

## WEEK IN REVIEW

### WORLD

#### Ex-Chilean dictator dies

Former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, who seized power in a military coup that toppled Salvador Allende in 1973, died of heart failure last Sunday at 91.

Once described as "one of the great murderers of this century," he went to his grave without ever being convicted of a crime.



Augusto Pinochet

### CANADA

#### Search for Gainey called off

The U.S. and Canadian coast guards called off the air search Tuesday for Laura Gainey, the 25-year-old daughter of Montreal Canadiens general manager Bob Gainey. She was swept overboard the previous Friday while sailing on a tall ship east of Cape Cod, Mass.



Laura Gainey

### CRIME

#### Wife killer on suicide watch

Michael White, an Edmonton man recently found guilty of killing his wife, Liana, was put under suicide watch after injuring himself, the Herald reported Monday.

White was found with minor cuts from ear to ear along his throat, along his wrists and up to his elbows, a source told CanWest News Service.



Michael White

### ALBERTA

#### Stelmach sets priorities

Premier-designate Ed Stelmach outlined "the new Alberta agenda," Wednesday as he detailed five priorities for his government, announced the framework for an oilsands royalty review and slashed the number of government departments from 24 to 18.

Stelmach's five priorities are governing with integrity and transparency, managing growth pressures, improving Albertans' quality of life, building a stronger Alberta and providing safe communities.

### SPORTS

#### Klassen named top athlete

Alberta speed skater Cindy Klassen — Canada's star at the Turin Olympics — won the 2006 Lou Marsh Award as Canada's athlete of the year Monday.

The 27-year-old Canmore resident beat out two-time NBA MVP Steve Nash and baseball's American League MVP Justin Morneau.



Cindy Klassen

## FAITH AND REASON

# Rev. Elvis takes pulpit for Blue Christmas

### Faith movement finds Christ in the blues

GRAEME MORTON  
CALGARY HERALD

Rev. Elvis may have left the building, but he hasn't left his spiritual calling, according to his "altar ego," Rev. Bruce Sheasby.

After 12 years as a United Church minister, the last eight at Red Deer Lake on Calgary's southern outskirts, Sheasby has parted ways with the denomination and is launching his own faith movement, the Spiritual Community Church of the West.

The new church will hold its first service tonight, a "Blue Christmas," gathering at 7 p.m. at the Millarville Racetrack Hall, 20 kilometres south of Calgary.

"We're starting in a manger," Sheasby says with a smile as he describes his new venture's venue.

"But spirituality isn't about bricks and mortar; it's about the reality of Christ within every one of us."

Sheasby says he'll mix the sacred and secular at tonight's

Blue Christmas service, a tradition he started 13 years ago when posted in Vauxhall. That will include singing Presley's holiday classic of the same name, one of the King's signature tunes.

"I think people can discover Christ in the blues," says Sheasby, who says he sings, "in the style of Elvis, but I don't try to be an Elvis impersonator."

More churches are holding annual Blue Christmas services designed for people struggling with the loss of a loved one, a broken marriage or simply those who don't embrace the "happy-happy, joy-joy" mantra that's part and parcel of the Yuletide season.

Sheasby says all the hype and heated commercialism of western society tends to mask the woundedness many people are feeling.

"I think every spiritual journey has to face its share of hardship. But even in the darkest personal hour and in the darkest time of the year, the darkness never extinguishes God's light."

Sheasby says taking on the

persona of Elvis in his ministry has allowed him to combine his love of sharing God's message with his musical abilities. He was working on a recording studio project when he opted to enter the seminary in his native Vancouver.

"The Rev. Elvis thing really got going in Vauxhall where I was also chaplain at the local legion," he recalls.

"They were always asking me to do Elvis tunes. The church was in dire need of money so we held a fundraiser which turned out to be phenomenally successful."

Sheasby maintains slipping in and out of his Rev. Elvis persona doesn't trivialize his faith grounding.

"But, sure, Rev. Elvis is kind of a hook, to get people interested in and talking about God and spiritual issues. Jesus called his disciples to be fishers of men and if you're a fisher, well, sometimes you need a hook."

Sheasby says Presley is a positive role model to use in a spiritual context.

"We all know about both his achievements and his human flaws. But there's no doubt he had a love of his audiences and of the Gospel," he says.

"And you think of Elvis and the energy and fun he portrayed on stage. I've always maintained faith can be fun.

There's a time to be sombre, but there's also a time to dance."

Sheasby says his new congregation is booked to meet through the end of January at the Millarville hall.

After that, he says, the future is in God's hands.

"I don't know how we're going to do it, but I believe the future is in mission, not church buildings," Sheasby said.

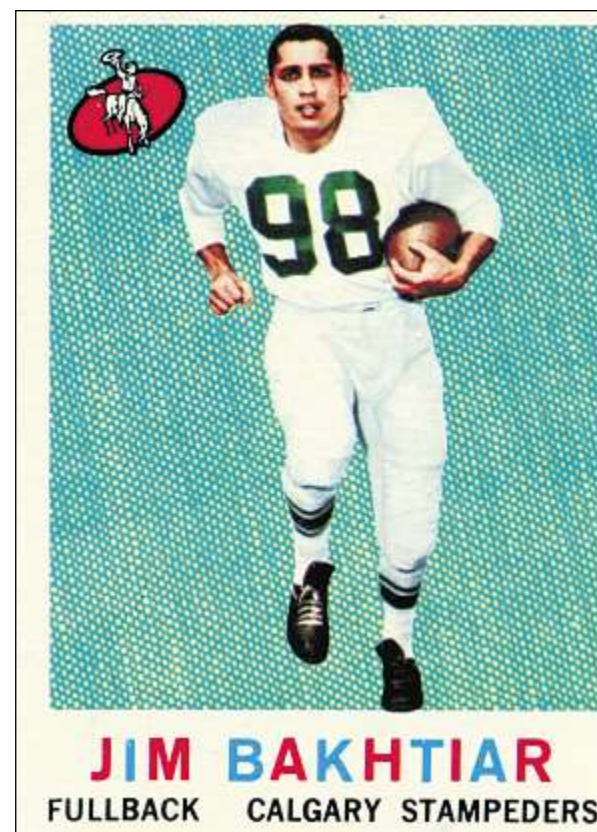
He says he wants to build a spiritual movement that includes people who come from traditional faith backgrounds as well as those who have never seen the inside of a church.

"I like to use the word 'movement' instead of 'church' because movement signifies you're going somewhere. I see something that's constantly changing and evolving and, all too often, the church tends to be somewhat resistant to change.

"I'd like to have a group of people who are willing to get out of the way and let the spirit take the lead."

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Mikael Kjellström, Calgary Herald  
**Rev. Bruce Sheasby, as his "altar ego" Rev. Elvis, hosts his 13th annual Blue Christmas service at 7 p.m. in Millarville.**



Courtesy, Topps

Former Calgary Stampeders fullback Jamshid (Jim) Bakhtiar has been honoured with the Football Writers Association of America's All-America Alumni Award for his psychiatric work.

## Ex-Stamp honoured for humanitarianism

DARYL SLADE  
CALGARY HERALD

Former Calgary Stampeders fullback Jamshid (Jim) Bakhtiar has been honoured for his psychiatric work in both his native Iran and in his adopted United States over the past four decades.

Bakhtiar, 72, a former University of Virginia football star who still practises psychiatry in West Virginia, was presented with the prestigious Football Writers Association of America's All-America Alumni Award last weekend in Florida.

His humanitarian success story involves a daring escape on horseback from Iran with his wife and three young children in 1982 after spending three months in prison under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's oppressive regime.

Bakhtiar grew up in Iran and moved with his family to the U.S. when he was 11.

At the University of Virginia, he set several varsity rushing records and was an all-American in his three years there in the mid-1950s.

In 1958, he joined the Stampeders and was the team's leading rusher with 971 yards. It was his only Canadian Football League season.

He then returned to Virginia, where he earned his medical degree in 1963.

Bakhtiar went back to Iran in the 1970s to teach at the University of Isfahan, where he established the country's first psychiatric unit in a general hospital.

But everything changed when Khomeini came to power in the 1979 Islamic Revolution, leading to Bakhtiar's imprisonment and eventual escape.

Despite the passage of nearly 50 years, he still has many friends in Calgary.

Former Stampeders teammate Chuck Zickefoose roomed with Bakhtiar, Jim Fury and Don Luzzi at southwest Calgary's Rideau Towers

during the 1958 season.

He recalled his unique teammate when a clip of his life was shown during the recent awards ceremony, which was televised.

"It was quite a story. It detailed his life from his college football days to getting his medical degree to starting the first clinic in Iran and his escape to Turkey," said Zickefoose. "We'd heard he had gone to prison, and he had taken a joking stance that he got into trouble.

"But I guess he was really kind of a hero."

The escape to freedom involved riding at night and hiding in caves during the day until Bakhtiar and his family reached Turkey. From there, they were able to return to the United States.

Zickefoose said Bakhtiar, who preferred to sleep on his apartment's deck because he loved the outdoors so much, took a lot of abuse on the football field because of his ethnic background, but he never let it get to him.

"Jim was very, very nice, just a great personality," Zickefoose said. "All four of us roommates, who were all single, never had an argument. We liked each other and everybody was nice to be around."

"You could tell Jim was very bright. I don't know how he ended up in Canada, and I don't know why he played only one year here. We had a really lousy team in those days and didn't make the playoffs, but Jim was a good player."

The Stampeders won four and lost 12 games in 1958. They finished dead last in the Western Conference, missing the playoffs.

Still, Bakhtiar led the team in rushing and was fifth in rushing that year behind three future Hall of Famers: Johnny Bright, Leo Lewis and Norman Kwong.

Bakhtiar could not be reached for comment.

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## LOOKING AHEAD

### NEWS

#### Murder verdict expected

A verdict is expected this week in the case of Robert Scribner, 23, who is accused of killing his pregnant girlfriend, Cari Lynn Gaulton, in February 2005. Scribner's lawyer has argued his client is guilty of the lesser charge of manslaughter, not second-degree murder, because he was provoked.



Cari Lynn Gaulton

### ENTERTAINMENT

#### Rocky back in theatres

Sylvester Stallone climbs back into the ring once more as an aging Italian Stallion in Rocky Balboa, which hits theatres Friday.

It's the sixth installment of the boxing saga that made Hulk Hogan a star and forever ingrained in our minds the words, "Yo, Adrian!"



Sylvester Stallone

### EVENTS

#### Christmas concert

The Calgary Civic Symphony puts on its annual Christmas concert this afternoon at 2:30 p.m. at the Jack Singer Concert Hall. The program features holiday favourites, along with The Snowman, a bit of musical theatre based on the children's book by Raymond Briggs. The piece will be narrated by former TV newscaster Brenda Finley and features 10-year-old guest soloist Graeme Climmie from the Cantare Children's Choir. Tickets are \$14.

### SPORTS

#### Flames on the road again

Dion (the phenom) Phaneuf and the Calgary Flames continue their longest road trip of the season with four games this week. The Flames are trying to improve their weak record away from the Saddledome, and will get the chance in Anaheim, Los Angeles, Colorado and San Jose.



Dion Phaneuf

### EVENTS

#### Nutcracker hits stage

Alberta Ballet continues its 40th anniversary season with a classic this week. The Nutcracker, which is touring several cities this year, begins in Calgary on Thursday and runs through Dec. 24. The choreography is being done by Mikko Nissinen. For tickets, call 299-8888.

