



## Balcarres has something for everyone

Balcarres is a thriving community of 600 at the intersection of Highways 310 and 10.

Two American Civil War veterans, Thomas Cavanaugh and Thomas Kelly, moved from the Dakotas and "squatted" on land in the district in the early 1880s. The new community was named for Balcarres Crawford, a postmaster in Indian Head.

While other settlers soon arrived, it wasn't until the CPR came through in 1903 that Balcarres grew into a town.

Balcarres is a very active community with a lot to offer visitors. The ball diamonds invite many friendly games, and kids can get some exercise on the playground equipment. Children can also take part in soccer. There is also a lot to offer the adults: activities such as badminton and volleyball are held in the school gym and a fastball league was recently brought back to life after a short hiatus.

The town also boasts a modern Kindergarten to Grade 12 school and adult education center.

April 22 area residents hosted a volunteer supper to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the new Balcarres Integrated Care Centre, which includes acute care beds. Also the Balcarres Care Home opened in the spring of 2005 in the old, but newly renovated, hospital.

It's also close to the Qu'Appelle Valley, where you can fish, swim, or go canoeing in one of the four nearby lakes.

In May the community plans to host a horticultural plant sale, however, the dates were not available at press time. Also in May the town's dance troupe hosts their annual showcase events. May 23 the Balcarres Business Association will hold a garage sale day. The town's Community in Bloom Committee is hosting a hot dog and hamburger sale in conjunction with the garage sale.

Golfers might want to mark June 27 on their calendars. That's the day of the Balcarres Broncs Golf Tournament.

The Canada Day sports day features ball games. It's a great way to spend the day dedicated to our nation. Also in August, organizers plan to hold a demolition derby.

Another major event — the Mud Bog — will be held again this year but dates weren't available at press time.

Four First Nations - Peepeekisis, Little Black Bear, Okanese, and Star Blanket - lie near the town. They also hold pow-wows and other celebrations during the summer where you can see a colorful and important part of the prairie's history and culture.

There's also a fall fair and fall supper Oct. 17 and 18. Take in the craft and quilt show and other activities.

In the winter the community is close to cross-country ski trails, and only a few minutes away from the Mission Ridge Ski Hill. The town also has a curling rink and skating rink.

In December the Balcarres Lions Club host a Santa Day at the community rink and Parks and Recreation will hold a rink fun day at the same time. The Lions also hold an auction supper in April. Also in April, the Art Club also hosts an art show. The town's fire department also holds a sno-pitch tournament in February.

The Curling Club also holds the Ladies, Mixed and Seniors bonspiels in January and February.

Speaking of winter events, the town hosts the Joe Trapp Memorial Hockey Tournament in the fall for senior hockey players.

Town residents are also proud of their new reverse-osmosis water treatment plant, which was built recently.



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