

The Assembly met at 13:30.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Kwiatkowski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on behalf of constituents of Carrot River Valley concerned about the exorbitant increases in long-term care fees and the petition prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

And this petition is signed entirely by the residents of Hudson Bay.

I so present.

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise to present a petition of great concern to the people of this province and I read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And these are all signed by people from the community of Yorkton, the Deputy Premier's hometown.

I so present.

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too stand today to present petitions on behalf of people from the Humboldt constituency who are gravely concerned about the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

And the signators on this petition, Mr. Speaker, are from the town . . . or the city, rather, of Humboldt.

I so present.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise this afternoon on behalf of my constituents to present a petition expressing their concerns about the long-term care rates. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for

long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

Signatures on this petition today, Mr. Speaker, are from the communities of Tisdale, Melfort, and Pleasantdale.

I so present.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition to present. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

The signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from the communities of Dubuc, Yorkton, Melville, and Saltcoats.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As well to present a petition and reading the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

And as is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, the petition I present is signed by people from Yorkton, Langenburg, and Good Spirit Acres.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition signed by citizens concerned with fee increases for long-term care services. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by individuals from the community of Foam Lake.

I so present.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too stand to present a petition on behalf of the citizens of Estevan. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reinstate a reasonable annual deductible amount for prescription drugs in Saskatchewan.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And this is signed by citizens of Estevan and Lampman.

I so present. Thank you.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too have a petition regarding long-term care fees in the province.

The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to make the immediate . . . immediate reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by people from Foam Lake and Sheho.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition today. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

I so present.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition with citizens concerned about the exorbitant fees being charged for long-term care:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increase for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens of Yorkton.

I so present.

Mr. Wiberg: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition this afternoon from citizens who are very concerned about the long-term care home fee increases. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition has been signed by the good people from Yorkton.

I so present.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to present a petition from citizens concerned about the increase in long-term care home fees. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for

long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

And as is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens of Shellbrook, Parkside, and Spiritwood.

I so present.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too have a petition of citizens concerned about the home care fee hikes. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

And as is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And the petition is signed by citizens from Yorkton and Theodore.

I so present.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition on behalf of citizens concerned with the proposed massive increase in long-term care fees. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

And signatures to this petition, Mr. Speaker, come from the communities of Southey and Cupar.

I so present.

Mr. Peters: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition signed by citizens of Saskatchewan concerned about the long-term care service increase prices. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by folks from North Battleford and they all live in one home.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan who are becoming outraged with the long-term care services fee. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reconsider the exorbitant fee increases for long-term care services in Saskatchewan.

And as is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good citizens of Yorkton.

I so present.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and are hereby read and received as addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional papers nos. 18, 24, 31, and 32.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING, SELECT AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills

Clerk: — Mr. Brkich, as Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills, presents the fifth report of the said committee which is as follows:

Your committee has duly examined the undermentioned petition for private Bills and finds that the provisions of rule 64, 65, and 68 have been fully complied with.

The petitions are:

From the Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan in the province praying for an Act to amend its Act of incorporation and to change its name;

From the Sunnyside Nursing Home in the province of Saskatchewan praying for an Act to amend its Act of incorporation and to change its name;

And from the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities in the province praying for an Act to amend its Act of incorporation.

Mr. Brkich: — I move the motion, seconded by the member from Regina Wascana Plains:

That the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills be now concurred in.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order.

Motion agreed to.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 34 ask the government the following question:

To the minister responsible for SaskTel: (1) how many telephone lines are there in the province that are subject to the surcharge for 911 service; (2) what was the total revenue from the surcharge levied against all telephone lines in the province for 2001; (3) what was the total cost of

providing the 911 service in 2001.

With similar questions for projections for the year 2002.

I so present.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Melenchuk: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And it's certainly my pleasure today to introduce a group of students, some of who are on a youth exchange here today. They are seated in the west gallery. They're from the Ituna School, 25 grade 8 and 9s, and from Clair, New Brunswick. And one of the students is on the floor here as well.

The YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) and Heritage Canada funds exchange opportunities for youth groups from across Canada. And the group from Ituna was in New Brunswick in February and now the group from New Brunswick is here in Saskatchewan this week.

And just to talk about what their major objective of the program is, Mr. Speaker, it is the development of linkages between students from different parts of Canada, fostering a greater awareness and understanding of the differences between communities as well as the commonalities shared by Canadians with different backgrounds.

So I would ask all members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming the students from Ituna and from New Brunswick. Bienvenue. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan it's my honour to rise today to introduce to you the members of the . . . and to the members of this Assembly, this year's recipients of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal, their friends, their family, their guests who are here to help celebrate today. And as you know they will be introduced individually a bit later on. So if I can ask the Assembly to join me in welcoming everyone here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the minister in welcoming the special volunteers who are going to be recognized today.

I would also like on behalf of the Saskatchewan Party official opposition to welcome all of their friends and relatives and those whose purpose in being here is to extend their best wishes to the honourees this day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, a few rows of active volunteers who've been invited to hear the Premier's statement.

Time does not permit for me to introduce them individually when we have so many special guests here today, but most are

seated in your gallery and one is celebrating very important parentage today as well. And I would ask them to stand and be recognized this afternoon and ask members to welcome them here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because volunteers are such an important part of the work that we do in Culture, Youth and Recreation, a number of public servants have chosen to attend today in the west gallery from the department. And they are — I'll ask them to stand as I call their names — Sandhya Padmanabh, Chelsey Krepakevich, Trina Thomson, Helen Petrovitch, and Dawn Gustilov. And welcome them to the Assembly today. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(13:45)

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Blackstrap Regional Recreation Association Volunteer Awards

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, the Blackstrap Regional Recreation Association recently held its annual volunteer recognition awards banquet and annual general meeting in Asquith. During the evening, many of the outstanding volunteers that live in our communities were recognized.

These are the people who ensure our many culture and recreation programs are run effectively. For members with children, I am sure that you can recall evenings and weekends being involved in sports such as baseball, soccer, and hockey. These are the numerous programs that would not be possible without the assistance of these volunteers.

Mr. Speaker, the Blackstrap Regional Recreation Association received many nominations in the various categories. On behalf of our members, I'd like to congratulate all volunteer nominees and recipients of the following categories: sport category, Charles Chappell of Asquith; recreation category, Marg Down of Asquith; youth category, Tara Procysbyn of Colonsay; community achievement, Colonsay, for project Operation Fast Freeze; community achievement honourable mention, Allan, and project Operation Big Chill.

Mr. Speaker, we'd like to congratulate all of these nominees and recipients.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

100th Birthday Congratulations

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, members of the Assembly, and guests. Signe Margaret Jensen was born 100 years ago today, on April 25, in Sweden. Signe immigrated with her family to Kinistino, Saskatchewan, three and a half years later. The journey to their homestead in Kinistino involved a

one-month-long voyage on boat to Halifax. From Halifax they travelled on train to Montreal and cattle train to Melfort. Signe remembers in Kinistino there were no railroads or roads — only bush and sloughs.

Everyone worked hard at home and after two years of school, Signe went to work at the age of 12. Over the years, Signe has worked in various homes in Kinistino, peeled potatoes at the Kinistino Hotel, and even helped deliver a couple of babies. Many Kinistino residents will remember her working in the laundry at the Jubilee Lodge.

She was married for 26 years and later cared for her parents in their senior years. Two of her sisters and two of her brothers have passed on, but her baby brother, at 85 years old, still resides in Melfort.

Mr. Speaker, Signe is one of the brave souls who came to our country, endured hardship, worked hard to make a life here, and helped to make Saskatchewan what it is today.

It is with delight that I ask the Assembly to join me today in congratulating Signe Margaret Jensen on her 100th birthday.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Members of the Assembly and guests, I know that members on both the sides of the House are quite . . . It's quite reassuring to members on both sides of the House to have you applaud their statements. However, I would ask that for the remainder of the proceedings that you would refrain from participating in any manner in their proceedings.

Cumberland House Maple Syrup Production

Hon. Ms. Lorjé: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. One of the joys of being an MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) is the opportunity it gives us to travel the province and continually discover just how amazingly diverse it is and how enterprising our people are. No matter where you go, there's something new to learn.

For instance, when I was in Cumberland House this past Sunday, I learned that in the Cumberland Delta, there are over one million maple trees.

The member for Cumberland tells me the people have been tapping the trees for decades — maple syrup and bannock on the trap line. And now there is an active commercial maple syrup operation in Cumberland House.

Joe Graves produces Cumberland House Pure Maple Syrup. The word pure is in the name because there are no pesticides in the forest and no artificial chemicals are used in the boiling or filtration process. Something that cannot be said, I'm told, about the industry in Eastern Canada.

Joe has four workers who call themselves the Cumberland House sapsuckers. They are: Cyril Goulet, Hugh Deschambault, Clarence Chaboyer, and Tyson Carriere.

Thanks to the skilful mud driving of Gary Carriere, we found them tapping maple trees in the bush. They harvest about

40,000 litres of sap from which they will produce 1,000 litres of syrup.

You can buy it either through the Nipawin Figure Skating Club, or you can drive across the wonderful new bridge on Highway 123 to CJ's Restaurant in Cumberland House.

Mr. Speaker, this is economic diversification with a distinctively Northern Saskatchewan flavour and I am proud to have seen this forest and the trees. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Fox Valley High School Sports Teams Excel

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, athletes from southwestern Saskatchewan are receiving recognition at the provincial level even when they don't finish in first place.

The Fox Valley senior boys curling team consisting of Ryan Deis, Brendan Myers, Wade Martin, and Jared Brusky as well as their coaches were recipients of the sportsmanship award at the provincial curling championships in Hudson Bay this past month. The team is to be commended for its exceptional sportsmanship displayed both on and off the ice.

As stated by Brian Matheson, the executive director of the Saskatchewan High School Athletic Association, not only did the senior boys curling team do well and its coaches — as far as sportsmanship is concerned — but so too did the parents, the fans, and the entire school. And now the whole community of Fox Valley can claim pride in this achievement.

As well, Mr. Speaker, 23 members of the Fox Valley Badminton Club recently competed in the provincial championships held here in Regina. Outstanding performances from Shane Dirk and Janice-Rose Reinbolt resulted in them winning their age class aggregate titles.

Shane achieved the triple crown, winning the singles, doubles, and mixed doubles in the under 19 category. Janice-Rose won two gold plus a silver medal to claim the age category championship for 12 and under.

Mr. Speaker, the local Fox Valley Badminton Club has been active for the past 18 years and continues to excel at the provincial and national levels and I'd like all members today to acknowledge this fine accomplishment on behalf of this small southwestern community.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mayor's Community Volunteer Awards

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On this day when we are recognizing seven exceptional volunteers, during this week when we acknowledge the invaluable work of all volunteers, I wish to draw the Assembly's attention to another group of volunteers who were honoured last night in Regina.

Eight notable local citizens were presented with the Mayor's Community Volunteer Awards at Regina's 12th annual Vital Link dinner held at the Hotel Saskatchewan. These awards were

begun by the Regina United Way and were joined with the Mayor's awards program in 1991.

Given special notice last night were the following: the distinguished volunteer award went to Barb Butler, a constituent and a friend. Another constituent, Krishan Kapila, was recognized for cultural diversity. The youth award went to D. J. Rodie; arts to Ken Holzer; community development to Margaret Willette; recreation award went to Brian Machuk. All other members . . . All Regina members will applaud Reverend Bob Gay, given the human service award, and Brian Saip received the sports award.

Our congratulations and recognition to each of these outstanding award winners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Sask Party Kindersley Constituency Nomination Meeting

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party is very excited about the upcoming by-election in the Kindersley constituency. As a matter of fact we are so excited we decided to hold our nomination meeting twice.

The Kindersley nomination meeting will be held this coming Tuesday, April 30. The deadline for both nomination and membership sales have now passed, and I'm very pleased to announce that we have five fine candidates in the race — the largest number of candidates ever in a Sask Party nomination contest.

The candidates are Jason Dearborn, a local area farmer; Allan Kerpan, a former Reform MP (Member of Parliament); Mavis Mulder, who works for the Bible college in Eston; Erhard Poggemiller, the mayor of Kerrobert, and Verna Thompson, a well-known weekly newspaper publisher.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also pleased to announce that in the past two weeks these candidates have signed up over 500 new Sask Party memberships in the area.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — So we're looking forward to a very exciting nomination meeting this coming Tuesday.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Premier to call the by-election as soon as possible so the residents of Kindersley can continue to have a strong representative in the Assembly here.

Mr. Speaker, but even better yet, I would urge the Premier to call a general election so all people in Saskatchewan can have strong support and representation under a Saskatchewan Party government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Early Childhood Intervention Week

Mr. Addley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take

this opportunity to bring the attention of the House that this is Early Childhood Intervention Week. We recognize the dedicated women and men who, as home . . . who, as home teachers/therapists, with the support of community boards, provide in-home, early intervention services to children from birth to five years of age.

Mr. Speaker, the early identification of children with physical challenges and the provision of home-based support services to the family reduces family stress, prevents the removal of the child from the family, improves parenting skills, and most importantly, helps families provide a positive start in life.

Mr. Speaker, early childhood intervention workers help build the foundation for a healthy Saskatchewan. Providing kids a good start means better performance in the education system and active contributing citizens in the future.

Our administration is proud to contribute to the funding for almost 600 spaces, including an additional 108 in last year's budget.

Mr. Speaker, we as a government seek to ensure that the needs of children with developmental delays and their families are well served. We know that this is money well invested in our future.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that all members of the House will wish to extend their thanks to the dedicated employees and board members who work with the children and their families to make Saskatchewan a better place.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Increase in Long-Term Care Fees

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health. The NDP's plan to take 90 per cent of the gross income of long-term care residents in the province has outraged senior citizens and their family members. But the fee increase doesn't just affect senior citizens.

Ken Stevenson is a quadriplegic who lives in long-term care but works full-time for the Department of Education. His annual salary is \$51,000 a year, so right now he pays the maximum monthly long-term care fee.

But as of October 1, the NDP's plan to take 90 per cent of his gross income will see his fees jump by 138 per cent to over \$3,700 a month. Unfortunately for Ken, this is over \$500 a month more than his take-home pay. After his employment deductions and union dues are taken from his gross monthly income, his take-home pay is \$500 less than what his long-term care fees will be done under the NDP's new plan.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister explain how he expects Ken Stevenson to live under the new fee structure?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I would remind everybody that we are contributing as Saskatchewan taxpayers \$337 million towards long-term care that affects 8,900 people.

What I am really disappointed about, Mr. Speaker, is that the Leader of the Opposition and his party would raise this question about this particular individual in a press release and in this House without giving any information to me, without asking that person to go to the Department of Health with his new information to have it assessed under the new . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order, please. Order, please.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Out of consideration for our special guests that are here today, I'm going to ask members to show special restraint while other members are speaking.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, as I have said day after day, there are ways in which individuals' particular situations will be assessed and reviewed to make sure that the program does allow for people to continue to live in the kind of way that they have. What we are doing . . . And I would ask the member opposite to remind those people who contact him to make sure that they get the proper information before they make a big fuss of it in a press release and in this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's becoming apparent that these are not exceptions to the rule, that there are in fact thousands of so-called exceptions.

Mr. Speaker, Ken Stevenson became a quadriplegic at the age of 16 after a tragic accident. Yet he finished school, attended university — he earned a degree. He is employed full-time and is a contributing member of our community. To take 90 per cent of his income to pay for his long-term care is unfair and it is absolutely wrong. He has other expenses. He enjoys a full life.

(14:00)

Mr. Speaker, the NDP (New Democratic Party) government has repeatedly tried to pass off the increase in long-term care fees as an increase that only affects wealthy seniors. But we know that also low- and middle-income people are being hit. In fact they are being hit the hardest. And now working disabled people like Ken Stevenson are seriously and negatively affected by the new fees.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister explain why the NDP want to take 90 per cent of Ken Stevenson's income just because he spends his non-working hours in long-term care? And will he explain why the NDP want to take 90 per cent of every long-term care resident's income?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health and

all of the people on this side of this House do respect the individual situations of people. And one of the ways that we do that is we allow them to sort these kinds of issues out directly with the health district and with the Department of Health. And so I think it's very inappropriate for that member to raise this question like this in this particular situation.

What I will say is that particular case will be reviewed and dealt with. What I remind the member is that we have a system whereby those people who can't afford to pay for their care — it's covered. And we've asked for a contribution from some of those people who have more income to contribute towards that cost. Even the people who have income beyond the maximum, they still will end up with a subsidy from the system.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker. I don't understand how that minister thinks he can justify taking 90 per cent of anybody's income, regardless of the situation.

Mr. Speaker, Ken Stevenson in fact did write to the minister. He wrote to Saskatchewan Health about his situation. He says, and I quote:

My only option would be to quit working which would only make things worse for both myself and the government. I would be without a job and the government would be paying an even larger share of the rent.

Mr. Speaker, I find it unbelievable that the NDP would put people like Ken in the position of having to quit their jobs because they can't afford long-term care and continue to work.

Mr. Speaker, the minister keeps saying the people that have concerns with long-term care fees increases should just contact his department and they will see what can be worked out. Well I ask the minister: what's he going to work out for Ken Stevenson? How will the NDP make a difference in Mr. Stevenson's take-home pay and his new long-term care fees?

Mr. Speaker, Ken Stevenson and people like him may be forced to quit their jobs. How is this building independence?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, this government has a long record and we're very proud of all of the programs that we have that allow for building of independence. They go everywhere from the Saskatchewan Aids for Independent Living, or SAIL, which covers many people . . . It also deals with all of the different programs that we have within Health, Social Services, Education, other places.

What I will say very clearly is that Mr. Stevenson's situation will be reviewed. And I remind everybody this change takes place October 1. We will have a chance to review some of these very specific situations where there are younger people with long-term care concerns. And we will make sure that it doesn't affect his ability to work or his ability to live.

Because, Mr. Speaker, what we are doing here is making sure that the taxpayers' dollars — and these are Saskatchewan

taxpayers' dollars, \$337 million — are being used effectively. I remind everybody that we are presently covering 76 per cent of the cost of long-term care and under the new program it'll be 74 per cent of all of this cost.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's becoming very obvious that the budget was put together hastily, the government was short of cash, and they had to look for every possible source. I don't think that the Minister of Finance, I don't believe the Minister of Health considered people like Ken Stevenson when they put this crazy plan together. I don't think they considered the fact that low-income seniors who make less than \$20,000 would see huge increases in their long-term care fees. Mr. Speaker, simply they were hasty and they were inconsiderate and they made a horrible mistake.

Mr. Speaker, this government, if it had a conscience, could do the right thing. It could say, we made a mistake, we're going to reverse this decision, we're going to protect people like Ken Stevenson — who's not an exception, who's not a rarity, Mr. Speaker but who represents many, many people in Saskatchewan that have been unfairly dealt a terrible blow by the NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier stand up in the House and reverse his decision to take 90 per cent of Ken Stevenson's paycheque, leave him with nothing, and people like him with nothing to live on?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — We have heard the Minister of Health say very clearly in this House today that any individual circumstances will be addressed by he and the Department of Health and the district which will serve that individual.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the case is: for every individual in long-term care in this province, we consider them to be an individual circumstance, and they are dealt with as an individual.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition gets up day after day in this House with complaint and concern. Fair enough; that's part of his job. But also part of his job is to stand in this House and say to the legislators and say to the general public, what would he do. Now the fact of the matter is . . . The fact of the matter is, we are . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order. Order.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Fact of the matter is, we are subsidizing long-term care 74 per cent of all the costs, even under the new plan. The fact of the matter is, we have increased spending for long-term care by \$10 million in this budget. The fact of the matter is, we have increased spending to the Department of Health since 1999 from \$1.6 billion to \$2.3 billion.

I ask, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition to stand in this House and explain how his commitment in the last election to freeze funding for health would allow him to do the kind of things he asks of us.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Financial Support for Agriculture

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, had the Premier been listening, he would have heard members on this side of the House tell them more than once what the Saskatchewan Party would do is reverse the fee hikes back to where it was.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Yesterday, the minister and the federal Agriculture minister, Lyle Vanclief, met. Western farm groups are seeking \$1.3 billion and the minister was going to ask or request Lyle Vanclief also to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: how did the meeting go? What new funding was he able to secure for the farm families in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, this is a very interesting question coming from the members opposite because, on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we're on record, Mr. Speaker, about asking and working with farm groups and farm producers and farm organizations — this government and this ministry — for months and months now to see if we can develop a new farm plan, Mr. Speaker, and also additional farm money.

And when we asked the members opposite and the departed late Mr. Boyd from this House, he told us in March that he would have an agricultural plan from the Saskatchewan Party. And, Mr. Speaker, it's now April and we haven't seen . . . we haven't seen one word from the Saskatchewan Party about the new Saskatchewan Party ag plan. Not one word, Mr. Speaker.

And we travelled the province, Mr. Speaker, and we put together a Farm Support Review Committee package which was sent out to all Saskatchewan farmers in the province and they worked on this document, Mr. Speaker. And you know who's absent from any contributions or conversations to this? Only one party that didn't make one contribution to what we're doing for farmers in Saskatchewan — that's the Saskatchewan Party. Not one word on ag policy, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the minister that I too have a copy of that document. And if this is so important to the government — if this committee was so important — let's just read recommendation no. 1:

Crop insurance should increase the available level of coverage from the current maximum while maintaining spot loss hail.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — How much did they listen to their own recommendations from their own committee?

Mr. Speaker, once again it looks like the federal Liberals are

turning their backs on the Saskatchewan farm families. But the NDP must accept some of the blame. When Ottawa sees the NDP cutting its own farm funding, like the \$17 million it took out of spot loss hail coverage, it makes it that much easier for the federal government to abandon its responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, we all agree that Ottawa has responsibilities to the farm families. But it's pretty hard for the NDP government to make a case when they're pulling money out of crop insurance.

Mr. Speaker, why are both the federal and provincial governments abandoning our farm families?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, we have a history on the other side of the House, of the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, on the other side of the House misleading Saskatchewan people.

And, Mr. Speaker, you should take a look at the crop insurance program. Every cent of the investment that we put in the crop insurance program in the past, we put right back into the program again, Mr. Speaker. And not only that, we've added another \$14 million into the crop insurance program this year. That's what we did, Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House — not abandoned it, but put it in.

And I hear from the member opposite what she thinks should happen across the country today and where there should be additional money, Mr. Speaker. And I quote from a November article, of which the member opposite said this, Mr. Speaker, when asked about what should happen with federal funding. And it says this, quote:

Harpauer also suggests that there should be no more federal dollars coming at this time. "I'm giving up on the federal government." (Mr. Speaker, is her comment.)

So the member opposite stands up today, Mr. Speaker, and says we should be asking Ottawa for more money on this side of the House when she's running around Saskatchewan telling Saskatchewan farmers and people we don't need any more money from Ottawa, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, since the Minister of Agriculture has no thoughts on the question, I would like to redirect my questions to the Premier.

I remember listening to the Premier's speech in the NDP leadership convention and I remember him saying, I will not rest until Ottawa provides more support for farm families. And that was nearly a year and a half ago. And he's been very quiet on the issue ever since.

Mr. Speaker, much of Saskatchewan is facing extremely dry conditions this year. And how do the NDP governments respond? By raising crop insurance premiums and cutting coverage. Mr. Speaker, what happened to the Premier's province . . . promise? Why has he abandoned Saskatchewan farm families?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the member opposite I haven't been resting the last year. The fact of the matter is if we'd have had a little bit of co-operation — just a little bit of co-operation — from the opposition in the Saskatchewan legislature, our voice would be that much stronger.

Recall what happened about a year ago, Mr. Speaker. There was a unanimous presentation taken, not from this House but from this province, led by the Minister of Agriculture, led by farm groups across Saskatchewan. We were even accompanied by the then Agriculture critic from Kindersley who was there.

Who was the one, who was the one person to go south on the unanimous position taken by this province and its producers? The member from Kindersley. And it's . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And, Mr. Speaker, it's being repeated again this year.

Mr. Speaker, in October of the year 2001 I prepared on behalf of every premier in Canada a report to the Prime Minister and to the federal government describing the situation facing Saskatchewan producers, Canadian producers, caught in the international subsidy war, caught in the international subsidy war.

Now the good news is, Mr. Speaker, at last a group of the federal Liberal MPs have come exactly to the same conclusion — that our producers need bridge financing to get us through this subsidy war. And if I may say, Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate it if the member from North Battleford would use his influence to move the federal Liberal government as best he could.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SaskTel Investments

Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday all of the annual reports — well almost all of the annual reports — for Crown corporations were tabled including SaskTel's. And SaskTel's story was pretty clear. When SaskTel sticks to its core function of providing telephony, telephone services to the people of the province, it's okay. And when it strays away from that in various adventures around the world, it gets into a little trouble.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the NDP through SaskTel have invested \$20 million in a dot-com, an Internet company based in Atlanta, Georgia called Retx (Retail Energy Transaction Exchange). But unfortunately yesterday the NDP did not release an annual report or a separate statement on their investment in Retx.

The question to the minister is this, Mr. Speaker: why didn't the minister release an annual report or a statement about the taxpayers' investment in Retx? And secondly, how much have taxpayers lost as a result of this NDP investment in Atlanta,

Georgia?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:15)

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to refer to, I think what summarizes and answers the question quite nicely, of a CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) interview yesterday, I believe it was, that Wally Lockhart, a professor of government policy and commerce, who is an expert at the University of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Here's what he says. He says, Mr. Speaker, that:

I think what they're doing (referring to SaskTel) right and some may agree or (some may) disagree (Mr. Speaker) with this is that they are diversifying their business. (He says) You talked about the Saskatchewan Party being opposed to not sticking to the core phone business. But I think SaskTel is making its profits because it's operating like a business and it's diversifying, getting into wireless, getting into Internet and getting into those other businesses, even security. (He says) And because they're operating like a business, I think they are making more profits.

Mr. Speaker, is that member opposed to SaskTel making profits and delivering services across this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — What the Saskatchewan Party is opposed to, Mr. Speaker, is this NDP government putting the interests of a money-losing dot-com in Atlanta, Georgia ahead of senior citizens in the province of Saskatchewan. That's what we're opposed to, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there's another investment the government has in another dot-com, in a state at least close to Georgia. It's a dot-com in Nashville, Tennessee, and the company is called *tappedinto.com*.

Mr. Speaker, the government tabled no report for its investment in *tappedinto.com*, which is about 3.8 million. So, Mr. Speaker, the question is, why was there no annual report tabled detailing this investment on behalf of taxpayers? And how much money did *tappedinto.com* in Nashville, Tennessee lose for this government and Saskatchewan taxpayers?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Mr. Speaker, I want to read a subsequent quote that I think answers this . . . that I think answers this question, Mr. Speaker. This member is against SaskTel doing any sort of diversification, Mr. Speaker. He says they should stick to their core business, Mr. Speaker. But he won't tell the people of Saskatchewan what those core businesses are, Mr. Speaker.

Here's what Wally says. He says:

If we go back to SaskTel example, if they should stick (just) to the phone service I'm not sure (that) they would . . . (have a) viable . . . business. They've got to diversify.

They've got to see where technology is going, where the industry is going and either move with it or have a questionable survival.

And that's exactly what that member wants, Mr. Speaker — a questionable survival for our Crowns so he can sell the Crowns, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the minister has read the annual report of SaskTel — he'll have had to have dug quite deep into the report — but page 42, and specifically note 4 on page 42 of the SaskTel annual report, does talk about four investments including *tappedinto.com* and *Retx.com*. The other two investments, Mr. Speaker, by the way, is a company called Craig Wireless International and Soft Tracks Enterprises.

Now the report doesn't say how much each company lost, but it does seem to point out that between the four of them, the NDP lost 12.5 million taxpayers' dollars last year — \$12.5 million, Mr. Speaker. More than enough, more than enough to cancel the NDP's attack on seniors, Mr. Speaker.

And so the question to the minister is this: why are money-losing dot-coms in Tennessee and Georgia, why do they have a higher priority for this NDP government than seniors and long-term care patients in the province of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — I can't believe that this member is actually going back to this issue again.

Mr. Speaker, the investments that SaskTel have made have overall netted profit for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker — over \$150 million, Mr. Speaker. And . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Mr. Speaker, and in an interview yesterday, Mr. Speaker, in response to the tabling of the Crown reports, here's what that member said. He said:

The four major Crown corporations (referring to SaskTel) arguably did a pretty good job in difficult times this year.

Now he stands up in the legislature and says they didn't, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, and here's in an interview with John Gormley this morning on *John Gormley Live*. Here's what he says — referring to these core Crowns . . . or to these Crowns, Mr. Speaker:

We want to do a review of those. An intensive blue-ribbon panel, a six month review, that looks at the return they're providing to taxpayers. The jobs they create . . . the services they provide. But (and listen carefully, but) that doesn't ideologically bind us to the status quo forever.

Mr. Speaker, very simply, sell. That's what he means — sell.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the minister says he can't believe that we're going back on this issue. I can assure him, Mr. Speaker, and all of his colleagues that we will be going back to this issue, this issue of this government investing tax dollars outside of the province while they put it to seniors and long-term care patients. We'll be on that issue until they change, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — And if they won't change, Mr. Speaker, if they won't change, then we'll be on that issue until the government changes, Mr. Speaker, after the next election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, to the end of last year, it looks like from the very little bit of information on these investments in the annual report, that the NDP's invested 17.3 million in *Retx*. That investment according to this information is now worth about 10 million. They've invested 10 million in Craig Wireless; it's worth 4 million. They've invested 5.3 in Soft Tracks; it's worth 3.2 according to this statement. And the NDP have pumped \$3.8 million into *tappedinto.com*.

Mr. Speaker, the only thing the NDP are tapped into in the province of Saskatchewan is taxpayers' wallets, Mr. Speaker. That's what they're tapped into.

And so the question is this. For these investments, these four investments, the government has lost \$12 million, more than enough, more than enough than their attack on seniors will generate. Will the minister stand up and indicate to seniors and long-term care patients why this government is putting the interests of dot-coms in the United States against their interests?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well that member I think raises a valid point about investments, Mr. Speaker. That's fair.

But, Mr. Speaker, please — and to the people of Saskatchewan — listen to the insanity of the argument. SaskTel made \$157 million — made, made, bring it back to Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That's a benefit to the people of Saskatchewan.

I would ask him to explain to the seniors of Saskatchewan, if they did not have that \$157 million, what would be the repercussions. He says, they wouldn't do it, they wouldn't do it, Mr. Speaker.

I want to say as well . . . I refer to an article of *The Globe and Mail*. It talks about Canada's 100 largest pension funds who lost money last year — the first time in 22 years. And you know what? All of our Crowns made money. That's an incredible record when you compare that back with the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I want to close by saying . . . Mr. Speaker, I want to close by saying that our Crowns do a very good job for the people of Saskatchewan. We will continue to

invest, Mr. Speaker, and diversify to ensure that our Crowns are strong and stable and bring revenues back to Saskatchewan so that we can provide the very services that those members demand of our government, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Saskatchewan Voluntary Sector Initiative

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, later today in this House by honouring the seven Saskatchewan individuals who we will honour, we are honouring thousands of men and women and young people who comprise Saskatchewan volunteer sector.

Volunteers in our province enhance the quality of life we enjoy. Volunteers contribute to the economic and the social well-being of our province. Volunteers make possible the vast range of services and programs that are available throughout our province.

Mr. Speaker, as you well know, the Saskatchewan voluntary sector has an awesome record of achievement.

Saskatchewan has the highest rate of volunteerism of any province in Canada — 47 per cent, Mr. Speaker, of our residents and citizens volunteer on behalf of their neighbours and their communities.

And Saskatchewan's not-for-profit organizations for sport, culture, and recreation — Sask Sport, Sask Culture, and the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, have about 12,000 community groups as their members — that's community groups, Mr. Speaker. And in addition, our province has more than 5,000 incorporated charities.

It therefore, Mr. Speaker, gives me great pleasure today to announce the Premier's Voluntary Sector Initiative.

The Saskatchewan Voluntary Sector Initiative will help our community of volunteers to sustain their achievements. It will establish a framework to support the further building of relationships with government.

It will also help us to better understand how this partnership is already working, both in action and in role, and to support the voluntary sector in the development of policies and programs.

I'm pleased to announce that the MLA for Regina Wascana Plains will Chair the initiative's steering committee.

I'm equally pleased to announce that the MLA for Cumberland and the MLA for Saskatoon Idylwyld will also serve as members of that steering committee.

Mr. Speaker, the committee's first priority is to develop a framework to guide provincial government interaction and participation with the voluntary sector.

The Voluntary Sector Initiative will help build capacity in our voluntary sector. It will help build a stronger volunteer

community.

This initiative will help equip our impressive army of volunteers and their organizations to fulfill their missions. By working together with the voluntary sector, our government will help raise the profile of Saskatchewan's volunteers. We will increase the awareness of the value of voluntary sector activities to the overall well-being of all of our citizens.

I expect, Mr. Speaker, that the committee will have completed their work on the voluntary sector framework by the end of this year.

The Voluntary Sector Initiative is good news for our many, many volunteers and their organizations, and in my view, it is good news for the people and province of Saskatchewan.

As the famous anthropologist, Margaret Mead, once said, never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has.

Mr. Speaker, our volunteers prove her point. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Premier for forwarding a copy of his statement to the official opposition upon announcing the formation of the Saskatchewan Voluntary Sector Initiative.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, later today I will comment more fully on the positive impact that volunteers have had on the province of Saskatchewan. Needless to say, the value of volunteers is so great that they are an invaluable presence in the betterment of our province. That being said, I am most interested in the Saskatchewan volunteer sector initiative that the Premier has announced this afternoon.

We all know that the work of volunteers is extremely important. Their work is important to government. Government cannot afford the cost of delivering the services provided in a spirit of volunteerism by thousands, in fact, by the majority of the people in the province of Saskatchewan. Their work is important to taxpayers who reap the benefits of the work that they freely provide in service to the people of this province.

And in fact, Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the work of volunteerism is important . . . volunteers is important to all of us because we have all experienced the benefits of the efforts of our countless volunteers over the course of Saskatchewan's history and at the current time.

Mr. Speaker, volunteerism extends far beyond the partisan nature of politics. And as the Premier acknowledged to the establishment of this committee and acknowledged that three of his colleagues will be serving in this steering committee, therefore, in the spirit of volunteerism, I would extend an offer that two Saskatchewan Party MLAs would agree to also sit on that committee should he invite them so that we can better do the work of marrying the work of governments and volunteers throughout the province of Saskatchewan.

It is said that it is better to give than to receive. We offer to give; I hope the Premier will offer to receive.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:30)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 32 — The Land Surveys Amendment Act, 2002

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 32, The Land Surveys Amendment Act, 2002 be now introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a first time and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 33 – The Land Titles Amendment Act, 2002

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 33, The Land Titles Amendment Act, 2002 be now introduced and read for the first time.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a first time and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move we convert for debates returnable.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has requested conversion to debates returnable for question no. 137.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to table a written response on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — Response to 138 has been tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, by agreement with the Official Opposition to recognize the Volunteer Medal Awards this afternoon, I move this House do now adjourn.

The Assembly adjourned at 14:32.

Volunteer Medal Presentation

April 25, 2002

1

Dr. Jackson: — Ladies and gentlemen, would you please rise.

Her Honour the Honourable Dr. Lynda Haverstock, Chancellor of the Saskatchewan Order of Merit and Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, and His Honour Mr. Harley Olsen.

Your Honours, ladies and gentlemen, please join in singing the Royal anthem, *God Save The Queen*.

Please be seated. It is a pleasure to welcome everybody, members of the Legislative Assembly, and guests to this seventh presentation of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal taking place in National Volunteer Week in Canada.

Before we begin the proceedings, I would like to note the passing of a recipient of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal last year, Iris Maber, who passed away this week.

It is now a pleasure to call upon our host, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, the Honourable Myron Kowalsky. Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Thank you, Dr. Jackson.

Your Honour, Mr. Premier, Leader of the Opposition, members of the Legislative Assembly, ladies and gentlemen, and especially the medal recipients. On behalf of the members of the Legislative Assembly, I would like to welcome everyone here today. We especially welcome the seven Volunteer Medal recipients and their guests.

This is the seventh year we have been honoured to hold the presentation of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal in this Assembly.

This honour was created by the Legislative Assembly, so it is most appropriate that the members of the Legislative Assembly are taking an active part in the ceremony by presenting their constituents to Her Honour.

These seven people are typical of the overwhelming volunteer spirit of the Saskatchewan people. It is a privilege to be here to honour these people.

Volunteers are the people that get stuff done. In a democracy like ours, getting things done means co-operation and compromise. And through the course of their volunteer work, they develop relationships as they work with others and thus serve and provide an excellent role model for our youth.

The recipients here today have been a significant part of building a better Saskatchewan and making this world a better place.

So along with the members of the Legislative Assembly, I say welcome, thank you, and congratulations.

Dr. Jackson: — It is now a pleasure to call upon Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor for her address. Your Honour.

Her Honour Dr. Lynda M. Haverstock: — Thank you, Dr. Jackson.

Mr. Premier, Mr. Speaker, ministers of the Crown, Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, members of the Legislative Assembly, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls. Well good, good afternoon.

2002 is a special year for Canadians because this year our Queen celebrates the 50th anniversary of her reign. Her Majesty has stated that she hopes the Golden Jubilee, and I quote directly:

. . . will provide a special opportunity to acknowledge all those who support and contribute to their communities through public service and voluntary endeavour.

As our Queen's representative, I offer sincere thanks and congratulations on her behalf to the seven outstanding individuals that we honour today.

It is most appropriate that we celebrate voluntarism in this Chamber. As Canadians, we enjoy many freedoms, including the freedom to participate in our democracy. But what does that really mean? Democracy is not just about elections and campaigns; even the act of voting, while important, is but one small part of living in a democracy.

Of far greater significance is the ability to participate freely and openly, and the willingness of our citizens to become involved through volunteering — to sit on boards of charitable and arts organizations, to organize and support local events, to take the initiative to become informed on national and international issues.

Democracy is all of these things and more. It affords us rights, but it is driven by citizens' determination to exercise those rights, and the power that stems from making choices and acting firmly upon them.

One year ago, when we joined together in this most beautiful place, and this was to honour volunteers, it was in the presence of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. The Prince believes that volunteering helps individuals to develop valuable skills and to gain confidence, but in addition and more importantly, His Royal Highness says that volunteering helps people to, and I quote again:

Realise the importance of the contribution they can make to their own community and that everyone, employed and unemployed, is part of the same society.

And he's bold enough, I must add, to say that volunteering is so important for every person that it should be compulsory.

I wish to congratulate each honouree this afternoon: to you, James, Clayton, to Gary, Evelyn, Farrah, to Paul, and Jean. Your passionate devotion to important causes has made us a much better province, and you are tremendous role models for all of us. And I thank you for being so wise in the way that you've exercised your unrestricted freedom to choose.

I also want to acknowledge at this time the love and support of family members and your friends, who have enabled these remarkable individuals to contribute in their remarkable ways.

I'd like to close with a passage from Harold Kushner's most recent book entitled, *Living a Life that Matters*:

The path to a truly successful and significant life is through friendship, through family, and through acts of generosity and self-sacrifice . . . In affecting the life of even one person in a positive way, we make a difference in the world, and we prove that we do (indeed) . . . matter.

So I'm pleased to bring greetings to this auspicious occasion on behalf of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada for half a century.

And I now invite the Secretary to present the recipients of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

Applause.

Dr. Jackson: — On behalf of the chairperson and members of the Saskatchewan Honours Advisory Council, it is my privilege to advise Your Honour, as Her Majesty's representative in our province, that seven citizens have been duly selected to receive the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal in this Golden Jubilee Year of Her Majesty's reign. They are present today for this purpose and I shall read the certificate formally appointing them.

In the name of the Crown in right of Saskatchewan and pursuant to The Provincial Emblems and Honours Act, James Burnett, Clayton Campbell, Gary Hyland, Evelyn Johnson, Farrah Mateen, Paul Ortynsky, and Jean Thomas have been awarded the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal for 2001 in recognition of outstanding volunteer service and exceptional community involvement in the Province of Saskatchewan. Presented at Regina, this 25th day of April, 2002.

Signed, Joanne Crofford, Provincial Secretary; Lorne Calvert, Premier; Lynda Haverstock, Lieutenant Governor.

God Save the Queen.

Applause.

James Burnett

Dr. Jackson: — Jim Burnett is well known in our province both as a leading educator and as an outstanding volunteer. It has been in the Saskatchewan Lung Association that Mr. Burnett made his special mark in voluntarism. He served on the board for sixteen years and as president for nine years. He was also chair of the national board of the Canadian Lung Association.

Mr. Burnett used his skills in education and public relations to be an articulate spokesman for the health causes championed by the Lung Association. Furthermore, he has served with the senates of both Saskatchewan universities, the United Appeal, the scouting movement and the United Church. He has worked with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and the YMCA. James Burnett truly contributes above and beyond the expectations for a volunteer leader in the charitable sector.

I call on the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Regina South, the Honourable Andrew Thomson.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Your Honour, it is my pleasure to present to you, Mr. James Burnett, from the constituency of Regina South to receive the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

Applause.

Clayton Campbell

Dr. Jackson: — Clayton Campbell somehow finds time from his busy real estate work in The Battlefords to undertake a myriad of volunteer activities in the community. He persuaded his fellow-realtors to volunteer for the Meals on Wheels program. As Provincial Chairman of the Associated Canadian Travellers he led that organization in fund-raising for charities. He was instrumental in starting the North Battleford Sports Museum and Hall of Fame.

Mr. Campbell has coached baseball and hockey, played an active role in local curling, and was chair of the 1986 Labatt Brier. On top of all that, he has served as chair of a special needs education centre, vice-chair of the school board, board chair of the regional college and a city councillor for North Battleford. No wonder he was named Battlefords Citizen of the Decade in 2000.

I call on the Member of the Legislative Assembly for North Battleford, Mr. Jack Hillson.

Mr. Hillson: — Your Honours, it is my privilege to present to you, Mr. Clayton Campbell, from the constituency of North Battleford, to receive the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

Applause.

Gary Hyland

Dr. Jackson: — The name of the organization “Moose Jaw Arts in Motion” well describes its driving force, Gary Hyland. Indeed, Mr. Hyland is constantly in motion, starting, organizing, promoting and leading multiple cultural activities in the Moose Jaw area. He is the respected founder of the Moose Jaw Festival of Words. He was involved in the launch of Coteau Publishers, the Great Plains School of the Arts, Cine View Saskatchewan, Art School Saskatchewan and the Sage Hill Writing Experience.

Mr. Hyland is Moose Jaw’s poet laureate. He has been involved in the Saskatchewan Film Board, the Saskatchewan Writers’ Guild, the Saskatchewan Arts Board, the City of Moose Jaw Centennial Committee, the Moose Jaw Cultural Centre Builders Committee, local theatre — and coaching minor hockey. He was a natural for Moose Jaw’s Citizen of the Year Award in 1998.

I call on the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Moose Jaw North, the Honourable Glen Hagel.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Your Honour, it is my privilege to present to you, Mr. Gary Hyland, from the constituency of Moose Jaw North, a recipient of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

Applause.

Evelyn Johnson

Dr. Jackson: — During and since her career as a teacher in Estevan, Evelyn Johnson has dedicated herself to volunteer service in education and the arts. She served as president of the Estevan Teachers’ Association and worked diligently through the Early Childhood Association to make speech therapists available in schools. For fifteen years, she was president of the Estevan Arts Council and managed the Stars for Saskatchewan Concert Series.

Mrs. Johnson organizes craft workshops, resident artist programs and an “art in the park” initiative. In the Quota Club she spearheads a campaign for the prevention of deafness and collects used hearing aids

for needy people in the Caribbean. She is active in the Estevan Museum, UNICEF, the Canadian Federation of University Women, the United Church, and various choral groups. It has been said that Evelyn Johnson uses her heart, her head, her hands — and her feet, in dedicated service to others.

I call on the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Estevan, Ms. Doreen Eagles.

Ms. Eagles: — Your Honour, it is my privilege to present to you, Evelyn Johnson from the constituency of Estevan, to receive the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

Applause.

Farrah Mateen

Dr. Jackson: — Farrah Mateen has accomplished a staggering amount of volunteer activity at a very young age. Under her leadership the Prince Albert chapter of Students Against Drinking and Driving became one of the strongest in the province. In high school she volunteered for the health board as a hospital visitor, for the winter festival children's carnival and for the Terry Fox Run. She was Prince Albert Citizen of the Month, Miss Prince Albert and YWCA Young Woman of Distinction in her home city.

Now a medical student, Farrah Mateen sits on twenty university committees at the University of Saskatchewan. She tutors university and secondary school students, coaches in the University Life orientation program for first year students, plays the pipe organ, performs tap dance, is an award-winning photographer and is in demand as a public speaker. At age 20, she is the youngest person to receive a Saskatchewan provincial honour.

Applause.

Dr. Jackson: — Now, Your Honour, Farrah Mateen resides part of the year in Prince Albert Carlton and part of the year in Saskatoon Greystone. So to avoid dissension in your Assembly, Mr. Speaker, I thought it only fair to have Ms. Mateen presented by both MLAs.

So I now call on the Member for Saskatoon Greystone, Mr. Peter Prebble; and the Member for Prince Albert Carlton, the Honourable Myron Kowalsky.

Mr. Prebble: — Your Honour, it is my privilege to present to you Farrah Mateen from the constituencies of Saskatoon Greystone and Prince Albert Carlton, to receive the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

Applause.

Paul Ortynsky

Dr. Jackson: — Paul Ortynsky's biography reads like a directory of Canora and area. This long-time pharmacist has served not only his profession but his town, cultural community and education. Mr. Ortynsky has been Mayor of Canora, chairman of the school board, president of the agricultural society, member of the housing authority and vice-president of the regional college.

He has been active in the chamber of commerce, Red Cross, Heart and Stroke Foundation and Kiwanis Club. This veteran of the Second World War has played a major role in the Air Cadet movement. He has

been a member of the University of Regina senate and the council of the College of Physicians and Surgeons. He has held positions of leadership in the Ukrainian Professional and Business Association, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Canora Ukrainian Heritage Museum.

I call on the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Canora, Mr. Ken Krawetz.

Mr. Krawetz: — Your Honour, it is my privilege to present to you Paul Ortynsky from the constituency of Canora-Pelly, to receive the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

Applause.

Jean Thomas

Dr. Jackson: — Jean Thomas has deservedly received many awards for her forty years of continuous service to the scouting movement, where she has occupied numerous leadership positions and been an enthusiast for outdoor camping and jamborees. Mrs. Thomas has also played a key volunteer role in the United Church as organist, choir director, teacher and one of the first women elders in her congregation.

Jean Thomas is well known for her musical talent. As accompanist and director she brings choral groups to entertain seniors at nursing homes in Regina. She has directed food bank drives. She has coordinated two hundred volunteers who provide income-tax services to students, seniors and needy persons. She is active in the Royal Canadian Air Force Association. *Amateur de la culture française, Madame Thomas se plaît à promouvoir les relations avec la France et la francophonie.*

I call on the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Regina-Qu'Appelle Valley, the Honourable Mark Wartman.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Your Honour, it is my privilege to present to you Jean Thomas from the constituency of Regina-Qu'Appelle Valley, to receive the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

Applause.

Dr. Jackson: — Your Honour, this concludes the presentation of recipients of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal for this year. It is now a pleasure to call upon the Premier of Saskatchewan, the Honourable Lorne Calvert, for his remarks.

Applause.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Thank you very much, Dr. Jackson.

Your Honours, legislative colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, and recipients of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

As Premier of Saskatchewan it is my pleasure to congratulate the seven recipients of this year's Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

And, Dr. Jackson, if I may say, I'm sure on behalf of all of us how much we have appreciated the biographical précis that you've given of each of those who have received the award today. And, as Her Honour and I have just observed between each other, it is a humbling experience to listen to the work

that has been accomplished by each of you in your community, in our province.

Michael, however, I need to say there was one detail left out of one of the recipients' biographies for which he should deserve another medal. One of our recipients today was the English teacher for the graduating class of 1969, Riverview Collegiate, Moose Jaw.

Applause.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And for that he deserves a medal.

It is our view that these seven have given our province a very precious gift — a gift of their time and their talent; a gift to their communities, a gift to their neighbours, a gift to our province. And we recognize you today and thank you for that.

Just about a month ago now an article appeared in the *National Post* in which the editors of the *National Post* entitled, "Saskatchewan: not the biggest, just the best."

And here is the writer's opinion, Roy MacGregor:

. . . where, we humbly ask (he says, in Canada), is the best place to live?

(And) By this we mean more than the greatest number of shopping malls . . .

We mean people: caring, concerned people who make the best neighbours and citizens, . . . who would be most likely to offer to help out in a time of need.

The envelope, please.

Congratulations . . . Saskatchewan.

Applause.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Friends, the most recent census of Canada indicated that between 45 and 47 per cent of all of our citizens volunteer, that 60 per cent of our citizens are involved in community organizations.

A year ago we celebrated the United Nations' International Year of the Volunteers. At that time, Minister Lorjé was our Provincial Secretary, and we thought an appropriate way to acknowledge the volunteers of Saskatchewan was through a small pin. I was proven wrong. When asked by Ms. Lorjé and the department how many of these pins they thought we should prepare, I said about 100,000. By the end of the year, we had distributed 550,000 volunteer recognition pins to the people of Saskatchewan — more than half of our population.

Applause.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And so today we recognize seven very special of those volunteers and through them, and because of them, celebrate all of the volunteers of our great province.

And just before I take my seat, I do want to acknowledge the members of the Saskatchewan Honours Advisory Council for their dedication — their continued dedication — and the very difficult task they have in recommending the recipients for this honour.

And finally my very, very personal congratulations to each one of you. Wear your medal with great pride in what you have accomplished, and in your province.

Thank you very much.

Applause.

Dr. Jackson: — I would now like to call upon the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, Mr. Elwin Hermanson.

Applause.

Mr. Hermanson: — Well thank you, Dr. Jackson. Your Honours, Mr. Premier, Mr. Speaker, colleagues in the legislature, especially the seven recipients of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal, your family and friends and guests that are assembled.

This is a wonderful occasion in which the province of Saskatchewan can show its appreciation in a tangible way to representatives of thousands of people who, like the seven of you, have gone above and beyond what is expected in the way of giving of your time and your efforts to make Saskatchewan a better province.

Saskatchewan has the highest rate of volunteerism in the entire country. And it doesn't matter what community you go to in the province of Saskatchewan, it's volunteers that make the wheels turn in every part of this province. And the seven of you are outstanding examples — in many different fields, I might add — examples of how our communities are better and stronger because of your untiring efforts to serve your fellow Saskatchewanian citizens.

On behalf of the official opposition, I would particularly like to thank the seven recipients for their efforts and for being such outstanding examples that each of us can emulate and desire to follow.

As a person in one Saskatchewan family, it's hard to express how much volunteerism has meant to us. We have three children, all of whom participated in sports. And those sporting activities would not have happened had there not been coaches, had there not been drivers, had there not been people that kept organizations together and kept facilities in place — and for the most part did it on a volunteer basis.

Our children would not have been blessed with the musical opportunities they had, had it not been for music festivals and the opportunities that availed themselves because people gave so unselfishly of their time to enrich our children's lives.

And as a family that attends a church, and recognizing the social fabric of our province and how it's strengthened by the volunteerism through churches and other organizations — community-based organizations that make our province so much richer and so much stronger — I think I'm just one of many, many thousands of families in Saskatchewan that want to say thank you to those of you who represent the thousands of volunteers in our province.

There is a Greek proverb that I think is very fitting for this occasion. And I quote:

A civilization flourishes when people plant trees under which they will never sit.

We are all benefactors of those who have gone before us and made our province better and stronger

because they gave. And now we who are citizens of today have the opportunity to make our province better for those who will follow us. And there is no better way to accomplish this than by volunteering.

To the seven of you, congratulations. And beyond that, to the thousands of Saskatchewan volunteers, on behalf of the official opposition, we say a very heartfelt thank you — keep it up.

Applause.

Dr. Jackson: — Ladies and gentlemen, the Speaker has asked me to invite you all, on his behalf, to the Speaker's tea immediately following the ceremony, in the rotunda outside the Chamber and in room 218 in the west corridor. And there you can meet the recipients of the Volunteer Medal and their families, the official party, and the members of the Legislative Assembly.

Following the singing of the national anthem, would you kindly remain in your places for departures from the Chamber in the following order: first the viceregal party, then the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, then the Speaker's party, the recipients of the Volunteer Medal, the members of the Legislative Assembly, and other guests.

Before we sing the national anthem, I would like to express on behalf of the recipients of the Volunteer Medal, the Saskatchewan Honours Advisory Council, and all the guests present today, our sincere thanks to you, Mr. Speaker, to the House leaders, and to all the members of the Assembly for making your time and your Chamber available to us this afternoon for this ceremony. Thank you very much.

Applause.

Dr. Jackson: — We will now rise and join in singing the national anthem, *O Canada*.

Ladies and gentlemen, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, and His Honour, Mr. Olsen.