

# PPCMP Update

April  
2015

A newsletter from Saskatchewan's Provincial Partnership Committee on  
Missing Persons[PPCMP]

Issue  
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## Missing Persons Week 2015

### A Community's Response to Missing Persons

The third annual Missing Persons Week will be held in Saskatchewan from May 3-9, 2015. The opening ceremony will occur at the TC Douglas Building, 3475 Albert Street, Regina on Monday, May 4 at 9:30am. This year's theme, *A Community's Response to Missing Persons*, will explain what happens when a missing person report is filed with the police.

The week will highlight the work of police investigators, search and rescue volunteers, and various support services like police-based Victim Services. Community-based organizations are also invited to showcase how they support families of missing persons in the short and long-term. The week will also review the myths around missing persons cases and the reasons why people go missing and what can be done to prevent people from going missing.



Missing Persons Week ceremonies include an open chair for every missing person in the province.

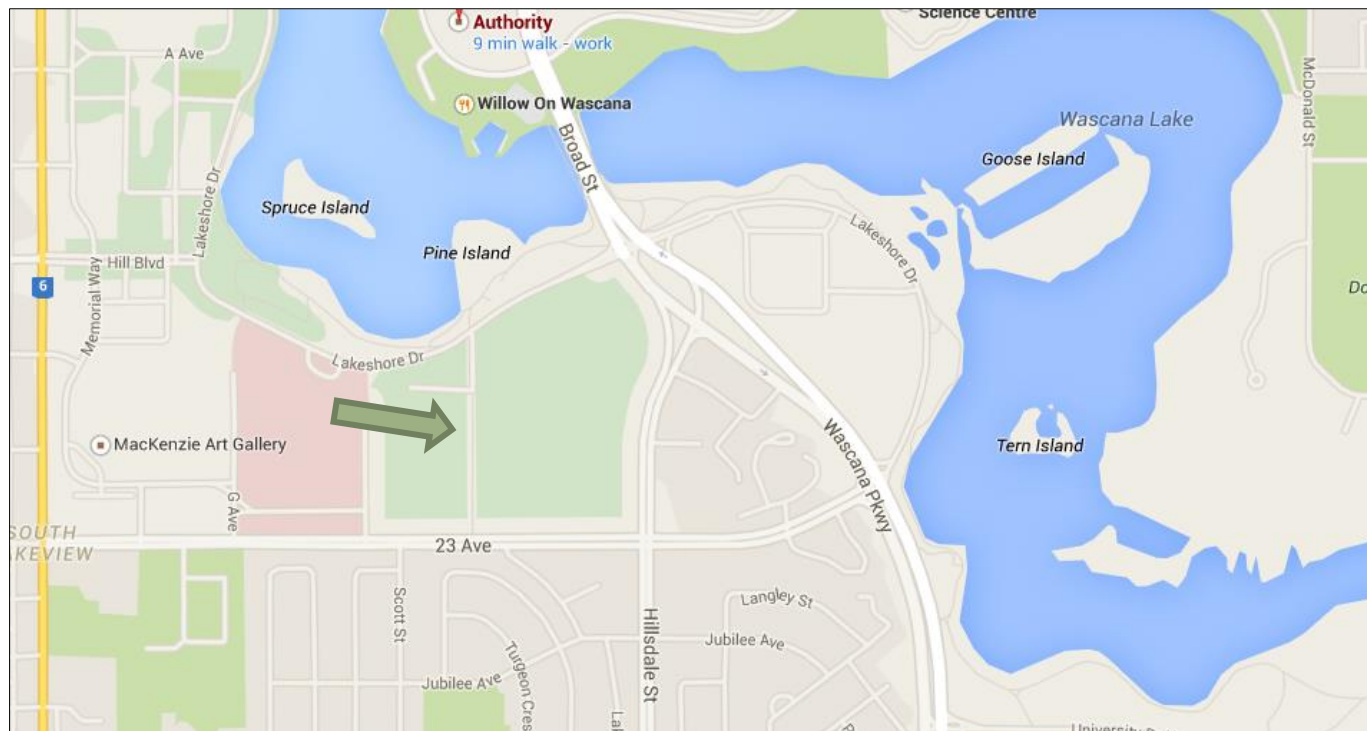
As always, social media will play a significant role during Missing Persons Week. Throughout the week, everyone is invited to follow the fictional case of Ima Missing using the hashtag #ImaMissing on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Each day will address a different aspect of the investigation process:

- Monday: What to do when someone goes missing;

- Tuesday: The role of police and search and rescue volunteers;
- Wednesday: The role of community agencies;
- Thursday: The role of communities themselves; and
- Friday: Possible outcomes of a missing persons investigation.

# Saskatchewan Missing Persons Tree

## What it is and where to find it



The location of the Saskatchewan Missing Persons Tree planted by the PPCMP.

The PPCMP understands the importance of providing families with a way to recognize the importance of every missing person. That's why it has planted the Saskatchewan Missing Persons Tree. An oak tree was selected for its longevity and historical recognition as a symbol of strength, courage and endurance. The tree was planted in Regina's Wascana Park in an area that is currently under development. It's the committee's hope that in time the surrounding area will also include seating and/or a bricked patio area where families may wish to honour their missing person.

The Missing Persons Tree was dedicated in Wascana Park, Regina on Friday, September 19, 2014 at the end of a week of workshops for families. Families of missing persons were invited to attend or to write a note to be placed at the root of the tree. The tree

dedication ceremony included a reading of The Sacred Tree by Judie Bopp (page 4). Participants took turns adding a shovel full of soil to represent each of the long term missing persons in Saskatchewan. A plaque identifying the tree will be installed this spring.



PPCMP members dedicated the tree in Regina's Wascana Park on September 19, 2014.

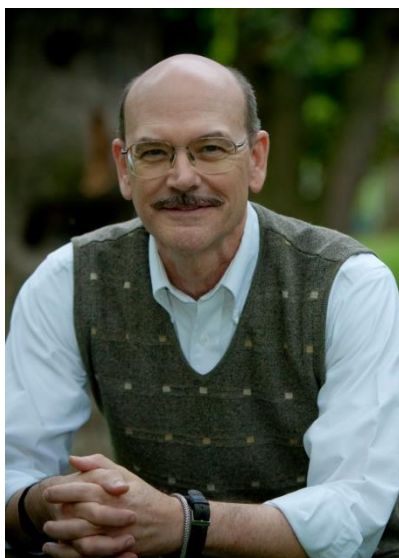
## Helping families cope with loss

### The Unique Experience of Families of Missing Persons

On September 16, 2014, the PPCMP hosted a one-day workshop in Saskatoon for agencies that support the families of missing persons (1990 to current). More than 80 people from all over the province attended the event.

The day began with a brief update on the PPCMP. Then Sylvia Keall, Greystone Bereavement Centre Program Consultant for Families of Missing Persons, made a presentation titled *Ambiguous Loss: Living with Absence*. Keall has been developing counselling services for families of missing persons. The ambiguous sense of loss experienced by families of missing persons differs from the sense of loss experienced by families of the deceased, the latter of which is Greystone's traditional clientele. Consequently, materials for missing persons counselling had to be modified.

Keynote speaker Duane T Bowers presented *What Is Happening with Me?* Bowers, an American author and Licensed Professional



Duane T Bowers is an American Licensed Professional Counselor.

Counselor and Educator, focused on the chemical changes that affect the body, especially the brain, when people experience traumatic loss.

Following these presentations there was a Q&A session during which agencies asked for improved and increased communication from the PPCMP—which this newsletter seeks to do—and suggested the need for more training for police dealing with missing person cases.

Just over a third of participants offered feedback that was overwhelmingly positive.

Participants greatly appreciated Mr. Bowers' presentation and appreciated the opportunity to network.

In addition to the agency workshop, Bowers and Keall also spoke to families of missing persons living in central Saskatchewan on September 17 (Saskatoon), in northern Saskatchewan on September 18 (via the Telehealth network) and in the south of the province on September 19 (Regina). The Missing Persons Liaison also helped some families of missing persons unable to attend in person to participate in the Regina session via Skype.

Families say they were satisfied with the events, describing them as informative. They advised Keall that they were interested in support group and one-to-one counselling sessions and said more support is needed for the children of missing persons and the family members who take care of them. Since the events, Sylvia has organized several sessions with individuals and families at their request.

*The Vision of the Saskatchewan Provincial Partnership Committee for Missing Persons (PPCMP) is to “work towards a future that ensures that when people go missing, there is a full response that mobilizes necessary participants and that recognizes the equal value in every life.”*

## Committee Member Profile

### The Provincial Partnership Committee on Missing Persons (PPCMP)

The PPCMP is a collaboration of government, police, community-based organizations and First Nations and Métis representatives which works to improve the response to missing persons cases in Saskatchewan. It also engages with other agencies and meets with families of long-term missing persons from time to time as resources and opportunities allow. Learn about our members in each issue of this newsletter.

The PPCMP consists of members from the following organizations:

- Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan
- Child Find Saskatchewan
- Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN)
- Greystone Bereavement Centre
- Métis Family and Community Justice Services, Saskatchewan
- Government of Saskatchewan:
  - Education
  - Government Relations
    - Office of the Provincial Interlocutor
- Health
- Justice – Attorney General
  - Office of the Chief Coroner
  - Community Services Branch
  - Counsel for Children
  - Victims Services Branch
- Social Services
  - Child and Family Services
  - Status of Women Office
- Saskatchewan Police Commission
- RCMP F Division
- Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women’s Circle Corporation
- Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police (SACP)
- Saskatchewan Towards Offering Partnership Solutions to Violence (STOPS)
- Search And Rescue Saskatchewan Association of Volunteers (SARSAV)

#### ***The Sacred Tree***

***- Judie Bopp***

*For all the people of the earth, the Creator has planted a Sacred Tree under which they all may gather, and there find healing, power, wisdom and security.*

*The roots of this tree spread deep into the body of Mother Earth. Its branches reach upward like hands praying to Father Sky.*

*The fruits of this tree are the good things the Creator has given to the people: teachings that show the path to love, compassion, generosity, patience, wisdom, justice, courage, respect, humility and many other wonderful gifts*

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