, and highlighting Saskatchewan as a premier destination.

### 32nd Annual Pulse & Special Crops Convention Regina, July 10-12, 2018

Organized by the Canadian Special Crops Association, the 2018 Pulse & Special Crops Convention will bring an estimated 500 delegates to Regina. They include international and Canadian pulse traders and buyers, and Canadian pulse producers. Guests will enjoy exploring Regina attractions, sampling the local food and drink scene, and seeing the surrounding countryside during a special farm tour.

### 14th International Conference on X-ray Microscopy Saskatoon, August 19-24, 2018

The International Conference on X-ray Microscopy (XRM) is the world forum for experts in the development and use of X-ray microscopes. An estimated 350 international scientists will attend XRM2018, held for the first time in Canada. Conference hosts, the University of Saskatchewan and the Canadian Light Source, are leaders in the development of Canadian X-ray microscopy technology, research and teaching programs. The assembly will shine a global spotlight on Saskatchewan and help the province build its international leadership in this field.

## Event Hosting Program measures economic impacts of 22 Saskatchewan events

Tourism Saskatchewan conducts a yearly evaluation of its Event Hosting Program to determine the return-on-investment (ROI) and ensure effective use of public funds. Applicants who receive support through the program are required to submit a final report. Details are analyzed to determine the event's impact on the local economy and gauge other factors that contribute to tourism growth and quality of life for Saskatchewan citizens.

Economic impact models were applied to 22 supported events in 2017. These events accounted for 155 jobs and had a gross output impact of \$13.12 million. Tourism Saskatchewan's investment of \$331,550 in funding saw a 40:1 ROI.

## Mark your calendar – September 30 deadline for Event Hosting Program fall intake

Tourism Saskatchewan reminds communities or organizations hosting tourism events that the next intake for funding applications is September 30. Submissions are welcome under four funding streams: Community Annual Tourism Events, Marquee Annual Tourism, National and International Tourism Events, and Special Tourism Projects.

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). Download the Event Hosting Program guidelines, available on [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com).



## TEAM Tourism talks product development



Jennifer Houillebecq

In December 2017, Tourism Saskatchewan announced a ten-month project led by TEAM Tourism Consulting that would yield a comprehensive tourism product development strategy for Saskatchewan's tourism industry.

TEAM Tourism Consulting is a global company that specializes in destination development, management and marketing. Its Canadian branch, the Tourism Planning Group, led strategic planning processes for Tourism Saskatchewan in 2013 and 2016. Jennifer Houillebecq, project manager for both processes and for the current tourism

product development strategy, has a deep understanding of Saskatchewan's tourism industry and a solid record for setting destinations on a course toward excellence, success and growth.

In an interview with Tourism Saskatchewan, Houillebecq shared background on TEAM Tourism and examples of product development best practices, and spoke to the project underway with Tourism Saskatchewan.

### **What are some examples of TEAM Tourism projects that are impressive models of product or experience development?**

TEAM Tourism is working on an ongoing basis with Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority, to develop visitor experience plans that will bring Ireland's branding of its west coast, the *Wild Atlantic Way*, to life. Creating unique experiences that align to the brand while encouraging visitors to linger on each stretch of the 2,500 km coastline brings added value to the visitor and the local communities alike.

Similarly, a destination development strategy for a region within Northern Ireland identified a clear thematic structure for the development of new experiences – a framework that creates a sense of identity for the entire destination and will enable businesses to bring stories of “giants, druids and saints” to life alongside other key themes. The strategy stimulates businesses and communities to work together in developing new ways of experiencing the local attractions, the heritage, the landscape and its scenic beauty, and contemporary culture. This experiential lens is also at the centre of current work that TEAM Tourism is undertaking to assess the attractiveness of England's World Heritage Sites as themed bookable products for the international market.

### **What current trends and best practices in product development are important to consider?**

Tourism continues to grow at a remarkable pace globally, with a seven per cent increase in international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) worldwide reported for 2017. In this climate of growth, destinations have become very focused on building market appeal, not simply through branding and innovative marketing, but equally through product and visitor experience development. Whether it is building the world's longest zipline in the United Arab Emirates or creating new eclectic cultural offerings in England's northern cities, the emphasis is increasingly on building new offerings that will stand out in the marketplace. These efforts coincide with the traveller's demand for compelling experiences that provide enrichment, adventure and the chance to connect with the local culture, while creating life-long memories.

### **What is important to know and understand about the tourism product development strategy for Saskatchewan?**

The project will guide Tourism Saskatchewan and industry, as a whole, in product development. To create a competitive edge, all stakeholders and organizations involved in the delivery of tourism need to be working in tandem toward common objectives. It involves looking at the entire experience – the travel to and within the destination, the nature and quality of experiences, and the local sense of place and welcome.

Developing the strategy will involve a holistic and integrated approach, which looks at the entire range of factors that affect the supply side of tourism – community infrastructure, planning policy, transportation, human resources, industry development and the nature of visitor experiences. It will identify opportunities and will seek to align or match these opportunities with the preferences and expectations of its key overnight travel markets – existing and potential.

Consulting with operators and stakeholders to gain a comprehensive understanding of current issues, strengths and potential opportunities is critical to the success of the project. TEAM Tourism will use a variety of techniques to fully engage industry and gain the required insights. These range from a destination and industry audit to interviews with tourism associations and community stakeholders to cross-ministry consultations, along with other tactics.

For more information about the project, contact Kwame Neba at 306-933-5918, [kwame.neba@tourismsask.com](mailto:kwame.neba@tourismsask.com).

## Sign up for stakeholder consultations in April

Tourism operators, businesses and stakeholders have the opportunity to participate in the tourism product development strategy project. TEAM Tourism will be conducting industry consultation and workshop sessions in April. These four-hour interactive workshops will facilitate candid discussion to determine a clear and current picture of industry today, including constraints on growth and opportunities to expand the tourism economy. These discussions will assist in shaping strategy recommendations and direction.

Workshops are scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (lunch included) in four locations:

Regina, RCMP Heritage Centre	April 3
Swift Current, Living Skies Casino	April 4
Saskatoon, Wanuskewin Heritage Park	April 5
Nipawin, Evergreen Convention Centre	April 6

Operators, businesses, community stakeholders or organizations with an interest in tourism are encouraged to register by contacting Tourism Saskatchewan's Product Development department. Those who cannot attend but wish to provide input may participate in an industry survey that will be circulated in the spring. To register for the workshops or sign-up for the survey, contact Pratyush Das at 306-933-7538, [pratyush.das@tourismsask.com](mailto:pratyush.das@tourismsask.com)

# STEC News

## Introducing the tourism Employers of Choice for 2018



Tourism Saskatchewan is proud to be among the 20 Saskatchewan businesses named Employers of Choice for 2018. These businesses represent the leadership and commitment to workplace excellence in eight Saskatchewan communities.

The Employer of Choice program is managed by the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC). Registrations are accepted from May 1 until November 30 each year. Management and employees are involved in earning the designation, which includes a comprehensive human resources audit.

"For businesses apprehensive about an audit, it is important to explain the ease and benefits of the process," Darcy Acton, STEC Workforce Development Consultant, noting that having an official HR department is not mandatory. "A business simply has to show that it has solid and effective HR practices. The audit process peels back layers and reveals HR strengths and areas for improvement. It positions you to recruit and retain top talent and gain recognition for valuing your employees."

A network has evolved among Saskatchewan's tourism Employers of Choice, some of whom have earned the designation yearly since the program launched in 2010. "The group assembled three times in 2017 to share success stories and best practices," Acton said. "This networking is an additional benefit of the program, over and above the affirmation of being a leader in tourism and a great place to work."

Congratulations to the Employers of Choice for 2018:

- Airline Hotels and Resorts
  - Country Inn & Suites Regina
  - Hilton Garden Inn Saskatoon Downtown
  - Travelodge Hotel Saskatoon

- CAA Saskatchewan
  - d3h Hotels Inc. (Dimension 3 Hospitality)
    - Days Inn Regina Airport West
    - Days Inn Regina Eastgate\*
    - Home Inn & Suites Swift Current
    - Home Inn & Suites Regina Airport
    - HomeSuites Regina
    - Home Inn & Suites Yorkton
  - Delta Hotels by Marriott Bessborough, Saskatoon
  - DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel & Conference Centre Regina
  - Gold Eagle Lodge, North Battleford
  - MasterBuilt Hotels
    - Microtel Inn & Suites Estevan
    - Microtel Inn & Suites Lloydminster
    - Microtel Inn & Suites Weyburn
  - Radisson Hotel Saskatoon\*
  - Saskatoon Prairieland Park Corporation\*
  - Sheraton Cavalier Saskatoon Hotel
  - Tourism Saskatchewan
- \*Employer of Choice since 2010*

Employers of Choice will receive formal recognition at the Tourism Professional Recognition Dinner on June 13 in Regina.

## Nominate a colleague for the Tourism Ambassador Award

Tourism Saskatchewan will be presenting the Tourism Ambassador Award at the 25th annual Tourism Professional Recognition Dinner on June 13 in Regina. The award will honour an outstanding professional who has made exceptional contributions to tourism and hospitality in Saskatchewan. It recognizes commitment to professional development in the workplace and in the industry.

Tourism Ambassadors can be powerful mentors to new employees, make their community a household name or spend their lifetime dedicated to tourism.

Consider nominating colleagues who have demonstrated exemplary work in the Accommodation, Food and Beverage Services, Recreation and Entertainment, Transportation and Travel Services industries, or deserve recognition as Educator of the Year.

May 18 is the deadline to submit nominations online at [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com).

For information about the awards or nomination process, contact Lendee Wiebe at 306-933-5910 or 1-800-331-1529, [lendee.wiebe@tourismsask.com](mailto:lendee.wiebe@tourismsask.com).

## Service First introductory customer service training delivered in four-hour workshop



Tourism Saskatchewan is pleased to launch a new introductory customer service workshop for individuals new to the tourism workforce or volunteering with a tourism event. Service First is a four-hour workshop developed by the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC). The workshop teaches basic skills and the attitude required by individuals who are in frontline tourism positions.

STEC enlisted an industry validation committee (IVC) to provide advice during the program planning and design phase. "The IVC was a mix of tourism operators, managers and customer service personnel," Kari Burgess, STEC Account Representative, said. "By taking a 'by industry for industry' approach in developing the training, we could ensure a program that would be relevant and beneficial to tourism operators and their employees and volunteers."

Service First workshops equip participants with the following:

- Understanding of the value of tourism and the power of first impressions
- Skills for adopting a positive, professional attitude inside and outside of the workplace
- Knowledge of how to focus on customer needs and provide a memorable experience

Businesses may also consider having their own professionals trained to deliver Service First in-house to employees. STEC's Facilitator Skills Development program engages participants in three days of interactive learning that builds a solid foundation of knowledge and skills to deliver training to adults.

For more information or to book a Service First workshop, call 306-933-5900 or email [stec.training@tourismsask.com](mailto:stec.training@tourismsask.com).

## Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference explores customer experience theme

The 3rd annual Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference takes place on June 13 in Regina at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel & Conference Centre. The theme *Customer Experience: Take the Lead* sets the tone for the day-long forum that offers practical, progressive human resource strategies to strengthen business and enhance the province's tourism sector.

A full schedule of speakers and presentations will provide delegates with valuable knowledge, inspiration and strategies to deliver on the promise of great customer experiences. In an age of social media and viral videos, the way tourism businesses respond to customer complaints and online reviews matters more than ever.

Andrew Hiltz, 2017 Saskatchewaner and Tourism Saskatchewan's new Content Creation Specialist, is the keynote speaker.

Hiltz was raised in Coronach, where the spirit and environment would shape his character and fuel his passion for exploration and adventure. He brought a sense of humour and down-to-earth charm to the role of Saskatchewaner, and made instant connections with people and communities across the province.

A natural storyteller, Hiltz pushed boundaries, embraced new challenges and candidly shared his experiences with more than 70,000 followers across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

In his morning keynote presentation, Hiltz will treat delegates to some of the highlights from his year as the ultimate tourism customer and some of the special touches that contributed to meaningful, unforgettable moments.

The afternoon will feature two concurrent sessions, including an abbreviated version of the Selling is Service workshop. Selling is Service demonstrates how the Service Best six-step sales model can produce a winning combination that benefits a business and its customers.

Marielle Gauthier, owner/principal of Redworks Communications, will deliver a session titled *Having the Right Conversations in High Trust Organizations*. Trained in the science of Conversational Intelligence®, Gauthier will address the basics on improving conversations in the workplace. Delegates will learn how to communicate more effectively, engage in high-quality, productive dialogue and gain the trust of staff, co-workers and customers.

The Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference is intended for mid-level managers, frontline employees, *emerit*-certified employees or those currently enrolled in certification, and secondary and postsecondary educators.

The 25th annual Tourism Professional Recognition Dinner will be held in conjunction with the conference. The dinner honours new



Andrew Hiltz

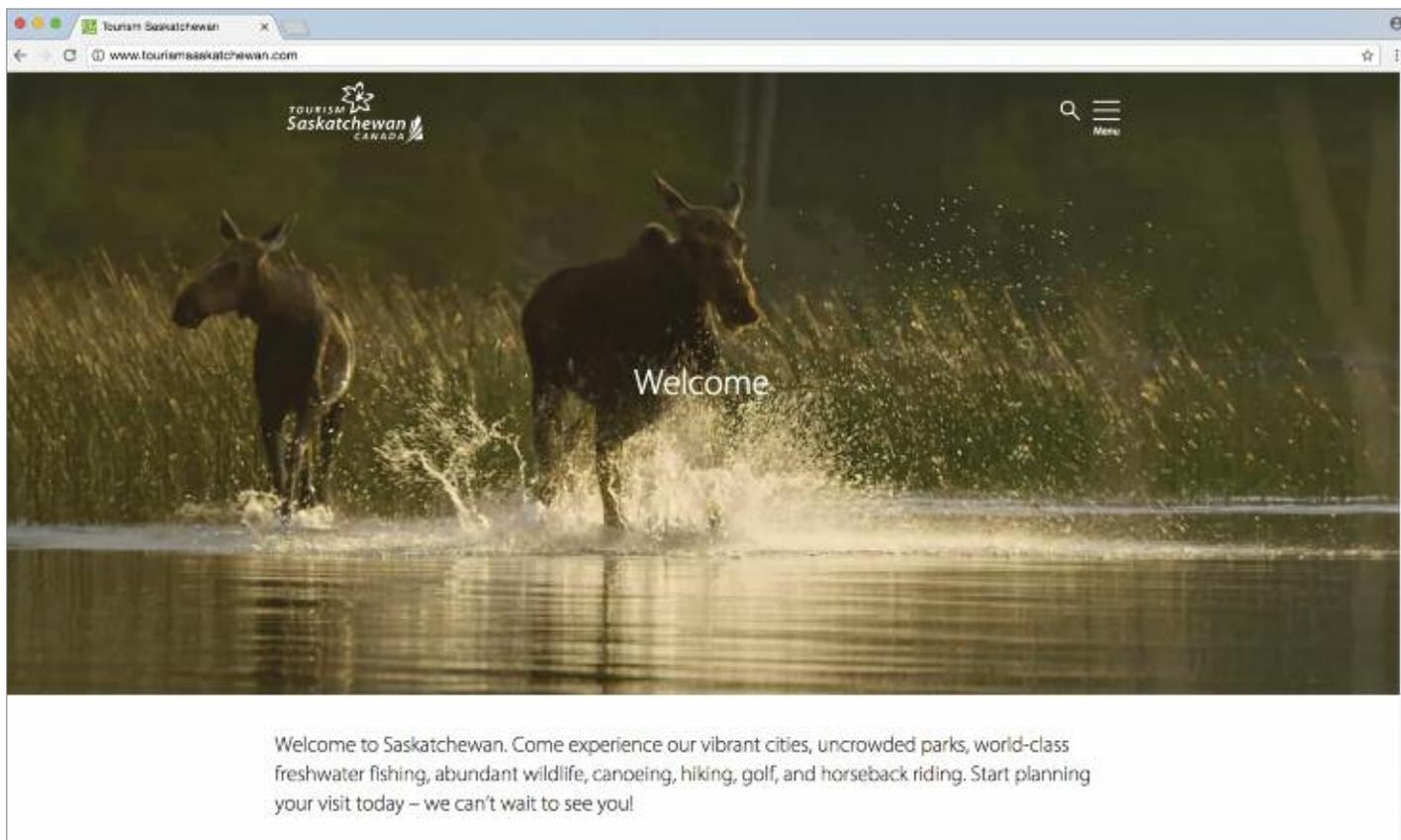
nationally certified tourism professionals and journeypersons, Tourism Ambassador Award recipients and Employers of Choice.

To register for the Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference, contact Nancy Hubenig at 306-787-9844, [nancy.hubenig@tourismsask.com](mailto:nancy.hubenig@tourismsask.com). The cost is \$125 (plus GST) and includes one ticket to the Tourism Professional Recognition Dinner.

Expanded sponsorship opportunities are available. For information, contact Darcy Acton, 306-933-7466, [darcy.acton@tourismsask.com](mailto:darcy.acton@tourismsask.com).

# Tourism Trends

## Website makeover streamlines the search for travel information



Tourism Saskatchewan's consumer website, [TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com), is a trusted and influential resource for travel planning. The site receives more than 1.5 million visits annually and directly links viewers to Saskatchewan tourism businesses, attractions and events.

To keep pace with rapid technological advancements and evolving consumer trends, destination marketing organizations (DMOs) must look inward and re-evaluate their tools that engage and entice travellers. A DMO's website, even if performing well, demands continuous monitoring, assessment and investment to provide optimum benefits to both consumers and tourism businesses.

Phase 1 of a broad makeover of [TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com) will be unveiled in the spring, after months of planning, construction and content creation. Recommendations from the comprehensive Content Strategy project and several research initiatives undertaken in 2017 guided the work. A principal focus was to ensure that the refreshed website and all of Tourism Saskatchewan's online content and services are relevant and appealing. At the same time, these tools must be simple to use and provide consumers with fast and easy access to information that will inspire them to plan a Saskatchewan vacation.

The website project aligns with Tourism Saskatchewan's *Strategic Plan 2017-2020*, which emphasizes action to build on Saskatchewan's strong tourism brand through consistent and compelling marketing and communications initiatives.

In a series of consumer web-testing sessions, held in Saskatoon in November, Tourism Saskatchewan monitored customer use and search patterns while participants navigated the website prior to its upgrade. The sessions uncovered valuable information and influenced work to ensure functions, content and navigation options are on track with consumer needs.

The original website, unveiled in 2015, was viewed favourably for several features. Overall appearance rated highly. The updated [TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com) builds on this strength and continues to employ striking photography and a clean, concise look.

Its menu moves visitors intuitively along a route to more details, additional stories, images and videos that highlight Saskatchewan's tourism assets.

Brand consistency was another positive attribute. Saskatchewan's tourism brand pillars – land and sky, time and space, and community – resonate with viewers. Furthermore, Tourism Saskatchewan's online channels are considered trustworthy sources of travel information.

The website ranked near the top of Google searches related to travel, destinations and attractions in the province. The renewed [TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com) builds on this solid record for landing preliminary searches, and employs strategies and features to keep visitors engaged and encourage them to dive deeper into the site.

Consumers want actionable content and expect to be able to book travel and make purchases online. Pushing them closer to the point of sale will benefit operators and the industry on many levels, and provide greater customer convenience and satisfaction.

Improved features include an interactive map, updated listings categories, descriptions and design, and better search navigation. A faster, more efficient onsite search engine will provide users with greater service.

Still ahead, a new Travel Offers section will provide industry with opportunities to promote unique, authentic product offers that will tempt customers. To inquire about listing a Travel Offer on the website, contact Belva Schlosser at 306-787-5488, [belva.schlosser@tourismsask.com](mailto:belva.schlosser@tourismsask.com).

## Tourism operators offered free listings on TourismSaskatchewan.com

Saskatchewan tourism operators, including businesses, attractions, accommodations, campgrounds, communities, etc., are encouraged to take advantage of FREE listings on [TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://TourismSaskatchewan.com).

Extensive customer research of key Saskatchewan tourism markets revealed that an overwhelming majority of travellers use online sources to find information and plan their vacations. Web, mobile and social media are now the most used and preferred information and search methods.

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 upcoming festivals, community celebrations and tourism events. 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.kosenkranz@tourismsask.com](mailto:kathy.kosenkranz@tourismsask.com)

## TOP FIVE TIPS FOR CREATING ENTICING TOURISM BROCHURES

Research commissioned by Tourism Saskatchewan in 2017 determined that brochures produced by tourism operators, destination areas or local tourism organizations are a resource that travellers use for day-to-day activity planning when they have reached their destination. If visible and easily accessible, the materials can be effective in promoting the area and its tourism assets. Here are some tips for creating brochures that stand out, give travellers the information they are seeking and lead them to enjoyable new discoveries.

### 1. PROMOTE LOCAL

Travellers want to know what they can see and do while visiting your community. They are curious about authentic experiences, and eager to discover local tastes and products. Concise guides produced by tourism organizations or destination areas are valuable for their content about attractions and events within the area. The content inspires visitors to try something new and may encourage them to stay longer.

### 2. BE SPECIFIC

Provide detailed, up-to-date information about your business, attraction or event. Travellers want to know about local activities underway during their visit. They want their questions answered up front. Make your brochures concise and accurate. Include dates, hours of operation, location, directions, address, website and contact information. If visitors request additional details, ensure a prompt reply to any phone calls or emails.

### 3. STAND OUT IN FRONT OF VISITORS

Placement is everything. See that your brochures are visible and adequately stocked in local restaurants, hotels, bed and breakfasts, gas stations, attractions and other businesses visited by tourists. People will pick up the material if it stands out directly in front of them. If hidden, your business or attraction may be overlooked. Remove outdated information or brochures that feature past events. Keep the material fresh.

### 4. FEATURE IMPRESSIVE PHOTOGRAPHS

Compelling images are part of effective storytelling. Tourism businesses, attractions and events benefit from investing in impressive, inviting photography for use online and in print. Show off your best photos of special places, dynamic settings and experiences that will spark curiosity and invite visitors to seek more information.

### 5. CREATE A MAP

Travellers still use and appreciate maps; the more specific the better. Consider creating a tourism map for your area that identifies local attractions, points of interest, parks, golf courses, trails and other features. Community and area maps are great resources for showcasing tourism assets and offering incentives to check out unique experiences. They are valuable tools that help visitors plan their travel route and activities.

# Around the Province

## Kevin Dunn hits the road as 2018 Saskatchewananderer



Kevin Dunn

The Government of Saskatchewan introduced Kevin Dunn as 2018 Saskatchewananderer on January 12. Dunn faced stiff competition from 34 other applicants, but came out on top for his energy, creativity and innovative use of technology to capture and share Saskatchewan stories.

“I love creating inspiring work through videos and photos,” Dunn said. “My goal is to motivate and excite others to try something new, explore their own backyard and witness a side of Saskatchewan they have not seen before.”

Dunn has a degree in Human Geography and has been working for the City of Saskatoon for the past five years. As a volunteer photographer and videographer in his community, he gained valuable experience that will serve him well as he focuses his lens on promoting Saskatchewan as the best place to live, work and play.

As Saskatchewananderer, he will travel the province, connect with Saskatchewan citizens and communities, and share his adventures across social media channels.

The Saskatchewananderer is a government partnership involving Tourism Saskatchewan, and the ministries of Agriculture, Parks, Culture and Sport, and Trade and Export Development.

CAA Saskatchewan has been the official program sponsor since the program launched in 2011. Its commitment ensures that Dunn will travel in comfort and provides him with a Toyota RAV4, CAA membership and gas vouchers.

DirectWest has signed on for the second year as official search partner.

Dunn welcomes story ideas to help him plan his year of discovery and adventure. Suggestions can be submitted via Facebook ([facebook.com/skwanderer](https://www.facebook.com/skwanderer)), Twitter ([@SkWanderer](https://twitter.com/SkWanderer)) or Instagram ([@saskatchewananderer](https://www.instagram.com/saskatchewananderer)). Keep up with his latest blogs on YouTube ([youtube.com/user/skwandererofficial](https://www.youtube.com/user/skwandererofficial)) or [saskatchewananderer.ca](http://saskatchewananderer.ca).

## Cure Your Winter Blues

Submitted by Saskatchewananderer Kevin Dunn



Saskatchewananderer Kevin Dunn, near Aberdeen



Wapiti Valley Ski & Board Resort



Nutrien Wintershines Festival, Saskatoon

Rolling out of bed on a -40 C morning can challenge even the most seasoned of Saskatchewanians. As our province’s official travel blogger for 2018, I am on a mission to prove that Saskatchewan is actually the epicentre of winter fun.

Looking for a surefire way to cure your winter blues? Grab a pair of long johns and hurry to the Crockicurl rink nearest you (hint: they are located in Saskatoon, Regina and Moose Jaw). This unique game is played on an octagonal ice surface and combines traditional aspects of curling and crokinole. Take it from a newly-seasoned Crockicurl player – the activity is a must do this winter season.

I also had the pleasure of celebrating everything great about winter while attending the Nutrien Wintershines Festival in Saskatoon. Saskatchewanians from far and wide traded their beach towels for a week of sleigh rides, ice carving, soup cook-offs and snow-park fun at the Saskatoon Farmers’ Market.

If you haven’t done so already, I highly recommend clearing a day in your calendar for a road trip to Wapiti Valley Ski & Board Resort. It was well worth the extra clothing layers to enjoy fresh snow and scenic views of the North Saskatchewan River from on top of Wapiti Hill. With multiple runs and friendly staff to help you gear up, your visit to Wapiti Valley will not disappoint.

In the coming weeks, I will be taking the over 75,000 “followanderers” along with me for a journey as I go ice fishing, play in a pond hockey tournament at Elk Ridge Resort, hit the snowmobile trails near Kelvington and warm up at the Ness Creek Fire & Ice Festival in Big River. I can’t wait!

There are so many things to do in Saskatchewan this winter, so layer up, get out and explore.

# Here & There

## Wanuskewin Heritage Park added to Canada's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites

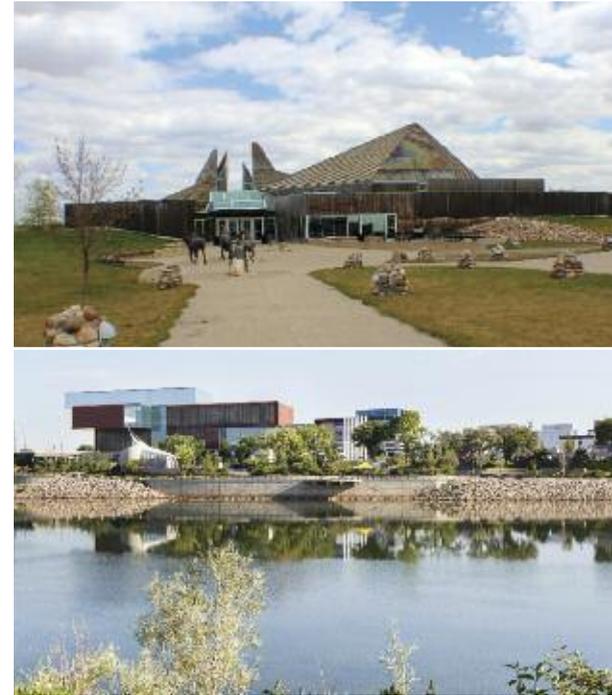
Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon, has advanced to the next stage in its quest for UNESCO World Heritage status, the world's highest recognition for protected heritage areas. In December, the Government of Canada announced Canada's Tentative List for UNESCO World Heritage sites. Wanuskewin Heritage Park was named among eight additions to the proposed list, last updated in 2004, and is Saskatchewan's first site to reach this milestone. Two years ago, Wanuskewin Heritage Park announced its intent to apply for UNESCO designation through the Parks Canada Tentative List. In February 2017, a visionary renewal and capital campaign, Thundering Ahead, was launched. The renewal plan includes expansion of the park, grassland restoration and the reintroduction of a bison herd to the property. Expansion of the Interpretive Centre will be undertaken in 2018.

## Saskatoon named a top place to visit

Saskatoon has reason to boast. In January, the city made the *New York Times* list of *52 Places to Go in 2018*, holding the 18th spot. Vacay.ca also voted Saskatoon as one of the *20 Best Places to Visit in Canada in 2018*. Most recently, the *Huffington Post* heaped praise on the city in a February 9 blog post titled *Here's Why You Should Put Saskatoon on Your 2018 Travel List*. Congratulations, Saskatoon.

## James Bogusz heads up Regina Airport Authority

The Regina Airport Authority welcomed James Bogusz to his role as President and CEO on February 1. Bogusz has more than 16 years of experience working with airports. He spent a decade with the Victoria Airport Authority, where he served as Vice President, Operations and Development before accepting the position with the Regina Airport Authority. In addition to his background in business and airport operations, he brings experience in technology and public relations to his new role.



Top: Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon  
Bottom: Remai Modern, Saskatoon, photo by Adrien Williams

## Canada-China Year of Tourism celebrated in 2018

In September 2017, the governments of Canada and China announced that 2018 would be the Canada-China Year of Tourism – a tribute to the deep friendship and ties between the two nations.

More than 1.7 million Canadians have Chinese ancestry, and Mandarin and Cantonese are the most commonly spoken languages after English and French.

China is Canada's third-largest tourism source market, following the United States and the United Kingdom. More than 610,000 Chinese

tourists visited Canada in 2016, with an 11 per cent increase predicted for 2017.

Check out the Government of Canada's Canada-China Year of Tourism 2018 website for information. Tourism operators are encouraged to click on the section titled *Is Your Business Ready?*, which lists tips for attracting Chinese tourists. Advice is offered on a number of topics, ranging from alternate payment options to considering an online presence on Chinese social media platforms such as Weibo, WeChat and Baidu.



Destination Canada shares information about the Chinese travel market on [destinationcanada.com/en/markets/china](http://destinationcanada.com/en/markets/china).

## Save the date for Saskatchewan Tourism Week – May 27-June 2, 2018

Saskatchewan Tourism Week will be celebrated province-wide from May 27 to June 2, coinciding with Tourism Week in Canada. It is a time for tourism businesses, operators, attractions and destinations across the country to stand united and promote awareness about a dynamic industry that contributes significantly to the Canadian economy.

The Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) stresses the significance of the industry on Canada's economic and employment growth. "With \$91.6 billion in total economic activity and 1.7 million jobs related to the sector, tourism is one of the few truly national industries that generates business in every region, province, territory, town and community," TIAC stated.

Travel expenditures in Saskatchewan reached \$2.19 billion in 2016, and there were approximately 12.4 million visits to and within the province that year. As of August 2017, more than 67,000 Saskatchewan citizens were employed in tourism-related jobs.

Communities throughout Saskatchewan will celebrate Saskatchewan Tourism Week with events and festivities that encourage residents to discover some of the tourism resources in their own backyard and explore unique destinations and sites elsewhere in the province.

Watch for details about Saskatchewan Tourism Week on [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com).

# Mark Your Calendar

## PUBLIC EVENTS

**Saskatoon Farmers' Market**  
Year-round .....Saskatoon

**RCMP Sergeant Major's Parade**  
January 3-December 2, 2018 .....Regina

**Government House Historical Society Victorian Teas**  
March 3-December 2, 2018 .....Regina

**Regina Farmers' Market**  
March 3-December 15, 2018 .....Regina

**TheatreFest 2018**  
April 1-8, 2018 .....Weyburn

**First Nations University of Canada Annual Spring Celebration Powwow**  
April 21-22, 2018 .....Regina

**Saskatchewan Country Music Association Awards Weekend & Country Music Festival**  
April 27-29, 2018 .....Prince Albert

**Kalya Festival of Ukrainian Dance**  
May 3-6, 2018 .....Yorkton

**Savour the Southeast**  
May 5, 2018 .....Estevan

**Saskatchewan Fashion Week**  
May 10-12, 2018 .....Regina

**Vesna Festival 2018**  
May 12, 2018 .....Saskatoon

**Moose Jaw Band & Choral Festival**  
May 14-17, 2018 .....Moose Jaw

**MasterCard Memorial Cup**  
May 17-27, 2018 .....Regina

**Rafferty Reservoir Walleye Cup**  
May 19, 2018 .....Mainprize Regional Park

**Saskatchewan Highland Gathering and Celtic Festival**  
May 19-20, 2018 .....Regina

**Cathedral Village Arts Festival**  
May 21-26, 2018 .....Regina

**Yorkton Film Festival**  
May 24-27, 2018 .....Yorkton

**Saskatoon Cache and Release**  
May 25-26, 2018 .....Saskatoon

**Mosaic: A Festival of Cultures**  
May 31-June 2, 2018 .....Regina

**Regina Beach Lions Walleye Classic**  
June 2-3, 2018 .....Last Mountain Lake

**Nutrien Children's Festival of Saskatchewan**  
June 2-5, 2018 .....Saskatoon

**Humboldt Summer Sizzler**  
June 13-16, 2018 .....Humboldt

**JazzFest Regina**  
June 13-17, 2018 .....Regina

**Great Saskatchewan Bacon Festival**  
June 16, 2018 .....Kipling

**Riverhurst Walleye Classic**  
June 16-17, 2018 .....Riverhurst

**Nipawin Great Northern Pike Festival**  
June 18-September 30, 2018 .....Tobin and Codette Lakes

**Canada's Farm Progress Show**  
June 20-22, 2018 .....Regina

**National Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations**  
June 21, 2018 .....various locations

**Long Day's Night Music Festival**  
June 21-24, 2018 .....Swift Current

**Country at the Creek**  
June 21-23, 2018 .....Big River

**Southern Saskatchewan Summer Solstice d'été Festival**  
June 22-23, 2018 .....Gravelbourg

**Moose Jaw Hometown Fair**  
June 22-24, 2018 .....Moose Jaw

**SaskTel Saskatchewan Jazz Festival**  
June 22-July 1, 2018 .....Saskatoon

**SaskPower Windscape Kite Festival**  
June 23-24, 2018 .....Swift Current

**Whitewater Festival 2018**  
June 29-July 1, 2018 .....Missinipe

**The Petroglyphs, Lifeways and Land Festival**  
June 2018 .....St. Victor Petroglyphs Provincial Historic Park

## INDUSTRY EVENTS

**HOST Saskatchewan Conference**  
April 12, 2018 .....Delta Hotels by Marriott Regina

**Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala**  
April 12, 2018 .....Delta Hotels by Marriott Regina

**49° x 110° Spring Conference**  
April 26-27, 2018 .....Swift Current

**Saskatchewan Tourism Week**  
May 27-June 2, 2018 .....Province-wide

**Saskatchewan Hotel & Hospitality Association Convention & Trade Show**  
May 29-30, 2018 .....Saskatoon

**Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference**  
June 13, 2018 .....DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel & Conference Centre, Regina

**Tourism Professional Recognition Dinner**  
June 13, 2018 .....DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel & Conference Centre, Regina

## TRADESHOWS/MARKETPLACES/FAMS

**AdventureELEVATE**  
March 13-15, 2018 .....Banff, AB

**Northwest Sportshow**  
March 21-26, 2018 .....Minneapolis, MN

**Canada Media Marketplace**  
April 9-11, 2018 .....San Francisco, CA

**Rendez-vous Canada**  
May 13-16, 2018 .....Halifax, NS

**Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC) Conference and AGM**  
May 29-June 2, 2018 .....Victoria, BC

**Professional Outdoor Media Association Annual Business Conference**  
June 12-15, 2018 .....Lincoln, NE

*Information subject to change.*

Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:

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