



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

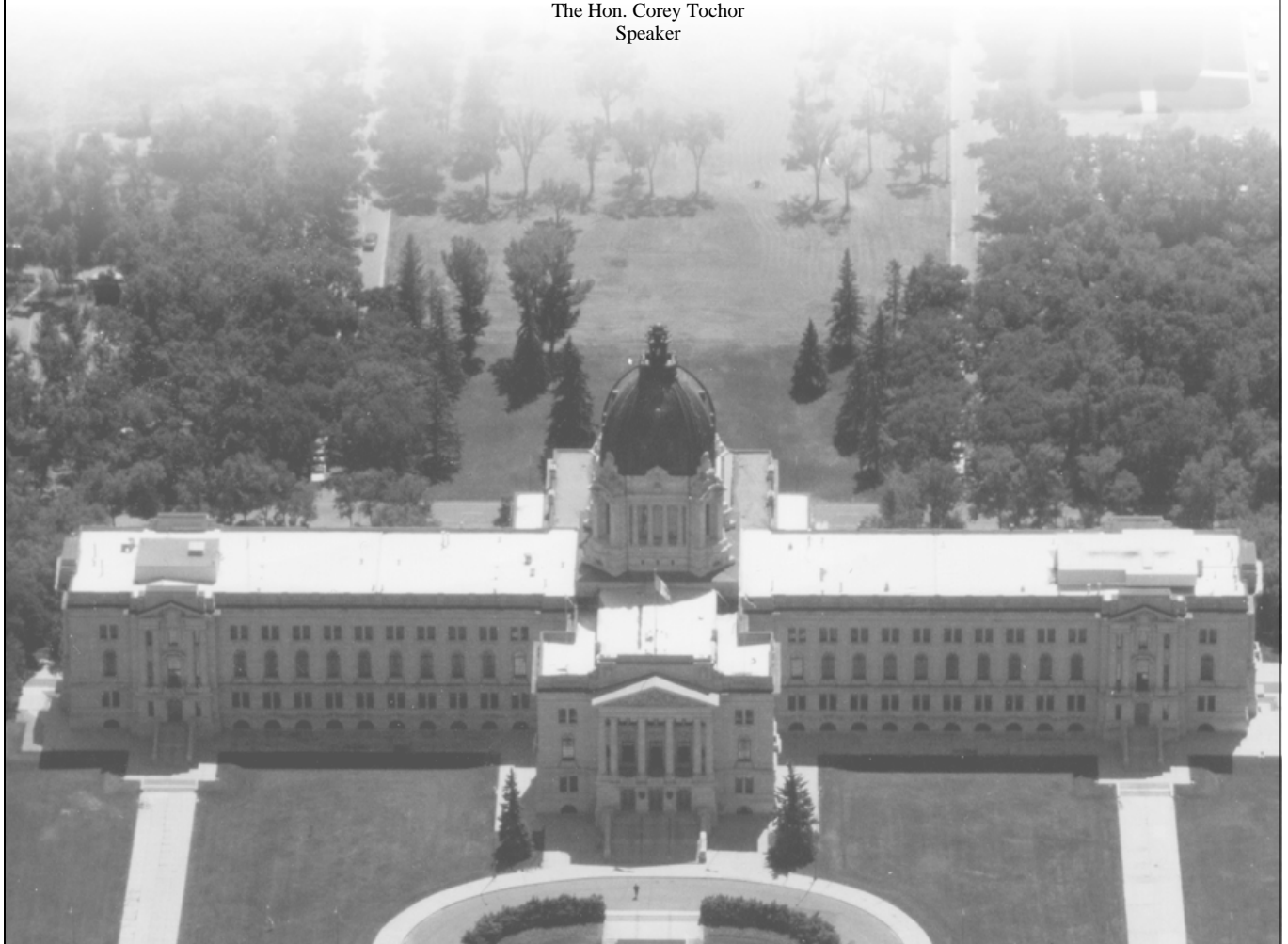
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)  
Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. Corey Tochor  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**2nd Session — 28th Legislature**

**Speaker** — Hon. Corey Tochor  
**Premier** — Hon. Brad Wall  
**Leader of the Opposition** — Nicole Sarauer

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<b>Makowsky</b> , Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)	
<b>Marit</b> , Hon. David — Wood River (SP)	

Vacancies — Kindersley, Melfort

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**Party Standings:** Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 47; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12; Vacant — 2

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**Clerk** — Gregory A. Putz

**Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel** — Kenneth S. Ring, Q.C.

**Principal Clerk** — Iris Lang

**Clerk Assistant** — Kathy Burianyak

**Sergeant-at-Arms** — Terry Quinn

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would ask leave of the members of the House to make a statement of condolence.

**The Speaker:** — Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

#### STATEMENT OF CONDOLENCE

##### Kevin Phillips

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues in the House.

“I have led a life of security, and family, and community.” These are the words of the late member from Melfort, Kevin Phillips, in his maiden speech in this Legislative Assembly sometime in late 2011. “I have led a life of security, and family, and community.”

Mr. Speaker, I think it’s interesting — if we examine these words, we see what is intentional about them on the part of the man who said them in this place. Because, Mr. Speaker, I don’t think you can make that claim, to have led a life of security, unless you also acted in that way, unless you committed yourself in an effort to live a life of security. And I think, I’m pretty sure what Kevin was referring to when he said that was the industry and the enterprise and the work ethic with which he conducted his life to bring that security for himself and for his family. It’s an intentional statement.

And we know the record bears it out — his work ethic and his industry and his enterprise.

We know that he was a publisher at the *Melfort Journal*, that he was an entrepreneur. He was in the newspaper business. We know he was an investor and a partner in other businesses as well, that he worked hard to provide that security, to live a life of security. There are members on this side of the House that know the kind of business person he was, and the values he brought to this House, he brought also to that life. I’ve heard specific accounts of that.

I have led a life of family, he said. And, Mr. Speaker, the record bears that out for Kevin as well. In that same speech and others that followed, he talked a lot about his parents. He noted that his father was ahead of the curve, that he moved from Alberta to Saskatchewan in 1940 where he got into the newspaper business eventually in Kinistino.

He talked about the values that his parents instilled in him. He said this, and I quote, as a lesson from his parents that taught him about empathy, and I quote, “. . . that if you can appreciate

what other people are feeling, then that’s the beginning of solving any situation or problem that you may have and that they may have.” You know, having read that quote from his speech of him referencing that lesson from his parents, a lot of what we were able to witness as his colleagues makes even greater sense. That’s how he went about his work of advocacy here inside this Chamber and in ministers’ offices and through the building and back home in his constituency.

And then in that Speech from the Throne that he gave just a little while ago, he talked a lot about his kids. He went on, a long paragraph. I’ll quote it for you if I may because it’s pretty recent. It’s pretty current. It’s just a few days ago. He said, “I visited . . .” This was of his report on his summer vacation, I guess, as a part of his Throne Speech. Kevin said this:

I visited my daughter Kelli, and her husband, Howard, and I attended the graduation of two of my grandchildren in the same ceremony. I also visited with two other grandchildren when I was there, Autumn and Tempestt. Got to visit one of the kids we lost to Alberta a few years ago . . . my son Brenden and his wife, Carly, in Edmonton. Spending time with my stepdaughter and her husband, Brandi and Zach, and their two really neat kids. And then my other stepson Riley and his spouse, Felisha, [they] had three children, and they decided to have one more, and the twins were born last month. Best-laid plans [Kevin says].

He led a life of family.

He also led a life of community, as he noted in that maiden speech. And boy, his record is replete with evidence of that, Mr. Speaker. It in many respects seems to have been his life work even beyond his vocation, his avocations.

He tells the story in his maiden speech about being upset about principals being rotated around the school division in that northeast area, and this must have bothered him and a few other parents because he organized and went to a meeting. And I’m not sure of the result of that effort, but someone told him, as he noted in his Speech from the Throne, in his maiden speech in this House, he noted that someone had told him, you know, “You should put your money where your mouth is and run for the school board.” And so he did, and he served for nine years as a trustee in the Melfort School Division, three as the Chair of that school division. And then later on he became . . . He was the mayor of Melfort. And that’s when I got to meet him.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it’s been my great fortune over these years to meet with wonderful community leaders, civic leaders, mayors, and councillors, women and men who are just obviously very dedicated to their community. They aren’t in those jobs for the money — that’s for sure — or the glory. And Kevin was no exception to that.

I remember Kevin’s approach to me in my various positions. But before he ran in ’11, even when he was thinking about running for us, he was very deliberate and direct about what Melfort needed from its provincial government in terms of a partnership. He was also one to recognize when maybe he thought we had done some things right. And that was the balance with which I think he conducted himself in this place,

even when he was a declared partisan. I think he offered that same generosity of balance to members regardless of where they happened to sit, to your left or to your right.

He led a life of community. There are any number of examples we could point to in this respect, but there are few that are as compelling as the domestic violence centre that he helped champion for the city of Melfort, which has also of course been a benefit in service to northeast Saskatchewan.

And I remember how he was with me on that issue. Kevin was a very . . . He was a good-humoured man, and so when he was serious about, very serious about something, you understood its importance to him. And I would say that's how he was with me, and dare I say with ministers, the Minister of Justice at the time, the member for Saskatoon Northwest about the importance of that particular centre.

And there are any number of community leaders and people that are still to this very day champions of that centre that deserve every bit of the credit that Kevin might get for that centre being there, but today we should remember him for his efforts for that centre.

I don't think any male member of our caucus and maybe across the way walked as many miles in those red pumps as Kevin Phillips did. The Minister of Finance recounts that on his first such walk he may have, he may have fallen down in a spectacular way at the beginning, but got right back up and kept walking and was encouraging all of us to do the same. And there's a pretty iconic picture in our family, of our family photos as a caucus, and as the member for Carrot River Valley and the member for Saskatoon Northwest and Kevin, and there were others of course as well. We got pictures of them in those red high-heeled shoes walking, both to raise awareness and money for something that was very close to his heart, an effort that has resulted in a centre that will be part of his legacy, to be sure. That will last beyond the political life of anybody in this room and obviously beyond his own life as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is a difficult day today for us, for all members. I thank members on the other side of the House for their generosity and their kindness, and the Leader of the Opposition extending that to me personally today, because it's a difficult day. We know that when we work together in this way, especially during session, we are more family than colleagues. I'm sure that is true of every caucus that has gathered and served in this place.

And we have faced loss as a caucus before recently, 11 months ago, with Roger Parent's passing. And though Roger's was quite sudden, there was still some indication that there were bad things to come, that Roger would leave us too soon. Mr. Speaker, there was no such warning at all in the case of Kevin's passing, and so that's what makes it all the more difficult, I think, today.

Members of the House should know — as I found out today and didn't know until today and the people listening should know — about the quality of the character of this man. The reason that April, his wife, knew there was something wrong is that Kevin, when he was in Regina, would phone her at 9:30. Regularly, routinely he would call his wife at 9:30, and they

would have a discussion. And that obviously didn't happen last night, which is why April took the steps that she did. And then she found out and we later all found out what had happened.

But you know that fact speaks to the faithfulness of a man and the reliability of a man. Someone who was interested in service, someone who indicated to me that it didn't really matter to him whether he served in cabinet or not or any other official titles. He was happy to serve, happy to serve. May that be said of us all.

So is there any good that can come from yesterday, from someone leaving us at 63 so tragically? You know, there is scripture that would say there is, that all things work together for good but, boy, it's hard to see it on a day like today unless you consider his daughter Kelli and her husband, Howard. They have five kids: Autumn and Tempest and Justice and Desiree and Denzel. Unless you consider Kevin's son Brenden and his wife, Carly, who live in Alberta. Unless you consider his stepdaughter Brandi and her husband, Zach. They have two kids, Tyson and Haley. If you're wondering if anything good can come from a day like today, well, there's his stepson Riley and his wife, Felisha, and they have five kids: Kaleb and Raigen and Dexter and twins, Mia and Ava.

And so there's every expectation, there's every hope that we can have that the kind of person that Kevin was, the qualities that I have tried to inadequately describe today, are going to get passed on, that they've already been passed on, that they're manifest in the lives of his kids, his stepkids, and his grandchildren. And so that's the good that will come not from yesterday, from his death, but most assuredly from his life, from a life that is well remembered. Because I believe his was a good example, a very good example, a compelling one and for that example some day it will be said of his grandkids and maybe subsequent generations, that they led lives of security and family and community.

[13:45]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of all Saskatchewan New Democrats, but more specifically my colleagues on this side of the floor, I want to extend our sincerest condolences to Kevin's family, in particular his wife, April, his children, his grandchildren — of whom he talked frequently about and fondly — but also to his friends and his legislative colleagues on the government side.

Kevin was an incredibly kind man. I often had the opportunity to speak with him at MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] receptions. He always took time to speak to me, to speak to many of my colleagues. We shared stories this morning. He often shared with me advice, wisdom, life, politics, even as recently as last week at the Sask Watershed Authority reception. And I'm so grateful that I made it to that reception last week because I know now that that's the last opportunity that I'll have to get to talk to Kevin. We talked about life. We talked about family. We talked about plans for after politics.

And we also talked about what the Premier mentioned. He was

a strong advocate for his community. He's an even stronger advocate for improving supports for survivors of domestic violence. And he was so proud of the work that he and his community partners did in the creation of the Melfort shelter, and he absolutely should be. His legacy will live on through his children and his grandchildren, but he will also have a piece of that. That shelter is in part because of him.

I'm very sad that our relationship is going to be much shorter than I thought it was going to be. My family has a cabin in his riding at Kipabiskau Lake. We often talked about, we joked with each other because nobody really knows that Kipabiskau Lake is a thing in Saskatchewan. Not a lot of people know it exists or where it is, and it sounds like a strange name. But Kevin knew, and we often swapped stories about the people that live there, and I'm sad I won't be able to do that anymore.

Know that our hearts and our thoughts are with Kevin's family and his friends today. I know that he will be missed by his family, and I know that he will be missed by his family on the government side. But I also want his family to know that he is going to be deeply missed by the legislators on this side of the House as well.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

**Hon. Mr. Hargrave:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On a day like today I wish I was a great orator like so many of the members in this House. Kevin was more than my colleague. As some of you may or may not know, he was my business partner for many, many years. And besides being my business partner, he was my good friend. We've been friends for nearly 20 years.

Many times, Mr. Speaker, we would leave this House on a Thursday after session, and he would drive ahead of me. I always got him to drive ahead of me in case . . . because he would like to drive a little faster, and I thought he could get the ticket instead of me. But we'd phone each other, on our hands-free of course, and we'd talk probably 20 minutes, half hour. And just about life, you know, about things. About the House, about the business. Just about life mostly. He was so proud of his new grandkid twins. He just couldn't stop talking about them.

I talked to him on Friday. I talked to him this Friday. I said, "Kevin, what are you doing?" I told him what I was up to. What he was up to. And I said, "Oh, I left my keys to my truck. Are you happening to come to town? You know, into P.A. Because I left my keys to my truck, and you could bring the spare set from Melfort." And he says, "No I'm not. I'm doing up my remarks," he says, "because I'm speaking tomorrow at Remembrance Day." He says, "It's one of the most important days of the year for me."

Remembrance. We'll all remember Kevin. He believed, like me, if you want to make a difference in your community, in your province, in your country, you have to get involved. I strongly believe that. And Kevin and I were friends because we talked about that all the time. You have to get involved. And Kevin got involved in his community from the day, forever. You know, as the Premier had said, he was involved in the school board. He was the mayor. When he was the publisher of

the paper there and owned the paper there, he was involved in everything. And he continued to this day to get involved because he wanted to make a difference.

And I know he made a difference here. He made a difference in the lives of so many members here because he would take them aside and he would talk to them as a friend. As a friend, he would talk to so many different people.

You know, back in my smoking days, him and I often would go outside for a smoke at the dealership, and we'd go out. And okay, we'll have a seven-minute conversation, Kevin, let's you and me. And we'd go out. And now, you know, even though I've quit smoking for many years, 10 years or so, when I was back in Melfort we'd say, well let's go out for a smoke. And he'd have a smoke and I'd sit there or stand there and talk to him outside behind his constituency office.

He was a true friend. When I first thought of getting into politics, he's the first person I called. I said, Kevin, have you got a few minutes? I want to drive out to Melfort and see you. I'll always have a few minutes for you, he said. I remember it clearly. I got out there and I said, Kevin, I'm thinking about running in Prince Albert Carlton. I says like, I'm throwing my name in for the nomination. He didn't take long to think about that. He said, you would be fantastic. He said, like, whatever I can do to help you. You should run. You would do a good job because we do believe in the same things and we always have. And that's why we were great partners.

We never had, in all the years we've been partners, we never had one disagreement — not one. And it's not very often you can say that about any partnership. Well I guess the one . . . We did have one disagreement. I was driving home with him, and he liked to smoke in his car, and kind of . . . So I said, Kevin, gee, you know, I'm bothered by the smoke. So that was the only disagreement that we ever did have.

But I know Kevin loved his community. Most of all, he loved April and he loved his kids and he loved his grandkids and his community. He loved this province. He loved this province, and I'll never forget that. And if I could be involved and show as much and care as much about my fellow colleagues and about my community half as much as he did, I'll be a very happy man. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to initially and first and foremost offer my condolences to Kevin's family: to his wife, April; and his children and grandchildren; and to his colleagues in the government, and just express the shock that we all felt this morning when we heard this terrible news.

Just a few comments about my connection with Kevin. When we were the class of 2011 — and yourself, Mr. Speaker, was one of those — and Kevin and I and I think the member from Moose Jaw North and Silverspring, we were chosen to sit on a committee to go to Ottawa. And it was just a couple of months after we got elected, so we were all still pretty new. And you'll recall that visit, I'm sure.

We went to Ottawa to sit in on a committee on the development . . . We were planning the development of the lobbyist registry, so we had been established as a standing committee to do that. And that's when I first got to know a number of the people who were elected the same time I was in the class of 2011. And my remembrances of Kevin, right from the get-go, was this warm friendliness that he would express.

And I was scared of those guys. I mean I was a new MLA, and it was terrifying in some ways to be the only new MLA on this side of the House when there was at least a dozen on that side of the House. So I was learning my way and I just felt, and I'm sure the rest of us that were at that conference felt that sort of easy friendliness that he brought with him to any conversation and just that gentle sort of almost laconic laid-backness that really put me at ease. And we had some great conversations right from the get-go. So I've always sort of cherished that opportunity because I met some of the new MLAs on a team basis rather than this adversarial world that we live in in this Chamber.

So that was sort of my initial encounters with Kevin, and of course since then, in the last six years, we've had a number of friendly exchanges. And as my leader expressed, it was always sort of that open friendliness and understanding why we're all here despite our differences maybe in a political level.

I always kind of thought he had this great voice and somewhat of an armchair philosopher. I always felt like Kevin could be the Lake Wobegon voice on a radio and tell these nice stories in that sort of lazy drawl that he had. And even when he got up in the House here, Mr. Speaker, it was sort of a gentle roll to his voice that just put me at ease except, of course, when he was railing on the previous government which he liked to do. But he always did that with a twinkle in his eye, and I really appreciated that as well. And we could go back and forth and enjoy those exchanges.

Certainly the Melfort sexual assault centre was something he was so very, very proud of. And I mean, that exemplified for me his ability to be self-deprecating because he was so proud of those high-heeled shoes, those red high-heeled shoes, and loved talking about it. And I mean, I have this image in my head. And it takes a brave man to do something like that, and I always sort of appreciated his willingness to sort of put himself in that position, in the self-deprecating . . .

In his speeches . . . I know the Premier shared some of his remarks, but I look to it at his recent Speech from the Throne and throughout his speeches, there is sort of a sprinkling of this, oh, you know, I'm not any great shakes but here it is. And I just want to share this quote from October 31st. So this is part of his speech, a reply to the Speech from the Throne. He said, "And I want to talk . . ." I'm sure you can all hear his voice. I'll do my best:

I want to talk just for a minute, about camping. I went camping this summer. It was probably not overly successful because I forgot the wind flap on the tent, but it was somewhat successful. But that's quality of life. You know, I think back to when my daughter was 13 years old and she wasn't a huge fan of camping and so she says to me, Dad, why do you work so hard all year long just so

you can live poor for two weeks? And you know, I thought, she's missing the point of camping. And I laugh about that every time I hear that they're back from camping for the weekend.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think — and it's clear from his speeches — that family was first and foremost for Kevin. His wife and his children, grandchildren, were the joy of his life. And I think because of them, he was willing to serve here in this Assembly, to serve in his community as mayor, and all the community efforts that he put in because he believed in his family. And that's why, I mean, he's still sad that his son had to move to Alberta during a different government, but that was part of it. He wanted his family near to him and close to home.

And when these kinds of tragic events hit us hard, I think it's a reminder to all of us of the Latin words *carpe diem*, seize the day, because these things are so shocking and so sudden. And I think if there's something for us to take away from this is to call our loved ones tonight and tell them we love them — probably at 9:30 would be a good time to do that — and to hug them and keep them close, and not just to forget from day to day how much we do love our families, how much they love us. And I think Kevin Phillips was an example of that for all of us. And I will miss his speeches and the exchanges we had here in the House, but certainly I will miss him as a man.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

[14:00]

**Mr. Michelson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we lost a colleague, but more than that, we lost a friend.

I guess I was blessed to know Kevin since somewhere around 1976 when we moved to Melfort. I was running a furniture store and he was the advertising for the *Melfort Journal* at the time. I can remember the first advertising we booked with him. Always very helpful, always there to try and do his best for his clients, and we were no exception. Later on I moved into radio, into sales, so we were actually in competition with each other. But with Kevin there was never any animosity. You didn't have to watch your back because of Kevin. You knew that he was a gentleman first and foremost, working for the community and for his clients. And he could never do enough for the community. It was always at Kevin's heart, was the community of Melfort.

We became even closer friends because we both belonged to the Kinsmen club. Mr. Speaker, here was a man with ideas. He had ideas that most of us would never scratch the surface with. One time there was a gathering of all the Kinsmen clubs for the province to meet in Moose Jaw. Well it was Kevin's idea, but we found this garage that had been abandoned. At the time it was empty. We hauled in truckloads of sand. Because Kevin worked at the paper, we had rolls of newspaper and we decorated all the walls. We even had a pool there, and had a beach party in the middle of February. We had the music and the bar and painted the walls so that the scenery was . . . it would go forever, the sand and the sky and the seagulls. And it just was an awesome event that we pulled off there. And he was always coming up with these kinds of things.

One time there was . . . all the billboards in Melfort were about Julius Caesar. At the car dealer, Julius Caesar drives our chariots. At the restaurants, Julius Caesar eats here. At the clothing store, Julius Caesar buys his apparel here. And nobody knew who Julius Caesar . . . what this was all about. And it went on for a few days, and finally it came out in the newspaper: it was part of a Kinsmen presidential campaign, that they were backing somebody that took on the character of Julius Caesar. But that's what he did. He got people involved. Can you imagine a car dealership putting up this on this marquee? And just ideas after ideas, just to build the enthusiasm of the community and do things.

One of his wildest ones . . . and I'm a little hesitant to even bring it up because it was such a great idea. There was an old, abandoned house on an acreage just a few miles out of town. It had been a family home forever. It was just one of those pieces of property you look at and you think, you know, at one time there was a family there; there was love and compassion and all the things that family does. And now here's this house, forlorn, abandoned, sitting there empty.

Kevin wanted to give it one last hurrah. He phoned the owners who had moved away and said, you know, your house is just dilapidated, but I'm sure you've got lots of memories there. He wanted to have one big party at this house just to send it off, and in the end, ignite it, have it burn up. That was the kind of ideas he had. It never materialized because there was just a fraction, an element of doubt that if some little thing went wrong, it could be a catastrophe. But that was his mind. That's what he was thinking, always looking out of the box. What can we do different? What can we do to make a splash?

Mr. Speaker, he did so much for the community. He did so much for the province. His leadership abilities were certainly evident here, and certainly in his community with his business entrepreneurship, his being the mayor of the city, and being elected here. And one of the . . . I don't think anybody ever had an unkind word, and he certainly didn't have an unkind word for anybody. He was just the kind of person you would love to sit down and just have a beer with. He was just that great of a guy. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I rise today on what is undoubtedly a very, very sad occasion. The shock, as the member for Nutana noted, this morning of hearing the news of Kevin's passing, I think hit all of us very hard. And I want to offer my sincere condolences to the members opposite, his legislative family; and of course his family — his children, and his grandchildren, and especially April.

I did sit on a committee with Kevin, and I had probably more seven-minute breaks than I should care to admit with him. And in those seven-minute breaks, I feel like I got a little bit of a sense of who he was, and I certainly looked forward to it. I won't blame the fact that I continued longer than I should've on him, but I did enjoy it when I was out there, the opportunity to speak with him.

And you know, I didn't ever meet April, but when he talked

about her, he lit up, and you could just tell how much he cared about her, and how proud he was of his family and his grandkids, and how proud he was of his community. He just glowed when he talked about where he was from, and his involvement in the community. And he did offer easy advice, and I found myself looking forward to his advice and his insights.

And I don't want to make this really lengthy, but there are a couple of things I wanted to say. The first was just how, having not met April, I could tell how much she meant to him, and how incredibly sad I am that they don't have each other anymore. And just to express those condolences.

But the other thing I really wanted to express, Mr. Speaker, is this. When we stand here day after day there is a lot of tension. There's a lot of division, and necessarily so perhaps at times. But when you were talking with Kevin, it was very, very easy to remember the things that we share to find common ground.

I'll never doubt his love of his community, his love of this province, his respect for all of you, his respect for this Assembly and the role that we play — public service. And I don't think anyone could question his love and devotion to his family

And I guess the third thing I wanted to say was just that you left a mark, Kevin, and we're going to miss you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Melville-Saltcoats.

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And certainly condolences to Kevin's family, and Kevin's family here as well. Kevin was a friend to everyone really in this caucus, but especially to the class of 2016. I know it was a rather intimidating place as we've heard when you first come here, and Kevin was one of those who had to find out who you are, what you're about, and what are your plans, what are you thinking. That was Kevin's way of introducing himself, I think, to each and every one of us, especially us as first years.

And you know, every time that we made a presentation — whether it was just a simple introduction or maybe it was a reply to the Throne Speech — as a minimum you'd get a nod and a wink, or you might get an "attaboy" or "you nailed it" or "good on you." Kevin made what was . . . really could be a rather intimidating place, a very friendly place. And I really, sincerely hope that we can all pay that forward sometime.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to add my condolences to the family of Kevin Phillips and his wife, April, and their children and their grandchildren, and to the members of the government side.

I too first met Kevin when he was the mayor of the city of Melfort. And he was a true champion of his citizens. I think the issue that we were talking about was housing and how he really, truly was, as the member from Moose Jaw . . . somebody who thought outside the box and looked for positive solutions for

everyone.

But most recently I had the opportunity, along with the member from Saskatoon Wildwood, to travel to Charlottetown for a Canadian parliamentarians' association conference with Kevin in October. And this was pretty special. It was Canada's 150th. But this is a real opportunity, when we get together for CPA [Commonwealth Parliamentary Association] conferences, where we get to know each other as people and our families, and I got to know April a little bit.

It was a pretty special conference. And Kevin, as many have noted how easy he is to make friends and conversation with, he was a really good ambassador for the province of Saskatchewan in Canada. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, you know, he's a true and principled parliamentarian. But he was asked to speak on behalf of the Turks and Caicos Islands delegation who could not be there because of the hurricanes, Irma and Maria, and the devastation. And he gave a very good presentation on their behalf. He's always thinking of others.

So thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Phillips family, Melfort, our House, and the province of Saskatchewan has indeed lost someone very special today, and our thoughts and prayers are with the family. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

**Mr. Docherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm going to actually ask for some help from my colleagues. Today I lost my friend Kevin, and we've lost our friend and colleague.

Kevin and I were "colleagues" for about one day. We were colleagues that almost immediately and instantly become friends. We were seatmates in the back corner when we were first elected in 2011. We sat beside each other in caucus from the start.

He'd bring me coffee, and sometimes it would be half full. I'd ask why, and he'd say, "Just because. It looks like that's all you can take today." We ate lunch together, and I'd always joke with the cafeteria staff that today I was going to get a free lunch as the millionth customer. I would do this every day and look with hope that the confetti would just suddenly start raining down and I'd get a free lunch. One day he got together with them and as they rang in my order, he excitedly said, "You won. You get a free lunch." They also had some makeshift confetti and threw it. Kevin said, "Are you happy now? You finally won." I said, "Yeah, I am. I am kind of happy. Thank you." And he said, "You're welcome. I don't want to hear about it again." I said, "All right."

We would leave the building at 5 o'clock together, telling one last anecdote from whatever the day brought. There wasn't a lot in common at first glance between the two of us — Melfort and Regina. I'd say, "Kevin, do you even have one bridge in Melfort?" He'd say, "Damn rights we do." And I went to Melfort, looked around for his bridge. I go, "Where is it?" And he finally, he took me to a park, and it was this little cross-bridge thing. And I said, "That's it?" He goes, "Yes, that's it, but it's still a bridge. You've got nothing in Coronation Park." I go, "Okay, fair enough."

We would joust and debate many topics if either of us was bored. It was a simple exercise to engage the other, and we would. He was fascinated by research. He would look at policy or criticism of policy and he would dissect. He knew there was more to an issue. Inevitably he would go off in some direction, and I'd make some snide comment, and he would convince me there was something there. He was embedded in the minutia, some factoid. He loved his factoids. Many of us would know he loved coming up with some sort of a fact and say, "There, I told you so. There's something in there."

We were seatmates for a few years in a place we referred to, in the back corner there, as the hinterland. We joked whether anybody knew we were there. There were occasions when the Speaker would just miss us and we'd stand up and we'd look and have to wave and go, "We're here." We would joke with our colleagues if they walked past. We would introduce ourselves to our colleagues that sat in the front row, and they would look at us with this puzzled look: "Why are you introducing yourselves? I know who you are." He said, "Do you really? We're just checking. We're in the back." They would never forget that one.

He would ask me a question and I'd think about it and maybe not answer immediately. He timed me one day and he said it took me 28 seconds to respond. He would happily relay this information to anyone, given the chance: "You know, it takes him an average of 28 seconds to respond. Is he the same with you?" And they'd say, "Yes, he is kind of stunned." I would accept that.

[14:15]

Maybe it was his ability to see the world differently. He was upbeat and hopeful. He believed in people. He was inquisitive. He asked questions. He was sometimes childlike. The world had not jaded him. He was a good and decent man. He was here to serve. He was honoured to represent Melfort. He fought for that shelter. And what hasn't been said is, it burned down. It had to be rebuilt. He was jaded and miserable for one day. He said, "We've got to get going. We've got to build it again." And away he went supporting it.

Most of all, he loved April and his kids, his grandkids. I had the opportunity to spend an awful lot of time with him and his family. He was just proud. He was just so proud — always family first.

Thanks for making a difference, Kevin Phillips. Rest easy, my friend.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Brkich:** — You know, I'm just like everybody in this House today. I was in shock when I heard the news. I still am in shock. I want to send my condolences to April and his family.

I never knew Kevin before political life, but I'd heard of him before. Heard of him before from the member for Melfort. Heard about him from our party people when he was seeking a nomination. And they spoke glowingly of him, just saying that . . . I know I remember Rod just saying, you know, you couldn't get a better guy to represent that area than Kevin. And he was



right.

As we, as all members here — men and women — first get elected, we all come here with ideas. We're going to change the world, make a difference, leave the partisan at home. But a lot of MLAs lose that after a number of years. Kevin never did. He came here to represent the people of Melfort and to make Saskatchewan a better place, and he did. I mean look at the centre and what he did for that. And I remember how hard he fought for that. He walked . . . the many miles he walked in them shoes. He'd have walked a thousand miles to get that centre for the people of Melfort. That's the kind of man he was.

He's a man that I think that everybody here would still like to be, representing their constituents, because he never forgot that. He, in all the years I've worked with him on the leadership team, never lost his temper. He was always cool, calm, and collect. A lot of days I'd be, you know, a little on edge at times and, you know, just things. And you want to get calmed down with House business or committee business, and you always talked to Kevin. He could always just kind of bring a perspective to why we're here and that there's always something more than political life, which was his family.

His family was very important to him. He talked about them constantly and, you know, as I listen to the tributes from both sides of the House, I mean, everybody's right. There was a man that was, that never cared as much for this province and for his family. The last few times . . . Last week we talked. I was with Kevin when he had his injury. He tore his Achilles, and we were on the football field with special-needs children. You know, and he never, he didn't even think he hardly got hurt. He didn't want to show, in front of them kids, he didn't want them to get upset. And I always think back, when I injured myself just recently, I wasn't like that. I wish I could've been as tough as he was. I remember him being helped off the field. He just said to the kids, "I'm all right. I'm just stretched a little bit. I just want to go rest." And then he was telling me how, you know, he had to . . . I told him I was having a little trouble sleeping, you know, with this brace, and he always said, well he had used a pillow, and different things. And we talked about our injuries, mostly giving me a rough time about them.

But I'll miss him. I'll miss his advice, even though I've been here a lot longer than he has been. He knew his job, and if I needed to ask him anything, being Deputy Whip, he knew it. And if he said it, you knew it was right. He never ever told you . . . He never guessed at anything. If he said a statement or said something, you knew that you could take it to the bank. You knew that it was right. I didn't have to go to the book and look it up in the rules and regulations. He knew it, you know, if he said it. I'm going to miss him here as all of us will.

He was a steady influence and somebody that, when I finish my career, that I would like to look back on my career, as people are going to look back on his, and say he made a difference, because he did. He made a difference to the people in his constituency. He made a difference to the people in this province. And I think he made a difference to each and every one of us in this House.

He will be remembered for what he has done, for what he has accomplished. He will be remembered in the city of Melfort.

And for that I will thank him, as many people will in the time to come. I just know that I'm going to miss him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

### TRANSMITTAL MOTION

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to all of the members who have so eloquently offered tributes.

I would like to move a motion of transmittal of these statements that have been made. And just before I do, I want to finish off the quote that I leaned heavily on for my remarks that came from Kevin's maiden speech. The rest of the quote is as follows. He says, ". . . I have led a life of security, and family, and community." And then he switches to his hometown of Kinistino, and he says, "It was a place where each of us looked after each other and watched out for each other. It was just the way things were done and the way things still are done."

Well, Mr. Speaker, we need to look after each other, especially April and the family, in the days ahead. I have talked to members today who said they remembered them walking hand in hand in the hallways on Throne Speech day. They were just a wonderful couple, and I can't really fathom the loss that April is feeling right now. And so we need to make sure that all of us are looking out for those who are just most bereaved by this very tragic loss.

And so it is with that sentiment in mind, Mr. Speaker, that I will move:

That this House send to the family of Kevin Phillips a copy of the tributes and statements of condolence on his passing and that the transcripts be sent under the cover of letter of transmittal signed by Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The Premier has moved the motion. We'll take the statement as read. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved that this Assembly do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. This Assembly now stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:24.]



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