

FLAMES A BUST IN VEGAS

Four-game losing streak 'getting old' **B1**



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THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT



JIM WELLS

James Alison holds his granddaughter, Aurora Boreal Alison, at the Spruce Meadows International Christmas Market in Calgary on Sunday. More than 400 vendors show their Christmas spirit in indoor and outdoor venues.

WestJet signs deal to grow Indigenous tourism sector

Partnership with non-profit organization targets attracting international visitors

AMANDA STEPHENSON

WestJet Airlines has formed a new partnership aimed at helping to grow Canada's Indigenous tourism sector, a move that could lead to the airline selling authentic cultural tourism packages to Eu-

ropeans and other international visitors. The Calgary-based airline announced earlier this week that it has signed a three-year, \$100,000 deal with the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC), an Indigenous-led non-profit organization

that markets travel experiences and tours offered by Indigenous peoples, communities and businesses across the country.

The deal will see WestJet collaborate with ITAC on marketing materials and videos that will highlight Canada's Indigenous cultures and communities in the WestJet magazine and on the airline's inflight entertainment system. WestJet will also work with ITAC to help existing

Indigenous-led tourism businesses enhance and develop their products — with an international visitor in mind.

"If you think of WestJet Vacations, right now it's focused on Canadians going down south," said Arved von zur Muehlen, WestJet's chief commercial officer. "But we also want to bring more guests into Canada. So the Indigenous product that we define and that we feel is export-ready, we will even be able to sell on our own platform in the future."

WestJet has been quietly working to increase connections with Indigenous communities since the airline's new CEO, Ed Sims, took over in 2018.

SEE WEST JET ON **A2**

Even without Stamps, Calgary set for spirited Grey Cup party

BILL KAUFMANN

Grey Cup fever in Calgary has been cooled by the no-show of the hometown Stampeders in next weekend's big game, says a quarterback of the event's spirit squad.

But one of the people carrying on the tradition begun in 1948, when 14 train cars of raucous Stampeders fanatics invaded Toronto for the Grey Cup, said the city will rise above that setback.

"It's a disappointment not having the home team in the final when it's hosted by your own city," said Alexander (Sandy) Dubyk, spokesman for the Calgary Grey Cup Committee.

"It's going to be a damper, for sure, but Calgary's in a unique po-

sition that the Grey Cup Festival committee's done a great job ... it's a national party no other championship has."

The Stampeders have won their way into five of the past seven Grey Cup games but were defeated by the Winnipeg Blue Bombers in the CFL West Division semifinal showdown on Nov. 10.

But the defending champs, who put up a 12-6 regular-season record this year, were challenged by numerous injuries and personnel changes.

That Grey Cup absence won't put a halt to any of the Calgary Grey Cup Committee's traditional hijinks, which will include a hotel walk-through by quarter horse Tuffy on Thursday.

The hotel is being kept a secret,

with fans invited to guess the location on social media.

And the committee is teaming up with the Calgary Stampeders to host a series of pancake breakfasts beginning Thursday morning.

Calgary Coun. Shane Keating will join colleagues Ward Sutherland and Ray Jones in flipping flapjacks.

"We have to take the good with the disappointing but this is still a great way to show the country what Calgary's all about," said Keating.

He noted how the city gave the 2026 Winter Olympic bid a pass, due largely to concerns over costs, while the XGames in Calgary met the same fate after the province pulled its funding and sufficient corporate sponsorship failed to materialize.

"There are some things in the political world that are worth the money and this is one of them," said Keating.

SEE CUP ON **A3**

SPORTS

NHL

Babcock's days with Leafs may be numbered **B1**

FOOTBALL

Dinos to face Carabins in Vanier Cup **B2**

