

# The Reno Reader

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## A BIT OF HISTORY

Let me take you back in time. Picture yourself in what is now Saskatchewan, in the late 1800's before the settlers arrived. All that's here are the natives, a few ranches, a few North West Mounted Police forts, and a few settlements starting to spring up here and there. The Canadian government, sitting in Ottawa, has a vision of expanding settlement in the west, and they want to promote it soon. It's time to prepare. People will want to stake their claims, but they can't be allowed to just mark a plot of any size and call it their own. The land needs surveyed.

Lt. Col. J.S. Dennis was sent out west to develop a plan for surveying what was then the North West Territories. He devised a scheme that closely imitated what the United States was using, a system of rectangular plots, mapped out north of the 49th parallel. These plots or townships would be of equal size and be numbered in a consistent manner. Land would also be set aside for road allowances. Dennis proposed townships be 800 acres each and be subdivided into four lots of 200 acres each, but that was later changed to the 160-acre lots and 640-acre sections like the Americans were using. The thinking was that more sections meant the potential for more settlers!

Early in July of 1871, 13 survey parties began work in Manitoba. Of course the early surveyors did everything they could to survey the land as accurately as possible, but the land, and the equipment of the time, didn't always cooperate. When the Dominion land survey began, the main unit of measurement for surveyors was a Gunter's chain: a length of chain 100 links long. Each link of the chain was about 2/3 of a foot, so the chain itself was 66 feet long. Ten chains gave you a furlong and 80 chains a mile. An area of one chain by one furlong—that is, 10 square chains—equalled one acre. Over time the links of the chain would wear and the chain itself would stretch. To periodically check the accuracy of the chain, surveyors were provided with a wooden yard stick. They'd measure out 22 yards, then compare the length of their chain to that measurement. If their particular chain was a little bit too long or a little bit too short, they'd include that variation in their measurements. Heat causes metal to expand and cold causes it to contract, which meant chains could vary slightly in length due to temperature. And, of course, it's a lot easier to measure a distance accurately on flat ground than on uneven ground.

Imagine! Going across the prairies with chains as your most technical equipment! Plus surveyors were attempting to do their work in country without roads or towns, transporting their equipment on horseback or in Red River carts. They struggled with blizzards and snowdrifts, intense heat, weeks of rain, clouds of mosquitoes, mud and marshes. Many were away from family and friends for months or even years; any opportunity to travel home was a major and joyful event.

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**COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Last chance to order **Mom's Pantry** - orders need to be in **January 20**. Please contact one of the grads for order forms!

The Reno Rodeo & Ag Society invites everyone to an **Appreciation & Social Evening** in Consul Hall on **Friday, January 20** at 7:30. We encourage the whole community to share in updates, pictures, the 2011 rodeo video, socializing, and a thank you for the encouragement and support. A card game or two & maybe some music may even break out! Sponsors, volunteers, participants, fans who attend the rodeo—everyone is invited!!  
 Make note—5th Annual Reno Rodeo dates are August 4 & 5, 2012!

**Consul Curling Club's Men's Bonspiel** is **January 20-21**. Entry fee is \$120. Entry deadline is January 16. Enter teams with Dale or Doreen 299-5712.

Join the Eastend Library and Artisans Guild of Eastend and Surrounding Areas (A.G.E.S) in a **Fundraiser for the Eastend Library** on **January 20<sup>th</sup>** at 7pm in the Eastend Memorial Tea Room. \$20 per adult (18 and over), children free. A.G.E.S will be providing a fun and informative evening featuring the works of Emily Carr - Canadian Icon, Artist and Author. Movie - 'Winds of Heaven', prints of Emily Carr's work in the library. Wine and cheese, popcorn and refreshments, bag draw, call to artists for show in February 2012. Tickets available through Alice Hanlin 295-3775 or Trea Jensen 295-4099. Cheques can be made out to Chinook Regional Library.

**Jennifer Phair and Akeso Massage Therapy** will be in Consul on **Tuesday, January 24** and **Wednesday, January 25**. Please call 778-2059 or 741-8026, email [j.phair@sasktel.net](mailto:j.phair@sasktel.net) or fb to book an appointment. Appointments are available Tuesday (Jan. 24) 11:00 a.m. to 7:45 p.m. and Wednesday (Jan. 25) 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. I will be located at Manley's Bakery once again.

**Consul Ladies' Bonspiel—February 1 to 4**. Entry deadline is January 27. \$100 entry fee per rink. Phone Peggy 299-4477 or Debra 299-4911 to enter.

**Tables for Two**—the best way to celebrate Valentine's Day 2012 with your sweetheart! **Tuesday, February 14** at Consul Hall. Tickets for 2 - \$50. Sponsored by St Stephen's Parish. Call Nancy-Jean Taylor 299 4445 for your tickets or more information. Limited to 20 couples.

**ROCKETS GAMES**

Friday, January 13	Away Game	vs. Leader
Saturday, January 21	8:00 pm	Leader @ Consul
Wednesday, January 25	Away Game	vs. Shaunavon

**Let's Go, Rockets!**

**FOR SALE**

For Sale - 2 eMac Computers. In very good working condition. Comes with all the standard Mac software including iTunes, iMovie and GarageBand, plus various open source software. \$200 each - 299-2189

For Sale - Dodge step bars. Should fit 2008 or newer. \$250 - 299-2189

**CONSUL CURLING CLUB**

The Consul Curling Club is selling tickets on the use of a box suite for the Swift Current Broncos vs. Prince Albert Raiders on February 22, 2012 at 7pm. Snacks and beverages included. Tickets are \$5 each and available from curling board members and the Credit Union. Draw is February 9, 2012. Stark and Marsh Chartered Accountants have donated the box suite. All proceeds to the Consul Curling Club.

**COMMUNITY CALENDARS**

Congratulations to Linda Brown for being drawn as the winner of the raffle for the December 16th Rocket Home Game. Also congratulations to Dayle McMillan for being drawn as the winner of the raffle for the December 30th Rocket Home Game (your cheques will be mailed to you). **Be sure to pick up your calendars at the credit union for your chance to win!**

**PERFORMANCE HORSE TACK**

Performance Horse Tack is moving in a different direction this year, so out with the old! All in-stock product is on Sale. Stop in at Curley Cat Consignment, Jasper Street, Maple Creek or you can email me for product information and pricing at [jb.gilchrist@xplornet.ca](mailto:jb.gilchrist@xplornet.ca). Thanks for your business!

**R M - CLEANING TENDER**

The R.M. of Reno No. 51 is accepting tenders for the cleaning of the new R.M. office (formerly the Crescent Point Office). This job is a onetime extensive cleaning of the entire building including ceilings, walls, etc. to be completed by February 8th, 2012. Tenders will be accepted until 4:30 p.m., Thursday, January 19, 2012. Kim Lacelle, Administrator. R.M. of Reno No. 51, Box 90 Consul, Sk. SON OPO. Phone 306-299-2133. Fax: 306-299-4433. Email: [rm51@sasktel.net](mailto:rm51@sasktel.net) The R.M. reserves the right to reject any or all tenders. Lowest tender not necessarily accepted. Please Call the R.M. office if you have any questions.

**R M - PAINTING TENDER**

The R.M. of Reno No. 51 is accepting tenders for the painting of the main floor level in the new R.M. office (formerly the Crescent Point Office). Painting to be completed by February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Tenders will be accepted until 4:30 p.m., Thursday, January 19, 2012. Kim Lacelle, Administrator. R.M. of Reno No. 51, Box 90 Consul, Sk. SON OPO. Phone 306-299-2133. Fax: 306-299-4433. Email: [rm51@sasktel.net](mailto:rm51@sasktel.net) The R.M. reserves the right to reject any or all tenders. Lowest tender not necessarily accepted. Please Call the R.M. office if you have any questions.

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**T H A N K   Y O U**

St. Stephen's CWL would like to thank all those who supported their raffle! The winner of the handcrafted wool afghan was Maxine Jacksteit from Golden Prairie. Thanks also to Nancy-Jean for generously donating the afghan for use as a fundraiser.

Jack & Jean Lightfoot would like to thank everyone for the financial gifts given to us since the fire. It will be put to good use and is greatly appreciated.

Consul Skating Rink would like to thank Sunshine Hill Farms for donating a beef to the Rink Booth & also Zilkie Farms & Calvin Kereluik for donating the cutting & wrapping. We would also like to thank Pioneer Co-op for donating the propane for the zamboni for the 2011/2012 season! Thanks everyone for your contributions—you help keep our rink going!

**A B I T O F H I S T O R Y**

continued from page 1.....

Despite difficult conditions, the surveyors had a long list of duties they were expected to perform, beginning with their primary task of marking corners with monuments. Originally, wooden posts about four feet long were used for section corners. The tops were shaped to a three-inch-square cross-section and each side was marked in Roman numerals with the appropriate township and section numbers. From 1871 to 1915 township corners were marked by iron posts five feet long. Other tasks on their lists included keeping extremely detailed field notes which had to be written down on the spot: nothing could be left to memory. The field notes included the length and exact bearing of every line run, what kind of monuments were used, where the line intersected with settlers' claims and various natural features, and the extent and height of all "remarkable hills or ridges." Surveyors were to note the course, width, depth and current speed of all streams, whether any lakes discovered were fresh or salt (alkaline), whether the country was level or rolling, what the soil was like and how suited it was to agriculture. They had to describe the kinds and quality of any timber present and any rapids or waterfalls that could power mills, and report deposits of coal and other minerals (specimens were to accompany their report). They were to make a careful description of, and separate reports on, any improvements made by settlers, including the names of the settlers, the types of improvements, and an estimate of their value. Everything had to be dated, of course, and at the end of his field notes, the surveyor had to make an affidavit saying that the notes were "correct and true in all their various particulars, to the best of his knowledge and belief." Far from "just" marking out the locations of future homesteads, surveyors were providing the government of the expanding nation its first detailed record of just what resources its vast new lands contained. Quite the undertaking!

(Source: *Land Surveying in Saskatchewan—Laying the Groundwork for Property Rights and Development*. See [http://www.slsa.sk.ca/news\\_events.php](http://www.slsa.sk.ca/news_events.php))

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