



## *Tell Your Story Newsletter (TYSN):*

*Specializing in Entrepreneurial and Organizational Storytelling*

*Let me tell your story!*

### **Welcome Mid-May, 2020!**

With spring in Saskatchewan finally upon us, trees budding and early perennials now blooming, I'm delighted to send you this issue of "Tell Your Story Newsletter."

Although we are still in the grip of Covid-19 and the necessary guidelines for self-distancing, we've also been heartened by Saskatchewan's success in "flattening the curve," with all of the sacrifices we've made to get, and stay, there.

While the media often stress the negatives of the pandemic, there have been flashpoints of light arising from artists and writers, notably the UK's spoken word poet, Tomos Roberts, whose children's poem, "[The Great Realization](#)," has garnered international interest from readers of all ages.

Closer to home, Saskatchewan creatives continue to work, keenly anticipating the re-opening of some much needed services. Many of us explore the significance of this time--this pause--on the rest of our lives and on our global future.

We think more than ever about living locally, embodied perfectly in the culinary community by Saskatoon writer Jenn Sharp's timely new book, *Flat Out Delicious: Your Definitive Guide to Saskatchewan's Food Artisans*. And we also think about the language we use--or misuse--to communicate in this time of uncertainty, sometimes with comic effect.

This month's issue of "Tell Your Story Newsletter" addresses some aspects of these two issues.

Home "truths" sound deceptively simple: Breathe deeply. Walk daily. Don't overthink. Put away your screens to spend time consciously in nature. As much as possible, respect those with whom you live--especially when you differ. Our time on this planet is so fleeting.

*Elizabeth*

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## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

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## **SHOP NEWS**

## **ABOUT US**

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**Article One Living Local: Jenn Sharp's New Book Promotes Saskatchewan Farmers and Culinary Entrepreneurs**

Although in the past I have written an occasional case study or article, or edited a cookbook on the food industry in Saskatchewan (e.g. the Fruit Breeding Program at the U of S; the Food Industry Development Centre's extrusion technology; a cookbook for the Saskatchewan Mustard Development Commission), I do not qualify as a food writer.

All the same, I have much enjoyed the articles or books of Amy Jo Ehman, Renee Kohlman and Penny McKinlay, amongst others. And I was intrigued to learn a few weeks ago that freelance journalist, writer and agricultural consultant, Jenn Sharp, was about to

launch her first book, *Flat Out Delicious: Your Definitive Guide to Saskatchewan's Food Artisans* (TouchWood Editions, 2020).

I admire any writer who responds to the restrictions of Covid-19 by launching a book over social media. And I was thrilled after tuning in to Sharp's Facebook Live launch, to learn I'd been awarded a copy, just for caring to participate! How lovely of her to give me an autographed copy of this fascinating and beautifully produced "travelogue." Thank you, Jenn!

Published by TouchWood Editions (in BC), *Flat Out Delicious* features 167 of Sharp's interviews with producers from small-scale farmers and city gardeners to beekeepers, ranchers, chefs, winemakers, chocolatiers and more. The book is a treasure trove for lifelong Saskatchewanians and newbies, alike.

Starting in 2018 and funded by Tourism Saskatchewan, Sharp, along with good

friend, veteran *StarPhoenix* photographer, Richard Marjan, took a 20,000 km summer-to-autumn road trip, visiting far-flung corners of the province. The book features hundreds of Marjan's colourful and engaging photographs that reinforce Sharp's writing on how "modest" Saskatchewan is home to some of the country's "most innovative and delicious food."

As Sharp herself says, "You don't have to be a foodie to participate in local food culture in the province. The book is a travelogue intended to inspire you to fall in love with Saskatchewan."

When Covid-19 broke and spoiled her original plans to launch the book, Sharp adapted, as Saskatchewan producers do. In fact, she thrived: the pandemic became the perfect backdrop for launching the book on social media on May 5th. The virtual event intensified the effect of her live statement that "the book is about connecting to Mother Earth: one way to do so is to pay attention to your food."

Sharp talked to farmers and to chefs, who also talk to farmers, penning a "Call-to-Action to readers, to slow down and go inward," in these times. "To spend time with our families [and] get to know where our food comes from is a glorious outcome" of pandemic times.

She said, further, to her online guests: "We are at a crossroads . . . We have the power to create the local food system we want in Saskatchewan." By buying locally, even partly,

we can make a difference: “Every dollar you spend on local food, you have a direct, positive impact on our food system, the environment, everything . . . . Every dollar you spend at a farmgate store, at an independent retailer, stocking food from local farmers, at local food hubs, at independent restaurants, using products from local growers, or a vegetable subscription box, or a side of beef, that’s all it takes. You’re having a . . . positive impact on our food system, our environment, our health, everything. It’s something all of us can do, easily.”

During the launch, we heard about the Muirhead family who farm wild rice in remote Northern Saskatchewan (page 43) ; and about Anna Schaab, who with her husband Darrel hand-grows gourmet garlic near Yorkton, saying “It’s a an honour to be a Saskatchewan farmer, because customers are loyal and love local” ( page 165).

Also contributing to Sharp’s launch (but not included in the book itself) was Indian-born chef, Milton Rebello, who cooked a savoury Portuguese recipe with local bison meat, the kind of fare he prepares at Skye Restaurant, in Regina. Rebello observed that support for local restauranteurs in pandemic times is crucial, because these chefs love to incorporate

the intense flavours and nutrients that only locally grown ingredients have.

As a graduate student in Southern Ontario twenty years ago, I remember meeting several students who subscribed to the old stereotype that Saskatchewan was “flat and boring,” and those who hail from it, second-rate "ne'er-do-wells." Even in a class on post-colonial fiction, those stereotypes were (and sometimes still are) very hard to shake.

But the detailed thought and sensitivity that *Flat Out Delicious* shows in telling stories about local food culture enable Sharp's book to do just that. As she writes, “If you take the time to truly feel and experience Saskatchewan, this land will become part of your soul.”

STORYTELLER'S CORNER . . . .

### **STORYTELLER'S CORNER:**

#### **Words, Stories and Riddles on Writing and Editing**

This Month: On "Mondegreens," from American copywriter and marketer, Ann Handley

Last month, I discussed the “eggcorn,” a figure of speech that consists of a coincidental mishearing of a phrase, creating a pun that carries a second, often humorous, meaning. An eggcorn is a subcategory of a larger word phenomenon, that is called a “mondegreen.”

Drawing on American marketer Ann Handley’s bestselling 2014 book, *Everybody Writes: Your Go-To Guide to Creating Ridiculously Good Content*, I share that the “mondegreen” is an example of a word that results from a similar kind of mishearing of a phrase.

Handley says the “granddaddy of all mondegreens” is “Scuse Me while I kiss this guy,” a distortion from Jimi Hendrix’s 1967 song lyric: “Scuse me while I kiss the sky.”

Other examples of mondegreens include “cross-eyed bear” for “cross I bear;” and “coming down the pipe” instead of “coming down the pike.”

The term “mondegreen” comes from the Scottish writer Sylvia Write (a good writer's name, if ever there was one!), who misinterpreted the following lines of a Scottish ballad, "They hae slain the Earl o' Moray and laid him on the green" as "They hae slain the Earl o' Moray and Lady Mondegreen." Handley reports that the error was reported in a 1954 article in “Harper’s Magazine.”

As Handley writes, “language is a growing, fluid thing.” In these challenging times, some of that growth and fluidity are destined to make us laugh.

*Have you come across any eggcorns, mondegreens or other puns, in these pandemic times? Please share on my "contact" page. I'd be delighted to hear from you.*

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## **ABOUT US:**

Between 2011 and 2018, Elizabeth Shih Communications chronicled the stories of Business-to-Business marketing and communications on the Prairies and across the country.

In January 2019, I rebranded as "Storytelling Communications." I now help small- and medium-sized businesses to close more sales by communicating more effectively; I help newcomers to Canada secure better jobs by strengthening their career documents; and I write ebooks and chapbooks that promote the legacies of major companies.

Interested in learning more? Please contact me through my CASL-compliant website.

After I receive your message, I'd be delighted to discuss projects with you!

Please visit my website for more information ([www.storytellingcommunications.ca](http://www.storytellingcommunications.ca)).

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### SHOP NEWS:

I'm pleased to report that I am fast at work interviewing alumni for a microsite promotion on the 30th anniversary of the Praxis School of Entrepreneurship, of which I am both an alumna (2018/19) and an occasional facilitator.

Along with creative partners and fellow alumni, Megan Kent ([Little Ox Film Company](#)), and Christina Cherneskey ([Christina Cherneskey Communications](#)), I am interviewing entrepreneurs and collaborators from the past 30 years to tell their "success stories." The project will be released, intermittently, over upcoming months, and may include an alumni directory. So stay tuned for updates!

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I continue to facilitate a module on media releases and, shortly, on business letters of introduction, to Praxis students in phase two of their preparation.

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And in fleeting moments, I have started to plan my next book, which I hope to publish locally.