

VIEWPOINTS

Editorial

How do you love thee (rink)?

What is life in a small town without a rink like?

Residents of Vibank could be about to find out, pending the outcomes of a town hall meeting coming up on Wednesday.

Even today, in an era of shrinking budgets, declining rural populations and decreasing numbers of volunteers, there are still precious few communities of any significant size in Saskatchewan without an indoor hockey rink, curling rink, or both.

Just as small-town America is built around its drinking establishments, small-town Canada is largely built around its indoor ice surfaces.

And it's entirely in the realm of possibility that Vibank could soon be without either.

It's not being alarmist. It's reality.

The first big question to be answered at the community meeting is how many people in town actually care.

Know that a chronic shortage of volunteers is as much a part of the problem as the estimated \$65,000 bill to replace the ice plant.

There are options of course. Local fundraisers or, in their absence, a significant tax increase or levy to cover that cost. Or perhaps a year with natural ice instead until sufficient funds can be raised.

But village council cannot (and in all likelihood will not) proceed with that purchase in good conscience without knowing there will be people ready, willing and available to quite literally keep the lights on, on a long-term basis.

Which potentially leads to the final, and most dire option: A year (or more) without an operational arena of any kind.

The guess here is that many in town were simply unaware of the depth of the issues facing the rink, rather than apathetic toward it.

Even for the indifferent, however, it may be worthwhile to consider all of those who do use the rink: Everyone who comes to town for Quad Town Rebels games and practices, adult rec hockey, public skating, the annual Chicks with Sticks tournament out of Regina, and so many more.

And do you know what those people do while they are in town? They spend money. At places like the gas station, meat market, grocery store and restaurant.

Anyone who's ever run a business in a small town knows how tight profit margins can be.

It's fair to question whether or not the Vibank rink is viable (or necessary) at all, with newer, nicer facilities not so far away in Odessa, White City and Indian Head. But in asking that question, it's also important to remember the support the rink offers to the amenities that are enjoyed by everyone in town — whether they use the rink or not.

When you support your rink, you support your entire community.

When you don't ... well, let's just hope that we don't collectively decide to find out what happens.

Vevang - Quit 'bugging' me



Glennys Vevang

Dear People of Saskatchewan: Please stop posting nasty videos of your tent caterpillars on social media. They are a real buzzkill to my outdoor experience.

I remember a time when I fearlessly burned them from the tree in our front yard, but I am no longer that warrior. Bugs irritate me. (Okay, maybe not ladybugs. There is something genteel and refined about them, daintily crawling up a blade of grass, timidly looking about, as if for directions to the nearest mint julep.)

Grasshoppers, on the other hand, always seem to be positioning themselves for a leap directly towards me; and I have memories of those mindless caterpillars sliding down my hair towards my shirt front.

It's gotten so bad, I only walk on the sunny side of the street. And yes, I know that is a song ref-

erence, but I'm not even kidding. I walk on the street side, with no trees.

The same goes for your ticks. Keep them. We don't want them, those bloated, blood engorged parasites. I know in my sensible mind, they probably live here too, but within my manicured, suburban Alberta patch of chemical-enhanced greenness, I prefer not to think about them.

I have nothing good to say about moths either. We have a few here, but nothing like the summer evening frat parties, that take place under every porch light in Saskatchewan. How do I even get TO the house besieged as it is, by swarms of Millers looking for a good time in my hair?

They bring to mind, images of rowdy college students, bumping into one another in inebriated good humor. Except for their soulless compound eyes, which vault them into the creepy clown category.

Horseflies deserve a special kind of hell, one where they are bitten back, times a million, by every animal, or human who has been on their receiving end. They are a squadron of flesh eaters. A winged zombie apocalypse, relentlessly tormenting horses and swimmers, just waiting for exposed flesh to present itself. It's how I learned to

bob and breathe. Underwater was safer than above the water.

I can't figure out when things changed. I used to catch crickets in glass jars and pull long spindly legs off spiders without a qualm. Sorry arachnologists, but bugs were a part of life and death. Now I'm skittish about all of them.

I think it's the big-box store displays. They start beckoning in February, with the siren call of a fake nature. It's a sensory rich getaway for the winter weary. No wind, no dust, no bugs. Coordinated dinner-ware and trendy patio lighting invite me to come sit - enjoy! I want to spend all my time in that hammock, sheltered from the elements by the \$1,200 cabana, reclining on those sumptuous cushions, listening to the background music of waterfalls and bird calls.

How easily I am swayed. I can't seem to remember weeds, and wind, and bugs. I forget my plastic lawn chair, hordes of mosquitoes, and rogue ants traversing my legs, headed for my nether regions. I'm a sucker for commercial version of the season.

Keep your bugs, Saskatchewan. I've figured out my summer experience is at the mall, and I'd best get going. Summer doesn't last forever.

A Bard's Eye Review - The volleyball scene from Top Gun



Brad Brown

I was originally going to file this column under "Confession Time." After watching the movie Top Gun for the first time on Saturday, I changed course, knowing full well that all along there was no shame to be felt in having not seen it at any time in the first 30 years since its

release.

It also became clear that I could not in good conscience review the movie in its entirety without mentioning the volleyball scene, and that this scene alone would require a full column's worth of words.

(See also: A one-way trip down the highway to the danger zone.)

But where this story actually starts is back in the early spring of 2012 or 2013.

I'd been part of an annual regular-season NHL draft for a few years. There were always a few token dollars involved just to make things interesting, but over the years the real grand prize came to

involve naming rights for the next season's draft.

So that spring, a Vancouver Canucks fan of questionable morals (as though there is any other kind??) — let's call him "Tyrel" — caught lightning in a bottle over the last few weeks of the season and won the whole thing.

His request, complete with a seven-pixel screen grab to represent our group chat, was that we name our next draft "The Volleyball Scene from Top Gun Hockey Draft."

Now I like awful '80s movies as much as the next guy. (Seriously, show me someone who doesn't include both Robocop and Roadhouse on their Mount

Rushmore of all-time greats — any genre — and I'll show you a damn liar.)

But I'll never be confused for a fan of Tom Cruise and his smug, stilted delivery, so I confessed I'd never seen the movie, offered a sympathy laugh at the reference, and dutifully obliged with the name selection for the next year's draft.

Five-ish years later, I finally discovered what all the hype was about.

Not regarding the movie, which was about as awful as I'd hoped and expected.

The volleyball scene, on the other hand ... wow. Just wow.

You can't have an action movie without a

training montage, and for those of you who've ever dreamed of becoming an elite fighter pilot, this is pretty much the definitive how-to.

Step 1: Take off your shirt.

Step 2: Attempt to drown yourself in baby oil.

Step 3: Crank up the Kenny Loggins. (This is actually the only life scenario in which it is acceptable to listen to Kenny Loggins, at any volume.)

Step 4: Trade in your shorts for skinny jeans. (Because if you can not only play but win a game of beach volleyball in slim-fit denim, you can do ANYTHING.)

Step 5: Shirk your

responsibilities and bail on the obligatory rematch because you're trying to get some from one of your attractive (really??) superiors.

Actual flying experience? Not required. (The rest of the movie was truly just filler that did nothing to advance the story. Move over, Rocky.)

The big question left unanswered by the scene is whether or not this approach can be applied to other career paths as well.

We may be at war with science and facts and other inconveniences at this point in our history, but this is one subject that is absolutely begging to be studied.

Race you to the lab.

The Forum

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