

# RC

## RURAL COUNCILLOR

VOLUME 53 number 1  
Spring 2020 ISSUE

PUBLISHED BY THE SASKATCHEWAN  
ASSOCIATION OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES  
Publications Agreement #40062693

# Economy and Infrastructure

Pipelines – Key Transition Infrastructure to a Sustainable Energy Future; Bridging the Broadband Gap; Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG) Program; Bridge Infrastructure – A Ticking Time Bomb; SARM, FNAP & U of S Sign MOU; Asset Management; Local Leaders Bring Canadians Together



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## our vision

By being the rural voice, SARM will effectively lead autonomous municipalities in creating a vibrant, diverse economy resulting in a strong, sustainable Saskatchewan.

## our mission

SARM delivers timely, dependable programs and services to meet the needs of its members while influencing government policy and facilitating municipalities to work together to foster rural development and build strong, sustainable communities.



# Minister's message

**BY THE HONOURABLE GREG OTTENBREIT**  
MINISTER OF HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

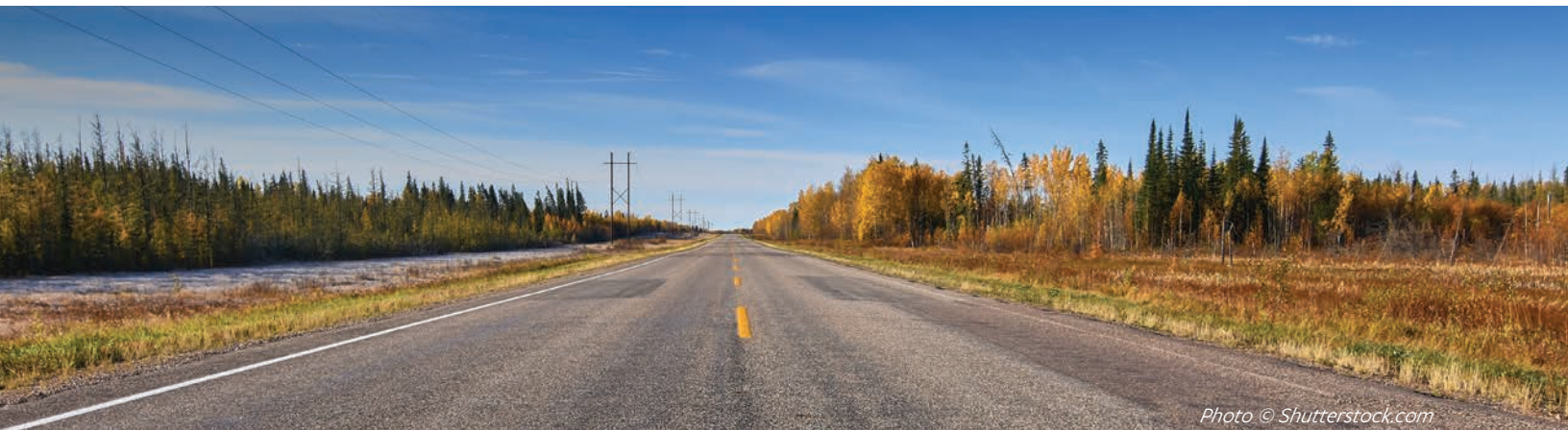


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**ON BEHALF** of Premier Scott Moe and the Government of Saskatchewan, it is my privilege to serve you as the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Safe, reliable and efficient transportation infrastructure is important to our citizens, providing an important link to move goods and services and the citizens of our communities. Our government recognizes this, so a key piece of *Saskatchewan's Growth Plan* is focused on infrastructure investment to support exports and building strong communities. Growth builds a better quality of life for Saskatchewan families and communities. In fact, our government plans to invest \$30 billion in infrastructure over the next decade, which includes building and upgrading 10,000 kilometres of highways. This is in addition to the 14,000 km of highways improved and more than 280 bridges replaced since 2008. During that time, we have fully repaved more than 3,600 km of our highways.

Our government continues to work to make our transportation system more efficient and reliable to support economic growth. Under the previous Municipal Roads for the Economy Program (MREP), we have converted more than 6,000 kilometres of secondary weight highways to primary weight. We have also worked together to create more than 6,500 km of primary weight corridors for heavy truck traffic to support rural communities and the rural economy. We will continue to prioritize repairs of roads and bridges in RMs and municipalities.

The results of a recent review of MREP will bode well for the future. We initiated the review to ensure the program was meeting the needs of rural municipalities and more effective for everyone. The feedback from the municipalities

was extremely valuable, and we are pleased to say that all the recommendations have been accepted.

The newly introduced Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG) program will allow projects to be completed on a two-year timeframe. We have delivered on a SARM resolution that was passed requesting this change.

**Our government plans to invest \$30 billion in infrastructure over the next decade, which includes building and upgrading 10,000 kilometres of highways.**

A number of partnerships with rural municipalities were announced last fall. These agreements provide cost-shared investments for improvements ranging from reconstruction to paving to a primary-weight super-grid highway. Partnerships allow this work to be accelerated, providing immediate benefits to local residents. We will continue to pursue partnerships where municipalities see an opportunity to work together to address local transportation challenges.

When we work together, we increase the value of the work we do on behalf of Saskatchewan people and that improves the quality of life. Our commitment is to make Saskatchewan the best place in Canada to live, work and raise a family.

By working together, we will continue to build stronger communities across Saskatchewan.



# Minister's message

**BY THE HONOURABLE JEREMY HARRISON**

MINISTER OF TRADE AND EXPORT DEVELOPMENT

**SASKATCHEWAN'S ECONOMY** is robust, diverse and growing. Capital investment in our province was estimated to be a record \$168 billion from 2008 to 2018, and the value of our exports reached \$30.6 billion in 2018. During that time, the province's population has grown to the highest it has been in a century. The Government of Saskatchewan sees the benefit of continuing to grow our province over the next decade – not just in population, but through value-added products, manufacturing and processes; innovation and technology; and trade partnerships – all of which contribute to Saskatchewan's strong quality of life.

In *Saskatchewan's Growth Plan: The Next Decade of Growth, 2020-2030*, the province announced 20 actions and 30 goals to build a stronger Saskatchewan by 2030; it is essentially a roadmap for growing the province to 1.4 million people and increasing jobs by 100,000. A vital component of the Growth Plan is to grow competitiveness in the business environment and to increase investment growth by adding value to the products we export and expanding and strengthening our trade partnerships.

One of the Government of Saskatchewan's goals is to increase the value of the province's exports by 50 per cent by 2030. To do this, we have placed a priority on our trade partnerships and, over the next year, intend to open a total of three new provincial trade and investment offices in India, Singapore and Japan. These offices are strategically located in some of our key export markets and will assist in diversifying our markets, promoting our exports and encouraging foreign investment to Saskatchewan. The establishment of these offices will also aid in reaching another goal, which is to grow the number of international markets to which Saskatchewan exports more than \$1 billion.

Saskatchewan is an export-driven province and an increasingly important player in global trade. Almost 70 per cent of everything we produce is exported to other parts of Canada or internationally to over 150 countries around the world. From 2007 to 2018, the value of our exports increased by almost 60 per cent and contributed to one in six (or about 100,000 jobs) in Saskatchewan last year. Exports and trade are essential pillars of our economy and will serve as an important foundation in creating 100,000 new jobs by 2030. We have the food, fuel and fertilizer to attract ample investment and keep Saskatchewan a place of opportunity for all.

At the same time, we must improve Saskatchewan's export infrastructure to ensure our products are able to reach existing and new markets. We will be looking at options to advance the province's transportation infrastructure, to improve our

province's export corridors and to build on national relationships to encourage expanded capacity at critical port access points. Sound infrastructure is a vital component to increase market access and reduce shipping costs, which will ensure Saskatchewan exports remain strong.

As we work towards increasing the value of our exports and growing the province's population and jobs, we subsequently encourage more business and investment opportunities. Saskatchewan will continue to support SaskFirst new growth tax incentives, which include:

- The Saskatchewan Technology Startup Incentive, the most aggressive angel investment tax credit for startups in Western Canada;
- The Oil and Gas Processing Investment Incentive, which supports infrastructure upgrades for companies, as well as value-added processing and improved emissions management;
- The Saskatchewan Value-Added Agriculture Incentive, to assist with new or expanded value-added agricultural processing; and,
- The Saskatchewan Commercial Innovation Incentive, the first "patent box" style incentive of its kind in North America.

Also outlined in the Growth Plan is the introduction of two new SaskFirst new growth tax incentives. First, an agricultural technology incentive, which will be aimed at supporting the application of emerging digital technologies in the agricultural sector and to aid in attracting agricultural technology companies to invest and locate in Saskatchewan. The second is an incentive to encourage investment in Saskatchewan's chemical fertilizer sector. Saskatchewan's incentives are designed to attract new capital investment, ensure the competitiveness of our economy and create jobs.

Saskatchewan's capital investment continues to reach record highs. Annual capital investment increased \$5.3 billion from 2008 to 2018 and grew at an annual average rate of 3.9 per cent. This is the second-highest growth rate among the provinces and above the national average of 0.9 per cent. The Growth Plan outlines a goal to grow private capital investment to \$16 billion or more annually. With our government incentives, increased trade partnerships, valuable products and a consistent triple 'A' credit rating from Moody's Investor Services, the recipe is right for investment attraction and value-added opportunities in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan is a province of sustainable growth and success.

A growing Saskatchewan is a strong Saskatchewan.





# Minister's message

**BY THE HONOURABLE BRONWYN EYRE**  
MINISTER OF ENERGY AND RESOURCES

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**, on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan and my Cabinet colleagues.

As we begin 2020, we've seen a good start, so far, to this year's winter drilling season. As of mid-January, 57 of 105 oil rigs were working, which is a utilization rate of 54 per cent, compared to Alberta's 48 per cent and BC's 45 per cent.

Oil and gas land sales this year are anticipated to remain comparable to those in 2019. We expect the industry to continue to acquire available Crown tenure, which provides a strong return on investment.

The Government of Saskatchewan continues to work to increase Saskatchewan's oil and resource exports and, to this end, to explore all possible options and routes. In *Saskatchewan's Growth Plan: The Next Decade of Growth 2020-2030*, we have aimed to increase oil production from 480,000 to 600,000 barrels per day.

We have a lot to build on. According to the 2019 Scotiabank Playbook, Saskatchewan is home to two of the top 10 plays in North America, with a total of seven plays ranked in the top 35. Equally, in the Fraser Institute's Canada-US Energy Sector Competitiveness Survey 2019, Saskatchewan was ranked as the most attractive province for upstream oil and gas investment in Canada.

In December, I met with investment banks and energy stakeholders in Calgary to promote investment in Saskatchewan and Energy and Resource's new incentives – the Saskatchewan Petroleum Investment Incentive (SPII) for research and development, the Oil and Gas Processing Investment Incentive (OGPII) for infrastructure, and our updated Waterflood Program.

It is also important to continue to promote our province's work around Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR) and Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) and to advocate for federal recognition of their environmental benefits. The Weyburn-Midale EOR project, for example, has sequestered over 3 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> since 2014.

Meanwhile, our recently proclaimed *Pipelines Amendment Act* fulfills our commitment to the province in 2017, to strengthen the safety and oversight of our pipeline system. The Act offers the first, fully electronic regulated pipeline licensing system of its kind in Canada and, among other things, will enable the licensing of all 80,000 flowlines in the province and increase protection around water crossings.

Despite certain global market challenges, our mining sector remains strong. In November, we announced our decision to exempt Provincial Sales Tax application on drilling for mining and exploration, which helps expand mineral exploration and development. Our newly introduced Targeted Mineral Exploration Incentive has led to an increase of 110 new drill holes and proposed expenditures of more than \$6.5 million in the north-east portion of the province, near Creighton. Certainly, however, our thoughts are with potash workers who remain out of work, and we hope that operations at Allan, Lanigan, Vanscoy, and Colonsay mines resume work soon.

Our newly introduced Targeted Mineral Exploration Incentive has led to an increase of 110 new drill holes and proposed expenditures of more than **\$6.5 million** in the north-east portion of the province, near Creighton.

We continue to be very concerned about changes to federal regulatory frameworks, including the *Impact Assessment Act*, (Bill C-69), the *Oil Tanker Moratorium Act*, (Bill C-48), and the pending federal Clean Fuel Standard (CFS), which will impose an increased financial burden on oil and gas producers, distributors and, ultimately, consumers. The CFS is something we will advocate against in discussions this year with federal and provincial leaders.

Thank you for everything you do in our province, to make it more prosperous and successful. On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, I wish all readers a happy and healthy 2020.



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# How *your* input impacts our lobbying efforts

By Carmen Sterling SARM Vice President



One of the best ways to drive home the need for change during meetings with provincial and federal elected officials and bureaucrats is to have **“real world” examples**. Being able to share situations where municipalities have experienced challenges... provides context that many outside of municipal government have not considered.

**I CERTAINLY DON'T** have to tell any of you that infrastructure is a vital component of every rural municipality and its ratepayers. Traditionally, rural infrastructure has generally been made up of roads, bridges and culverts. This transportation infrastructure not only provides access for ratepayers but also is integral to supporting industry and agriculture. In addition, many rural municipalities are managing water and sanitary sewer systems, recreational facilities and, in some cases, broadband internet. Given how important these infrastructure components are to you, our members, and the viability of all our municipalities, they are key areas of focus of the Infrastructure and Development Committee of SARM. And considering the broad expanse of the infrastructure file, the committee looks to leverage as many sources of information as possible to ensure we deliver the best possible recommendations to the Board of Directors to undertake action on.

Recent areas of focus of the committee specific to infrastructure include funding and financing, construction and maintenance related issues, federal grade crossings, and CRTC decisions and consultations related to Broadband, to name a few. Through the course of our work, we've had the opportunity to meet with various stakeholders to gather information and inform our recommendations to the board. In turn, the board uses these recommendations and the accompanying information to advance resolutions passed by our members at conventions and to lobby the provincial and federal governments. As members who experience issues and challenges with infrastructure daily, you provide valuable insights into these areas we are working to address.

During my time on the board, I've appreciated the many of you who have reached out to me to share your challenges related to infrastructure and your suggestions for improvements.

I strongly feel one of the best ways to drive home the need for change during meetings with provincial and federal elected officials and bureaucrats is to have “real world” examples. Being able to share situations where municipalities have experienced challenges related to legislation provides context that many outside of municipal government have not considered. As well, being able to share successes, in addition to challenges and issues, allows us to leverage positive feedback to demonstrate areas that are working well for our members.

As I'm sure you've already gathered from my last two statements, you are very important to our lobby efforts! Please continue to reach out to us as board members to share your challenges, issues and successes.

Although this article has focused on infrastructure, I look forward to continuing to hear from you on any and all issues facing your municipalities.

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# Advocating for local infrastructure and development

By Harvey Malanowich SARM Division 4 Director

**THE THEME** of this *Rural Councillor* issue is Infrastructure and the Economy. As part of SARM's infrastructure and development committee, we worked on several issues this past year. These issues were analyzed, and a recommendation was taken back to the board for further discussion.

## **So what is meant by infrastructure and development?**

Infrastructure is the term for the basic physical symptoms of a business or country or province; transportation, communication, sewage, water, roads, and bridges are all examples of infrastructure. These systems tend to be high cost investments and are vital for economic growth. Both economic and social infrastructure increases people's access to the basic resources required for living. It is imperative that infrastructure be of good quality, well located and provided in a timely manner. Local municipal governments own and are responsible for approximately 60 per cent of the public infrastructure that supports our economy and quality of life.

## **Infrastructure is the key in growing our province and the provincial economy, so we must look after it to the highest standards possible.**

A critical infrastructure issue SARM is dealing with is rural broadband and the lack of connectivity in rural areas. As we are all aware, all the resources in this province are located in rural areas and are resources that drive the provincial economy. For business to locate to rural areas and to support growth of the farming sector, access to high speed internet and cell coverage is a necessity to be economically viable. It is also important for the health, safety and well being of those living and traveling in rural and remote areas in the province. Communication is key to grow the provincial economy, and at SARM we are diligent in our lobby to get this message out to provincial and federal ministers.

A second issue that's key for growth is our transportation network: roads, bridges and rail. Any business, especially farming, needs a network that is fully functional in order to get their goods to market in a timely fashion as well as services back to their operations to ensure business viability and economic growth. This brings me to bridge funding and the lack of it. SARM has lobbied hard over the past few years to get more funding from provincial and federal pots – we feel it's crucial and must be addressed. Without bridges we have roads that go nowhere, and we have a hard time keeping our road network fully functional.

Other issues the committee has dealt with to help rural municipalities deal with their road networks more efficiently is the development of the Got Gravel manual, which is an aggregate management tool as aggregate is a precious resource that is key to maintaining the vast road network in the province. We also have a gravel extraction guideline they can follow and road haul agreements with the help of the RMA to use. We've also dealt with permitting issues with SGI, CN and CP rail crossings and building standards, to name a few.

In closing, I feel infrastructure is the key in growing our province and the provincial economy, so we must look after it to the highest standards possible. To ensure development in oil and gas, forestry, mining, helium, and especially our agriculture industry, we need a reliable infrastructure network to succeed in moving our province forward.



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# Insight into SARM's Infrastructure and Development Committee

By Wendy Gowda SARM Director Ex-Officio

**AS AN APPOINTEE** to SARM's Internal Infrastructure and Development Committee, I am taking this opportunity to summarize the committee's workings over the past year and provide members insight as to the issues SARM directors, administration and staff consider from a committee perspective on behalf of its members on a regular basis.

The Infrastructure and Development Committee meets every other month, generally at the SARM Office, and over the past year has met in the Kronau Curling Rink and the RM of Edenwold Offices with the host municipalities extending rural hospitality to SARM representatives. The committee had an opportunity to tour and learn about the Western Potash Corporation development site in the RM of Lajord on one such occasion.

Occasionally, the committee meets with external delegates to learn more about issues relevant to rural municipalities. The committee has had presentations and dialogue with representatives from the Ministry of Energy and Resources (pipeline mapping) and SaskTel (CRTC decision rates for high speed access services), as well as elected officials from the RM of Lajord to gain a municipal perspective on the mine site development.

Topics that have come before the Infrastructure and Development Committee have included broadband, infrastructure funding, Got Gravel report development and reporting, Bill 152 and prompt payment. Committee representatives have been invited to participate in consultations with the province in respect to highway improvement fees, road maintenance agreements, tax tools and photo speed enforcement. The committee has been advised of workshops and working groups related to building standards, road signage and transportation studies. Opportunities



for collaborative efforts, such as the Climate Services Collaborative with SUMA, have been initiated at this level.

A standing order of business at every committee meeting is to review the responses to SARM correspondence from resolutions – to consider a recommendation for the SARM Board – often notifying the sponsoring municipality, posting the response, contacting the sponsor for further information and to defer to the SARM Board. The committee also reviews resolutions that may be expiring to determine whether the issue is still current, unresolved, or perhaps a subsequent resolution will keep the file open. The committee is often the source behind the “ask a municipality” and direction for staff to conduct surveys, stakeholder workshops, questions on

the policy report, where member information would be helpful in developing consensus.

During my tenure as ex-officio on the SARM Board, the number of issues SARM works on behalf of a very diverse member group has been ever apparent. The old adage of hearing it here first has brought new meaning as ministries introduce many concepts at the SARM, and often at the committee, level.

Even though this is my fifth year as ex-officio Director to the SARM Board, I am continually impressed by the expertise around the board table, and in appreciation for the experience and knowledge the SARM staff contribute towards the betterment of rural Saskatchewan, on so many fronts.

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# Bridge infrastructure a ticking time bomb

By Jay Meyer SARM Executive Director

**AS YOUR ASSOCIATION,** our board members and staff spend many hours working on files on behalf of our members. If there is one consistent challenge, it is the infrastructure file. Across our nation, municipalities own approximately 60 per cent of public infrastructure that supports our economy. The dollars retained by municipalities due to adequate infrastructure is a lot less. One of the biggest issues we have lobbied over the past few years, is increased funding for both roads and bridges for our members.

**Our rural municipalities have an inventory of approximately 1,450 bridges.** Most of these bridges are timber and are 50-60 years old. 23 per cent [are] currently restricted, and we predict that this number will more than double to 50 per cent over the next five years if no action is taken. At the current provincial government funding, which enables six new bridges per year, it will take **240 years** to replace the current inventory.

We have seen some recent challenges with bridges, challenges that have even hit the national stage. Of all the SARM files, President Orb has had the most media requests on the bridge file. The newly developed Rural Integrated Roads For Growth program provides \$14 million in funding to support the maintenance and capital costs of both roads and bridges. After the funding is divided to all the important parts of the program, there is approximately \$3 million per year for capital bridge funding. With increasing costs in the development of bridge infrastructure, and at the current cap of \$500,000 per project, \$3 million will provide six new bridges in rural municipalities per year.

Our rural municipalities have an inventory of roughly 1,450 bridges. Within this inventory, most of these bridges are timber and are 50-60 years old. 23 per cent of the inventory is currently restricted, and we predict that this number will more than double to 50 per cent over the next five years if no action is taken. As a result, there is much urgency for proactive funding, so we are not having to react to a bridge crisis. It is critical we start to look at solutions to this major issue, if we do not, the economy will be hurt the most. Without bridges we will struggle not only with getting crops in the bin, but also to market. Industries throughout our province will grind to a halt. At the current provincial government funding, which enables six new bridges per year, it will take 240 years to replace the current inventory. The SARM Board of Directors have lobbied the province to, at the minimum, provide funding dollars to 2014 levels, which was \$25.5 million. If we were to see a top up to the current program and allocated it to bridge capital, we would see an increase to 29 bridges per year. At 29 new bridges per year, you would see the number of years to replace the current inventory drop to 50 years. With bridges having a lifespan of 50 to 75 years, we would then be in the ballpark of sustainability.

We cannot wait for a major crisis to take place in our municipalities before we react. Without infrastructure, our provincial economy would be challenged. The SARM Board of Directors has once again asked the province to increase funding in the 2020 provincial budget, either a top up of the current program or the development of a separate bridge capital program. If this happens, we will start to build some momentum. If we do not get to a minimum of 2014 levels, all ministries of government will be affected, including energy, education and health.

These numbers are not something we can ignore. If you happen to run into your local MLA, especially in an election year, please help us spread the message. We must have a serious conversation, in order to get working on a proactive plan, to rectify this “ticking time bomb” called bridge infrastructure.

# Local Leaders Bring Canadians Together

**By Bill Karsten**

President, Federation of  
Canadian Municipalities

**AS WE BEGIN A NEW DECADE** and a new session of Parliament, familiar conversations about national unity in the face of a western economic crisis are still unfolding. Some speak of a divided country, but we shouldn't be too quick to misread strong debate as tears in our national fabric. Canada is stronger than that – and local leaders are continuing to bring Canadians together.

From our place on the front lines, we know there's more that unites Canadians than divides us. Right across the country, people want many of the same things. Fundamentally, we all want better lives for ourselves, for our families, and for the people around us. And, we want the people we elect to be practical and reasonable about working together to help us get there.

That's what Canadians have come to expect from their local governments in particular. We're the ones closest to their daily challenges, and we build solutions that work. That's because, in our bones, we are bridge-builders. We're all about delivering results. We don't deny our differences, but time and again, we reach across differences to get real things done.

**WEST** is exploring short, medium and long-term solutions in four focus areas: getting resources and products to market; energy development, climate policy and regulation; supporting communities to diversify economies; and promoting municipal infrastructure and fiscal sustainability.

In every corner of our province, reeves and councillors reach across tremendous diversity to move practical objectives forward. That's what makes SARM such a force in this province. I'll say the same for the organization I lead: The Federation of Canadian Municipalities unites nearly 2,000 communities – of all sizes and regions – behind an ambitious policy vision and action plan.

In advocacy, our unity is our strength. More than ever, our approach also makes us models of what government can be: reality-based and results-driven. And at FCM, we're actively recognizing this as value that we offer our federal counterparts. Our message to Ottawa is straightforward: *Empowering*

*municipalities will deliver results on the ground and bring Canadians together.* One example of how we are bringing municipalities together to tackle national challenges is our Western Economic Solutions Taskforce.

Municipalities are on the front lines of the economic downturn that's rocking so many western communities. From agriculture, to mining to the energy sector, people living in western communities are grappling with job losses and economic insecurity. At the same time, the federal government is looking for ways to connect to the region.

In November, FCM launched the Western Economic Solutions Taskforce (or WEST), with SARM President Ray Orb as a founding member. WEST is chaired by Councillor Randy Goulden from the City of Yorkton. Our mandate is to identify solutions to the economic challenges western communities face.

## Western Economic Solutions Taskforce

WEST is exploring short, medium and long-term solutions in four focus areas: getting resources and products to market; energy development, climate policy and regulation; supporting communities to diversify economies; and promoting municipal infrastructure and fiscal sustainability.

At the end of the day, we'll take concrete recommendations to the federal government. By the time you read this, WEST will have staged a full-day summit in Leduc, Alberta – hosting a delegation of senior federal ministers and deepening conversations about how economic uncertainty is playing out in our communities.

WEST is doing what nobody else has – pulling players together across provincial and partisan lines. This builds on SARM's work with counterparts in Manitoba and Alberta to strengthen resource-based communities. Any recommendations that ultimately come to life will have local priorities at their heart.

I'll have more to share when I join SARM members at your annual convention in Regina in March. I want to hear from you in person about solutions to economic challenges in rural Saskatchewan and the rest of western Canada.

*Bill Karsten is a councillor from Halifax Regional Municipality, NS and President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.*



# Bridging the broadband gap

BY CHRIS LALANDE

Hill+Knowlton Strategies

**SEWERS. ROADS. BRIDGES.** These are all critical pieces of infrastructure that residents of rural municipalities rely upon daily in every aspect of their lives. Whether it is taking the kids to school, driving to the grocery store, washing the dishes or doing laundry, it takes significant investments to build and maintain the infrastructure that people take for granted.

Take for example, the Samuel De Champlain Bridge in Montreal. The bridge was constructed in the early 1960s to link the South Shore of the Saint Lawrence River to the Island of Montreal, linking it to the Trans Canada Highway, carrying some \$20 billion of goods between Canada and the United States on an annual basis. But years of neglect, exacerbated by road salts destroying the steel structure, necessitated a replacement bridge to the tune of \$4.2 billion.

While rural municipalities may differ from the likes of the Samuel De Champlain Bridge, their infrastructure – including rail and pipelines – is just as crucial to the functioning of their communities and economy. Without roads or bridges, getting products to market is impossible, and without water and sewer, proper sanitation becomes a public health issue.

Over the last few decades, national and sub-national governments have recognized that municipalities have far more limited resources to develop and maintain infrastructure and have launched tripartite funding agreements for projects. Many of these targeted projects include upgrading water, sewer, roads and bridges, and they are funded through such programs as the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program and the Federal Gas Tax Fund Program.

More recently, there is a renewed interest in improving access to goods to international markets. Saskatchewan

partnered with Canada on several projects in recent years under the National Trade Corridors Fund. As we have all experienced from time-to-time, highways become congested, and the time to reach and cross borders is exhausting. The Fund's purpose is to help ease the flow of people and goods across Canada and help improve the flow of trade in and out of Canada. Lately, Saskatchewan experienced upgrades to Highways 6 and 39 to help meet this objective under the Trade Corridor Fund.

But a modern Saskatchewan requires more than physical infrastructure to conduct business all over the world. Canada is behind its international competitors when it comes to connectivity and rural communities lagging further behind. Rural councilors know too well that this significant gap in infrastructure puts trade opportunities in jeopardy. No longer is business conducted by fax and phone – the internet handles it all.

Reliable, broadband high-speed internet is to Saskatchewan's rural municipalities what the Samuel De Champlain Bridge is to Eastern Canada. It is an essential link to international markets that will provide the opportunity to boost trade and provide equal opportunities to those living in rural municipalities as to those living in Regina, Toronto or Singapore.

High-speed internet is not the luxury it was even a decade ago. It is a necessity for the 21<sup>st</sup> century – and it is more than merely about business. It connects families and provides students with the ability to study online, taking courses that are not available nearby. It also helps inspire a more comprehensive global view of the shrinking world around us.

During the last election, all three major political parties made some form of commitment to ensure that high-speed

internet would be available to all Canadians. Those promises on high-speed internet further complemented the government's Rural Development Strategy, released in June 2019, yet no plan is in place to implement this essential infrastructure component of a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

Governments must listen to the voices of rural councilors on the broadband commitment. Councillors must demand answers to the question: Why is the federal government allowing 5G technology to be rolled out in Canada's major urban centres when many of Saskatchewan's rural municipalities have dial-up internet, at best?

Just as the government has multiple programs to address physical infrastructure, the rollout of high-speed internet should require a suite of government programs. These should target various aspects of broadband, including the intention to address multiple policy objectives, just like how governments are combatting crumbling physical infrastructure and focusing on increasing access to international markets.

Entering this new decade provides us with an opportunity to reflect upon what areas of infrastructure lack in rural Saskatchewan. It also gives us pause to consider how we are going to achieve economic and cultural success to finish this century.

Political will is required to ensure that Saskatchewan's rural municipalities get their fair share. Decision-makers, whether they are provincial or federal politicians, must be held to account. SARM, as an organization, is a strong advocate for your needs and needs your help to keep these issues alive and on provincial and federal leaders' radar to ensure prosperity for your residents.

# SARM, FNAP & U of S Sign MOU



**By Guy Lonechild**

President and CEO,  
First Nations Power Authority

## Memorandum of Understanding

First Nations Power Authority (FNPA) was pleased to sign an MOU with SARM leadership, and the School of Environment & Sustainability (SENS) at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S), which outlines our intent to help guide renewable energy development in Saskatchewan developing a streamlined approach for stakeholder engagement, policy and planning for projects being advanced to SaskPower. Although these are early days, FNPA and SARM believe that it's important to demonstrate a strong commitment to early engagement by our respective organization's leadership and SaskPower from the SARM Engagement Session held in Regina in November 2019.

Leading up to the work through the FNPA, SARM, SENS Memorandum of Understanding, we are also developing a Renewable Energy Toolkit, which should provide insight into a number of our commonly stated objectives:

## Goals through the Memorandum of Understanding may include:

1. Learning about the economic and social benefits of wind, solar and other renewable energy technologies and what it could mean to our province;
2. What a growing renewable energy industry can do to help Indigenous-led projects matter to the sustainability of a largely rural-based Saskatchewan economy that relies on electricity to power the agriculture, mining, oil and gas sectors;
3. Mitigating the adverse environmental harms that these activities may do to the local environment; and
4. How to meaningfully involve rural communities in the province's Prairie Resilience Plan.

## FNPA is Advancing Current and Future Projects

FNPA's mandate is to support the full participation of First Nations General Members that intend on submitting renewable energy projects and achieving commercial operation. This is a very exciting time for FNPA and its General Members – Cowessess First Nation, the George Gordon and Starblanket



Cree Nation. The first two solar projects are expected to begin generating revenue for all First Nations and FNPA with their development partners in 2021.

- Progress to date under the first 10-year Master Agreement – 20 MW Flare Gas First Nations Opportunity Agreement;
- 20 MW Solar Power Generation First Nations Opportunity Agreement; and
- First Nations pursuit of commercially viable power generation projects through a SaskPower/FNPA Master Agreement.

## Plans for a New 10 Year Mandate for FNPA and the Province of Saskatchewan and SaskPower

FNPA hopes that a new 10-year Master agreement will include opportunities for FNPA General and Industry Members in wind power: 300 MW, 100 MW of solar power, up to 60 MW of biomass and/or waste heat recovery.



## Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program

FNPA believes that the way forward will be to carefully plan and advance projects that achieve at market or even below market prices, witnessing what was achieved in Alberta with the Renewable Electricity Program (REP) Round 2, where Indigenous projects achieved near record low wind prices.

**The way forward will be to carefully plan and advance projects that achieve at market or even below market prices, witnessing what was achieved in Alberta... where Indigenous projects achieved near record low wind prices.**

To do so, the Province of Saskatchewan and Canada should agree to collaborate and support this future renewable energy development with infrastructure funds from the Canada – Saskatchewan Integrated Bilateral Agreement, which provides long-term funding support over the next decade. These projects could greatly help to improve overall community health and safety, economic growth and sustainability, environmental protection and quality of life through ICIP investments:

1. Northern, rural and remote roads and airports of \$115,905,927.00;
2. Municipal and regional infrastructure of \$307,871,025.00;
3. Greenhouse gas mitigation of \$416,334,673.00; and,
4. Culture and recreation facilities of \$56,211,382.00.

## Aboriginal Consultation and Bill C-69

There is a need to ensure that aboriginal (indigenous) consultation occurs and how many of the new infrastructure projects and SaskPower's Clean Energy Roadmap affect and involve Indigenous People. As rightsholders, Indigenous people and their communities must be adequately consulted, and in many cases, accommodated through early-stage planning. Under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, the recipients (in some cases municipalities) or Province of Saskatchewan are to undertake proper consultation and ensure that consultation and accommodation is achieved.

## Saskatchewan's First Nations and Métis Communities

At FNPA, we know that the economic, social and environmental benefits of having indigenous-led renewable energy projects create long-term revenue for our communities and potential gains for lower costs of electricity through wind and solar. FNPA respects the aspirations, values and shared benefits of the relationship it has with First Nations General Members interested in developing power projects. We have done so through our relationship with SaskPower and the Government of Saskatchewan through the signing of the joint Memorandum of Understanding in 2011. FNPA is a new proud partner to SARM and looks forward to doing our part in creating new opportunities for economic and social reconciliation.

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### IMPORTANT DATES

**JUNE 15** — Last day  
to file crop reports

**JUNE 30** — Last day for new SMHI  
applicants to apply for coverage

**AUGUST 1** — Last day to apply for  
coverage with AMHL or PMHL



**SMHI**

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# Asset Management

BY JOANNE LOY

Administrator RM of Manitou Lake



**ASSET MANAGEMENT** (AM) for the RM of Manitou Lake No 442 began with the TCA and PSAB 3150 requirements in 2009. It raised the question – *What do we do with all this information we gathered?*

In 2012, the RM took the first step with the reeve, the foreman, and myself taking the NAMS face-to-face training in Humboldt. An AM plan was started for the Heavy Haul High Volume Roads. The AM plan was a great idea but it was a new concept, and with everything else that occurs in a municipal office, it was not given the attention it needed.

Atana Management was hired to complete the plan which was presented to council in August 2016. I completed the online Professional Certificate in Asset Management Planning Course in the Fall of 2016, which resulted in another AM plan for a subset of roads.

While working on the AM plan and the conversations I had with the reeve and the new foreman, I encouraged them to take the course as they are part of the AM team and need to speak the same language. They completed the online course in Fall 2018 and attended the workshops as well.

## Challenges

The key challenge has been time as it will be with most municipalities. The data needs to be updated to include current costs opposed to historical, add condition ratings, levels of service, and risk management. Money can be another. Do you hire someone to do the plan for you? But what happens when it needs updating? What happens if there are changes to council and staff? You – the administration, public works, and council need to know what the AM plan is and how to use it.

Start with what you have. Start small – 20 miles of road or 10 blocks of waterlines. Ensure that the Gas Tax requirements are being met regarding condition ratings and levels of service. Understand it is acceptable to put what needs work into an improvement plan.

## Council's Role

Local government exists to provide services, and council determines the quality and quantity of the level of service. The greatest value of service comes from taking care of the assets.

Council represents the residents, and your role is to reflect their needs and wants. One key role is to determine the level of service provided, while considering the residents' expectations, legislative requirements and available resources. Council, while setting strategic direction, must consider the level of



service and required resources through budgeting, cost recovery targets, and tax rates.

It would be great to have every road cleared within 24 hrs after a snowstorm or to have facilities with minimal fees and extended hours, but that is not reality. The reality is council must choose which services and at what level you are able to provide given your municipality's limitations. Council needs solid information about asset performance, risks and costs to set the direction. Engage your staff to help answer questions like:

- How long will this asset continue to perform under the current maintenance and operations levels?
- What is the likelihood and consequence of the asset failing?
- What is the budget needed to maintain or increase the current level of service?

It is critical that staff have the resources, training, and support to gather this information.

Council sets the direction and allocates the resources. Staff manages the risks and maintains the expected levels of service. The services provided and the level they are provided at direct the budget. Costs to provide the same level of service year after year can mean an increase in material costs, energy costs, and staffing costs. Knowing the performance, risk and cost of assets allows you to determine if you need to maintain, increase or decrease the levels of service.

Historically, many councils have tried to keep taxes as low as possible, which unfortunately has led to deferred maintenance and underinvestment in assets. The asset management process will help provide the information needed to meaningfully address what our assets re-

quire, while still maintaining the services and quality of life our citizens have come to enjoy.

## Next Steps

The actions council can take right now include ensuring there is an AM policy and strategy in place, explore asset management practices, engage your staff – where are they in the data gathering process, what risks do they see, are the levels of service adequate, develop life cycle costing – take into consideration all the costs incurred throughout the entire life of an asset – maintenance, operations, and preventative maintenance. The goal is to ensure residents receive the sustained, cost-effective services they expect. What steps do you, as council, need to take to ensure that sustainable services are provided in the future.

*Photo © Shutterstock.com*

## Resources

Asset Management Saskatchewan – Training, resources [www.assetmanagementsk.ca](http://www.assetmanagementsk.ca) – Look for the 2020-21 Training Opportunities.

Asset Management BC - Guides, Presentations, AM Building Blocks [www.assetmanagementbc.ca](http://www.assetmanagementbc.ca)

Alberta Government - Tool Kit User Guide & Excel Worksheets [www.open.alberta.ca/publications/getting-started-toolkit-user-guide-for-building-an-asset-management-program](http://www.open.alberta.ca/publications/getting-started-toolkit-user-guide-for-building-an-asset-management-program)

Federation of Canadian Municipalities – FCM – Guides, Reports, Training [www.fcm.ca/en.resources/mamp/asset-management-resources](http://www.fcm.ca/en.resources/mamp/asset-management-resources)

\*Information Sources used: Asset Management BC, FCM - MAMP

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# Pipelines

## Key transition infrastructure to a Sustainable Energy Future

BY GREG POELZER School of Environment and Sustainability, University of Saskatchewan &  
BRAM NOBLE Department of Geography, University of Saskatchewan

**OIL PIPELINES** are the centre of contentious debates about the future of Canada's energy. Many proponents of pipelines argue that oil and gas not only serve as critical pillars of Western Canada's economy producing many jobs in Saskatchewan and Alberta, but also generates employment and manufacturing jobs in provinces thousands of kilometers away. Oil and gas, proponents argue, build schools and hospitals. It is hard to imagine what Canada's equalization arrangements would have looked like without the energy sector. Critics of pipelines argue that building more infrastructure only deepens our "carbon lock-in" and continues our dependency on fossil fuels, taking us in the wrong direction in our fight against climate change. After all, a carbon-free future is just around the corner. Invest in green energy instead. But, are these the only two positions to consider regarding pipeline development in Canada?

Climate change is real, and human beings are contributing significantly to global warming; indeed, we are accelerating and compounding otherwise normal, natural processes of heating and cooling of the Earth. It is imperative that all countries move toward low-carbon economies as quickly as possible. But, how quickly can and are we moving? Energy demand globally is growing, last year by 2.3%, and as more and more people in the developing world move into middle class in-

comes, demand for energy consuming transportation and amenities will continue to grow. Moreover, there are currently 850 million people on our planet who do not have electricity. When electrical services reach this segment of our humanity, demand for energy will increase even more.

Air pollution (CO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>) costs of shipping oil by rail were **double** that of pipelines and... the costs of oil spills were **six times greater by rail car** than pipeline.

Renewable energy is growing at an exponential rate, but it is not enough at present to keep with growing energy demands. In fact, demand for fossil fuels continues to grow. In fact, the use of liquid petroleum energy sources, such as natural gas, is anticipated to be higher in 2050 than today, even though its overall share will decline from 32% to 27% of total global energy consumed. This is critical to understand. Even though coal should be declining by 2050 (both as a percentage and in absolute terms) and renewable energy sources will be significantly higher, liquid fossil fuels absolute amount (not percentage) of liquid fossil fuels will be higher. In other words, Canada,



the United States, Norway, the U.K. will be involved heavily in the oil and gas sector for the next forty years, notwithstanding the urgent need for renewable energy. Oil and gas will need to ship from Western Canada for the next forty years. The only question is how?

Grain handling and especially **limited rail capacity** are creating reduced export opportunities for agricultural producers was costing the sector in the order of **\$5 billion dollars** in 2014.... When food does not get to global markets, overall food insecurity increases.

The two primary options for shipping oil from Western Canada is either by pipeline or by rail. It is well established that Canada does not have sufficient pipeline capacity to meet current production rates. Over the past 12 months, oil shipments have averaged nearly 290,000 barrels per day, or more than 100 million barrels per year by rail car. This is double the amount of oil that was shipped by rail car during the high point of oil prices when oil was \$US112 per barrel. Those who think lower oil prices means less oil shipping by rail cars are sadly mistaken.

What does this mean for the environment, public safety and global food security? Shipping oil by rail car is a far worse environmental option, and arguably far riskier to public safety, than pipelines. In their 2017 paper, "The External Costs of Transporting Petroleum Products by Pipelines and Rail: Evidence From Shipments of Crude Oil from North Dakota," published by The National Bureau of Economic Research, Karen Clay, et.

Al. found that air pollution (CO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>) costs of shipping oil by rail were double that of pipelines and that the costs of oil spills were six times greater by rail car than pipeline.

Another study (2016) by University of Alberta researcher, Amit Kumar, in the *Journal of Environmental Science and Technology* found that transport of bitumen from Alberta by pipeline had between 61 and 77 per cent fewer greenhouse emissions than rail cars. The environmental costs for shipping oil by rail are high and at unsustainable levels. But, what about other sectors like agriculture? In their recent article (2018), "An Economic Analysis of Western Canadian Grain Export Capacity," Mohammad Torshiz and Richard Gray identify grain handling and especially limited rail capacity are creating reduced export opportunities for agricultural producers was costing the sector in the order of \$5 billion dollars in 2014. The actual costs to the sector vary year to year but there is no question, the agricultural sector has lost billions of dollars in Saskatchewan alone. Similar complaints have been noted by producers in North Dakota. But, there is an even larger humanitarian cost. When food does not get to global markets, overall food insecurity increases. If you are living in parts of the developing world that are subject to drought, global food markets matter. Lack of pipeline capacity is contributing to global food insecurity.

Knowing that liquid petroleum products will be in global demand for the next 40 years at least and knowing that pipelines are far superior to rail cars from an environmental perspective and for global food security, it may be time to think about pipelines as a key transition infrastructure, just as natural gas is viewed as a transition fuel, as we move toward a low carbon future. Photo © Shutterstock.com

# REAL HUNTERS

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If you have information regarding livestock shootings, contact your **local police agency** or call **1-306-216-8294** as soon as possible. You can remain anonymous and may be eligible for a **CASH REWARD** of up to **\$10,000** if your information leads to a conviction.



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# Rural Integrated Roads for Growth Program

**THE MINISTRY** of Highways and Infrastructure (MHI) and SARM introduced Phase one of the Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG), a new infrastructure grant funding program, on October 31, 2019. The RIRG will replace the Municipal Roads for the Economy Program (MREP).

Phase two will involve the Clearing the Path incremental funding grants to be shared in early summer 2020.

SARM Members asked, and we listened! As a result of MREP consultations with all rural municipalities, SARM's Board of Directors, the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure's Minister, Deputy Minister and staff, and the MREP Project Management Board (PMB) developed the new RIRG.

## Key feedback and actions:

- Strong support for maintaining roadway and bridge funding opportunities.
  - Funding will be provided for roads, bridges and large culverts, pending Provincial Budgetary approval on March 18, 2020;
  - Clearing the Path (CTP) primary weight corridors and Heavy Haul High Volume roads (HHHV) are rolled into one road program; and
  - Eligible projects must be a Rural Road Classification (RRC) 1-5 for Bridge and HHHV projects and RRC 1 to 7 for CTP projects.
- Strong variability in needs based on prevalence of bridges in municipalities.
  - MHI and SARM hosted a well-attended informative Bridge Summit targeting RMs, First Nations and Urbans with bridges.
- Opportunities to adjust the program to provide less funding per project and impact more RMs.
  - Introduction of a \$500,000.00 cap per program year, per RM, per project;
  - Introduction of a four-year rolling cap. A RM may only receive two funding caps within a four-year period; and
  - Electronic applications for road and bridge/culvert projects will be kept on file and eligible for three years.
- Support for removing pavement.
  - Pavement will not be an eligible expense; and
  - Base and sub-base will be eligible.

**RIRG** will allow projects to be completed over a two-year time frame. This will allow for stockpiling of materials, ensure permit conditions are met, utility moves are in place and address contractor capacity and weather delays.

- Bridge maintenance.
  - Bridge maintenance will not be an eligible expense. Funds will be directed to capital projects; and
  - Bridge inspections will continue to be conducted in a three-year rotation.
- Managing weather and stockpiles are difficult in a one-year program.
  - The RIRG will allow projects to be completed over a two-year time frame. This will allow for stockpiling of materials, ensure permit conditions are met, utility moves are in place and address contractor capacity and weather delays.
- Traffic counts
  - RMs asked for an increased cycle from a five-year rotation to a three- or four-year rotation. SARM has requested that the next Traffic Count Request for Proposal (RFP) include prices for five-, four- and three-year rotations of traffic counts.

The new program was developed under the assumption of a \$14 million status quo budget. For more information, contact:

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# Youth Progression into rural Saskatchewan

BY LACEY BAUER

4-H Saskatchewan Member Ambassador

**AS THE ECONOMIES** and outlooks are constantly changing worldwide, I am grateful to be a part of the stable and growing economy of rural Saskatchewan.

Although the Saskatchewan economy has faced difficulties in the past and continues to do so, there are many positive aspects that are benefiting the rural populations. As a youth involved in 4-H and agriculture I see that Saskatchewan's rural economy will be negatively affected by the high land prices, rising expenses of operations, and the growing popularity of Beyond Beef products in the future. However, the advancements in both technology and farming practices, increasing employment, and a wider range of agriculture-based education will all positively influence the youth to remain and build their livelihoods in a rural setting.

Having grown up on a small family ranch, I have experienced the difficulties associated with increasing farmland prices. We are currently facing the inability to purchase additional land required to expand the operation. Many families are faced with the dilemma of farm succession planning when there is more than one child interested in taking over the family farm due to the land not being able to support the financial needs of multiple families.

Along with the higher land prices, there are more additional costs of general operation than there were in the past. These expenditures that my grandparents were never faced with include, but are not limited to, carbon tax, GST on used vehicles, and the cost of fertilizer and chemicals.

Due to the lack of knowledge about how animals are raised, treated and slaughtered has led to the vegan and vegetarian movement. This movement has caused people to look for alternative options such as Beyond Beef food products. One of the major misconceptions is

that the use of antibiotics is "poisoning" their food. Where in reality antibiotics are necessary for disease control and the well-being of all species living on earth.

"What button did I just hit? How do I fix this?" Although the advancements in technology may cause stress and confusion to parents, the youth are here to

**4-H** has taught many members across Saskatchewan strong leadership qualities, effective communication, and other life skills that will be essential in our journey to preserve the rural living in and around the small towns of Saskatchewan.

help and believe that it has drastically increased productivity and the profit margin in small and large operations. Technology advancements have also impacted the marketing of agriculture products in rural Saskatchewan. My Uncle Larry's marketing strategy is Kijiji, Kijiji, a few online auctions, and more Kijiji. This helps reduce the miles driven, time away from the ranch, and money spent. As well, it increases the variety of products available for purchase.

With changes in farming practices, we have seen an increase in farming productivity. The availability of fertilizers and chemicals in today's market has enabled farmers to move towards zero-till practices. This has enabled the range of crops grown to broaden and allows for Saskatchewan to be a major exporter of more crops worldwide.

As the availability of jobs in the agriculture sector remains stable, it encourages youth to return to their roots in rural settings after obtaining post-secondary

education. This provides the opportunity for young families to raise their children in the same rural environment that they were born and raised in. There are many beneficial factors to growing up in a rural setting, including reliable and helpful neighbors, personalized relationships with local businesses, small classroom sizes, strong community envelopment with one another, and everyone stops to ask how the cows are doing because everyone knows everyone.

There have been changes to the education system allowing rural students the opportunity to have access to a wider range of classes, such as agriculture courses and dual credit classes in conjunction with University institutions. As well, post-secondary schools have created more agriculture-based programs, allowing students to obtain more knowledge about agriculture practices. Programs, such as 4-H, have established numerous scholarships that help provide financial assistance to the youth attending post-secondary institutions. This is one of the factors that has increased the number of youths receiving post-secondary education.

Having been born and raised on a family ranch and involved with 4-H for 12 years I have had an inside look into how life in rural settings is constantly changing and adapting. Although the economy of rural Saskatchewan faces unknown difficulties, I believe that the economy is stable and will continue to grow enough to provide a sustainable future for the youth. 4-H has taught many members across Saskatchewan, including myself, strong leadership qualities, effective communication, and other life skills that will be essential in our journey to preserve the rural living in and around the small towns of Saskatchewan.

*Photo: 4-H members, Meghan, Lacey and Erin, with former MP David Anderson at the 4-H Canada Citizenship Congress in Ottawa.*





# RMAA – 100 Years Strong

By Linda Boser RMAA Director Division 3

**2020 IS A VERY EXCITING YEAR** for the Rural Administrators' Association of Saskatchewan as we celebrate our centennial year! It is a great opportunity to look both back to the past and forward to the future. To honour the past, we have to look at how it all began. In March 1914, SARM's Executive provided a time be set aside in their convention for secretary-treasurers to discuss matters concerning their work. This continued until 1921 when the secretary-treasurers formed an associated committee under SARM's bylaws. SARM was thereafter referred to as the "Parent Body" and the SARM Executive as the "Central Executive" for as long as the Associated Committee existed. A set of rules and regulations was formally adopted in which the following objects were stated in Section 3 thereof:

- To work in conjunction with SARM in all matters of public interest.
- To protect the interests of the council and public by insisting on a proper educational standard for all its members and a high degree of honor and efficiency.
- To mutually assist each other in standardizing the work, methods and forms used in solving questions arising from the administration of the Acts.
- To secure a recognized standing of the profession and to provide means by examination for admission to the Association.
- To obtain recognition of the importance and responsibility of the municipal secretary's work and to protect the members of the Association carrying out their duties in accordance with the law and the dictates of honor and integrity.
- To secure for members adequate compensation for services rendered and satisfactory working conditions.
- To watch legislation relating to municipal work and to suggest to the Executive of SARM, from time to time, such amendments that may be deemed advisable.

The Associated Committee continued until 1951 when it was dissolved and The Rural Municipal Secretary-Treasurers' Association of Saskatchewan was constituted as an autonomous organization. By an act of the legislature in 1955 the Association was constituted as a professional organization. The name was changed to The Rural Municipal Administrators' Association of Saskatchewan in 1981.

To maintain a close relationship with SARM, reciprocal provisions were made to have the president of one organization serve as an ex officio member of the other's executive. This practise continues and has benefited both organizations. Our Association appreciates and respects the close working relationship between SARM and RMAA.

I wish to share my gratitude for those first Administrators and honor these visionary leaders who sought to form this Association. It is the dedication, passion, and determination of membership and prior leadership that has guided us into 2020.

When one thinks about how the RM administrator's world looked 100 years ago, the technology and office trends that seemed innovative and transformative at that time have been surpassed beyond anything that could have been imagined. But what has not changed for the RMAA is the professional integrity and commitment to the service of its' members and improving the professional services offered to the people of Saskatchewan.

Our centennial year presents us with opportunities to celebrate a century of success and to continue to steward. As we celebrate the end of the first 100 years, it is the founding of the next 100 years. 2020 will be a time to plan for our future, share ideas and be adaptive and resilient for whatever the future may bring.



Timely delivery of maintenance was a major priority for the Agency in 2019, and SAMA delivered maintenance on time to 88% of our client municipalities.

SAMA also reinspected 20 RMs in 2019, and conducted 20,200 industrial reinspections, which were comprised primarily of oil and gas properties, and some railway and elevators.

SAMA launched our MySAMA portal earlier in 2019, which lets municipalities submit maintenance lists to SAMA online. SAMA also launched an updated version of our SAMAView application to make it more user and mobile friendly. For information on MySAMA or the updated SAMAView application, please contact your local SAMA office.

For more information visit our website at [www.sama.sk.ca](http://www.sama.sk.ca).

Contact SAMA by phone at: 1-800-667-7262,  
or by email: [info.request@sama.sk.ca](mailto:info.request@sama.sk.ca).





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**FlexFarm**

# Making use of your plant health officer



**By Colleen Fennig, PAg**  
SARM Division 6 Plant Health Officer

**THE PLANT HEALTH NETWORK'S** role within the Pest Biosecurity Program is to establish human resources in the form of plant health officers (PHOs) as local points of contact for rural municipalities (RMs) and First Nations Bands (FNBs) in each of SARM's six divisions. The role of the PHOs is to provide direct support, education, training to RMs and FNBs (and their appointed officials) on how best to manage agricultural crop pests and prohibited and noxious weeds under *The Pest Control Act* and *The Weed Control Act* in Saskatchewan.

## PHO Staff Support

PHOs are available to help with the more procedural paperwork required of staff. This may include help with drafting agreements or orders, filling out reports, drafting weed management plans and writing appointment letters to the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture (SMA). PHOs can also assist RM councils with drafting bylaws and policies or adapting existing templates.

## PHO Technical Support

PHOs provide training opportunities and technical support for weed inspectors (WIs), pest control officers (PCOs), staff, councillors and ratepayers throughout the year on topics such as clubroot and biosecurity; weed identification; and integrated weed management (including biocontrols). If a RM does not have a WI, a PCO, a licensed pesticide applicator or a licensed trapper, the PHO can support their efforts in finding one. When applicable, PHOs can provide technical support for rebate programs. They are also available to speak at ratepayer meetings to provide education and awareness on timely topics.

## PHO Legislative Support

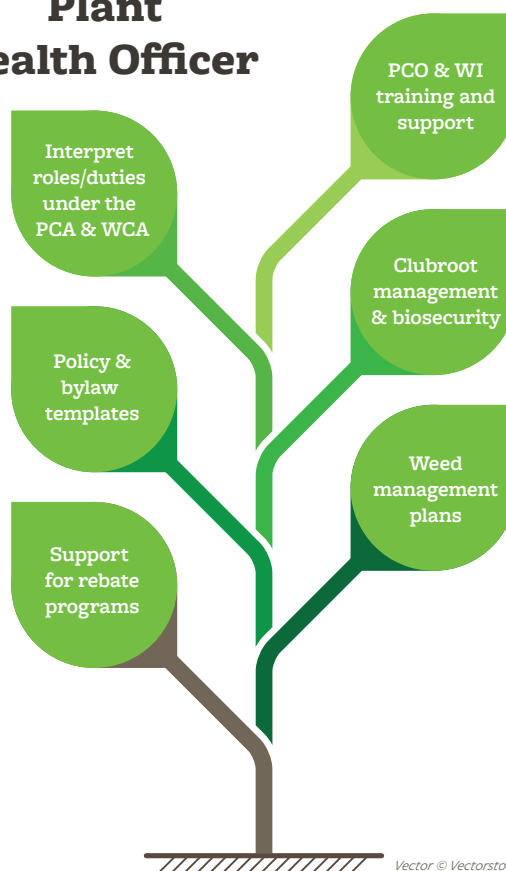
PHOs are here to help administrators, councillors and their appointed officials interpret their roles and duties under *The Weed Control Act* and *The Pest Control Act*. Sometimes an appointed official (for example, a WI) may need to perform regulatory duties such as working with a landowner or occupant to control nuisance or noxious weeds. PHOs are a resource to provide direction as it pertains to *The Weed Control Act*.

## Communication

PHOs publish a quarterly newsletter for all the RMs and FNBs. These newsletters highlight upcoming events and deadlines. They also provide useful information on a wide variety of topics. The PHOs strive to meet with every RM and FNB council in their respective division to check in, discuss concerns, and answer questions. This is an opportunity for each PHO to introduce themselves to new staff and councillors and to connect with council as a whole. Discussion points, concerns and feedback help identify areas where support is needed and shape the role of the PHOs in the future.

The PHOs are here to help and can be an important part of your tool kit to control invasive weeds, form management plans and get a handle on agricultural pests and emerging threats. Do not hesitate to contact your PHO with questions or to request support.

## Plant Health Officer







# Sowing seeds for mental resiliency

**FEW WOULD ARGUE** with the statement that farming is one of the most stressful occupations out there. With so many variables out of a farmer's control, including weather, market prices, trade disruptions, agricultural machinery failure and government policy, it is no wonder that farmers continually face stress and mental health challenges.

As a farmer, you take care of your crop, your livestock and your equipment, but what about yourself? You are the most valuable part of your farm. Without a healthy and productive workforce, farm operations will suffer or stop. Taking care of your mental and physical health is just as important as taking care of your farm.

The Agricultural Health and Safety Network (The Network) began a province wide Farm Stress Initiative over 20 years ago in 1999. The resulting Farm Stress Unit involved stakeholders and producer focus groups and culminated in the development of the *Rural Stress Toolbook*, a *Farm Stress Inventory* and the *Difficult Times* resource. The Network continues to focus on mental health by offering the following resources and activities:

- Farm Stress Workshops: held throughout Saskatchewan
- A new electronic Farm Stress Inventory (checklist)
- The Daily Chore (2016 stress resource)
- Farming and Mental Health Webinar

At the Network, we take a holistic approach to mental health that recognizes the many different factors that play a role in our mental wellness. Here are a few quick tips to strengthen your mental resiliency for the season ahead:

- 1. Social Support:** Having someone to talk to about what's going on in your life and work, especially when things get challenging, can help your mental health and prevent you from feeling isolated or alone.

- 2. Sleep:** It revitalizes your body and mind. Being sleep deprived can impact both your physical and mental health. Make sure you have a healthy sleep routine. Try relaxation exercises and deep breathing to lower anxiety about falling asleep if needed.

- 3. Exercise:** It gives you energy and makes you feel better – that's not just an opinion, it's a scientific fact! Exercise improves all aspects of your well-being, including mental health. Find an activity you enjoy and stick with it.

- 4. Relaxation:** Finding ways to wind down is important and can significantly reduce anxiety and stress levels. Try learning relaxation techniques or just taking some time out of your day to wind down and de-stress.

- 5. Good Nutrition:** A diet that is good for overall physical health is also good for your mental health.

For more information or to access The Network's resources, visit [www.aghealth.usask.ca](http://www.aghealth.usask.ca).

## Other Resources:

**The Do More Ag Foundation**  
([domore.ag](http://domore.ag))

**Farm Stress Line: 1-800-667-4442**

Help is always available. 24 hours per day. Seven days per week. Free and Confidential.

*Photo by icono.com from Pexels*



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and Safety in Agriculture**  
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# Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers Contributing to safer communities

**SASKATCHEWAN CRIME STOPPERS** is a non-profit organization that combines the efforts of the public, media and police to assist in solving crime in our communities. Founded in 1987, Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers receives anonymous tips of criminal activity in Saskatchewan's RMs, cities, towns, villages and Indigenous communities, and it works with the RCMP to provide this information. The program, along with four others in the province (Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Prince Albert), operates through a telephone and online reporting system to collect as much detailed information as possible through anonymous means, which is forwarded to the respective law enforcement agency for investigation. Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers protects the safety of those reporting the tip information by ensuring all contact remains anonymous, and anyone providing information that results in an arrest or charge may be eligible for a cash reward of up to \$2000.

## Reasons for Success

A key contributor to the increase in program statistics in 2019 was the introduction of the Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers Facebook page that has led to more exposure and the ability to reach an expanded audience since its inception in July 2018. The page currently has close to 20,000 followers and has played a significant role in the conclusion of many cases in the past year and a half.

Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers is also very active across the province in promotion and education of the program through attendance at public events and tradeshow, along with providing presentations and promotional materials to various groups and being featured on digital billboards in high profile locations in the province. Having a presence in social media, along with the efforts of our police coordinator working together with Rural Crime Watch to increase education and awareness, continue to be important ingredients to the success of the program.

## Support/Promote Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers

Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers would not exist without the support and financial contribution of its sponsors and community partners. With your continuing support we can help make our communities safer and together we can reduce crime... one anonymous tip, one arrest, and one charge at a time.

**Submit a tip:** Call 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS), access our website: [www.saskcrimestoppers.com](http://www.saskcrimestoppers.com) or use the P3 app for tablets and smartphones.

**For more information:** Contact Sgt. Rob Cozine, RCMP Police Coordinator at 639.625.3027.

Statistics	2018	2019	+/- Change
<b>Tips</b>	1970	<b>2634</b>	+ 33.7%
<b>Arrests</b>	46	<b>68</b>	+ 47.8%
<b>Charges</b>	117	<b>142</b>	+ 21.4%
<b>Cases Cleared</b>	37	<b>71</b>	+ 91.9%
<b>Property Recovered</b>	\$13,340	<b>\$280,600</b>	+ 2003.4%
<b>Drugs Seized</b>	\$17,830	<b>\$268,182</b>	+ 1404.1%
<b>Rewards Approved</b>	\$18,575	<b>\$19,925</b>	+ 7.2%



# SARM Q&A

## Getting to Know SARM's board and staff



WENDY GOWDA



TERRY HOEVING

### WENDY

#### Q What is your role at SARM?

The Director Ex-Officio is a mutually appointed position between SARM and the RMAA whereby SARM's president is Ex-Officio Director to the RMAA, and the RMAA president is Ex-Officio Director to the SARM Board. Through this long standing and mutually beneficial arrangement, I believe our roles are similar in that the Ex-Officio Director can provide an administrative or SARM perspective on many of the issues either association is working on at any given time.

My role includes participation and contribution to board meetings and activities, including committee work. The committees I represent SARM on include the Audit Committee, the FCM Asset Management Working Group, Lieutenant Governor's Award Committee, Municipal Forum, Program & Steering Services Committee, Convention Committee, Infrastructure and Development Committee, Municipal Governance Committee and the University of Regina Senate.

#### Q What do you enjoy most about being on the SARM Board?

The opportunity to meet people and the diverse number of issues and perspectives that perhaps I would never have experienced.

#### Q How long have you been an Administrator?

My career in rural municipal administration has spanned 25 years over three RM's in Division 5 – RM of Big River No. 555, RM of Buckland No. 491 and the RM of LeRoy No. 339, each with unique challenges.

#### Q Where did you grow up?

I grew up in the community of Kelvington.

#### Q What is a talent you wish you had?

A natural golf swing.

#### Q Where is your happy place?

A lake, beach, forest, field, pasture, garden, golf course, anywhere experiencing the outdoors.

### TERRY

#### Q What is your role at SARM?

My role is the Manager of the Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG) and Infrastructure Development Committee (IDC) Advisor. I am responsible for the strategic management and administration of RIRG and the provision of technical advice to RMs for infrastructure related issues, funding, projects and programs as well as supporting various infrastructure committees/projects.

#### Q What is your favourite part about working for SARM?

Building relationships with SARM members, board members and colleagues! Contributing to the progress of infrastructure initiatives and seeing progress. Traveling the gravel roads network and seeing the back road beauty of our province.

#### Q How long have you worked at SARM?

After working 12 years with the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure, I came to work for SARM on October 31, 2013. It's like I never left MHI as SARM works very closely with MHI. Funny story. I came to SARM for three days a week for a month! That was seven years ago.

#### Q Where did you grow up?

I was born in Edmonton, AB and moved back and forth with my family as a child then settled in Regina. My husband, Peter, and I have one son, four daughters and one son in law! The last ones were twins...thus the large family. We now get to play with our two grandchildren.

#### Q What is a talent you wish you had?

Something I always wanted to be is a philanthropist. Helping others who are unable to help themselves especially children and babies.

#### Q Where is your happy place?

Without a doubt anywhere with all my children. We all prefer a hot beach whether in Saskatchewan at Etters Beach, Lake Diefenbaker or someplace tropical!

# Member news



**John Wilton**  
**RM of Tecumseh No. 65**  
**In Memoriam**

John Wilton of Stoughton, SK passed away at the age of 60 on July 27, 2019. John was a generous, honest, hardworking individual who touched the lives of many by making every effort to lend a hand when needed. John will be greatly missed by his family and numerous relatives, coworkers and countless friends.

On behalf of the RM of Tecumseh, we want to recognize John for his years of service as a valued public works employee and contracted employee with the RM. He also served as Deputy Fire Chief for many years with the Stoughton – Tecumseh & District Fire Dept. He was a committed and dedicated employee who was a pleasure to work with and will be greatly missed by all at the RM.



**Wally Envik**  
**RM of Arlington No. 79**  
**In Memoriam**

Wally Envik, age 81 years of Shaunavon, passed away quietly at his home on October 13, 2019.

Wally was born on February 19, 1938. He started farming with his dad at a young age. Wally and Myrna were friends all their lives and married in November

1965. They were blessed with three children, Dorene, Martin and Deanna, and two grandchildren, Tamaria and Jarric. All of whom were loved dearly by Wally.

He enjoyed hunting and was passionate about habitat and wildlife conservation. He was an active member of the Shaunavon Wildlife Federation for over fifty years, President of the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation for two years and sat on the council for many more. During those years, he formed many lifelong friendships.

Wally was very community minded. He was a board member of the Shaunavon School Division for 21 years and a councillor of the RM of Arlington from 2010-2019. Wally helped out with many other organizations that he felt were important. When Wally got that special twinkle in his eye you knew he was up to something. He loved so many things: going for drives, riding his quad, travelling, old vehicles, guns, visiting, photography, stargazing, combining, farming, cows, his dogs, stock car racing, being a pilot and Frosty Treat, but most of all he loved Myrna, his kids and his grandkids. Wally's heart and door were always open to anyone that needed him. His love for his family and friends was immeasurable, and he will be deeply missed.

**Elmer Bender**  
**RM of Coulee No. 136**  
**In Memoriam**

Elmer Otto Bender, age 96, of Swift Current, passed away on December 14, 2019. He was born on February 4, 1923 at Morse. He was the second child of Jake and Emma Bender. Elmer was raised on a farm with his three brothers and two sisters, Walter, Lorraine, Luaine, Alan and Wilbert. He married Margaret Hoffman on November 11, 1948. Together they raised five children on the family farm.

In his younger years, Elmer enjoyed softball, curling and hockey. Always a

farmer at heart, Elmer continued to offer advice to his son, David, even after her retired and could no longer work on the farm. Elmer was also a councillor for the RM of Coulee from 1971-80, and he drove the school bus for many years.

Elmer was a loving, caring man who cared for his family and enjoyed helping out his friends.

**Allan Unger**  
**RM of Coulee No. 136**  
**In Memoriam**

Allan Erdman Unger, age 84 of Swift Current, passed away September 17; he was born on February 22, 1935 in Vanguard. He attended school in Braddock and enjoyed playing baseball, hockey and helping run the family farm at Hallonquist. As his siblings got older and moved away, Allan continued to work the farm and eventually took over the farming operation and married Dianne Campion in 1975. Allan welcomed Marianne and Phillip as his stepchildren, and in 1977, Michael was born.

While on the farm, he was active as a councillor for the RM of Coulee from 1981-84, helped the Hallonquist rodeos and sang in the Hallonquist Lutheran Church choir. In 1988, he retired from farming and moved into Swift Current.

In his retirement he stayed busy working different jobs, such as driving the No. 32 highway mail route, helping his friends with harvest/ranching and got his engineering ticket to run boiler systems for a few schools and facilities. Allan's strong work ethic was obvious in everything that he did, and he was always willing to lend a hand. Allan loved country music, golfing, curling, fishing, gardening and playing cards. Later in life, he enjoyed making road trips to Alberta and BC to visit his children and siblings. Allan enjoyed a long, full life and made friends everywhere he went. He will be missed dearly by his loved ones.





**Amalia "Mollie" Weinbender**  
**RM of Coulee No. 136**  
**In Memoriam**

When Mollie was 16, Frank Bolin hired her as his assistant at the RM of Morse. She married the love of her life, Fred Weinbender, in 1944. In 1945 they moved to Chaplin where Mollie became assistant to Bill Hambly at the RM of Chaplin. In the spring of 1950, Fred bought the store at Calderbank, and Mollie became the administrator of the RM of Vermillion Hills. They moved to Donavon in 1953 where Mollie was the administrator for the RM of Montrose. In 1963, she became the administrator for the RM of Coulee, a position she held until February 1997, after serving over 50 years in municipal government.

In 1964, Fred started an income tax preparation business, but he soon turned it over to Mollie. She loved doing

the income tax returns and CAIS applications. At the age of 50 she learned to swim and dive and earned her instructor's certificate and taught as an unpaid volunteer. At the age of 62, her grandson, Vince, introduced her to computers. Largely self-taught, she loved to write programs in Excel and Clarion. Mollie loved sports – softball, golf and bowling. She loved their many trips to California and Nevada and especially bingo. She produced beautiful gardens and flower beds. Her mother claimed she was born with a needle in her hand as evidenced by the clothing and quilts she made for friends and family.



**Lorne Beer**  
**RM of Edenwold No. 158**  
**In Memoriam**

Councillor Lorne Beer was first elected to the RM of Edenwold Council in 2004. He remained on council through to

2009 and then took a break. He was re-elected in 2014, and he most recently won his seat during the 2018 election, the only contested seat in the municipality during that election campaign.

Passionate about infrastructure and community development and prudent with fiscal planning, Lorne worked hard to ensure the responsible development of high-quality infrastructure to stand the test of time across the municipality. He had a strong and well-deserved reputation for representing his constituents at the council table and ensuring their needs were met. Outside of council, he supported and participated in a number of community-based initiatives and organizations. A firm supporter of opportunities for youth and a passionate sports fan, Lorne was often found cheering on local teams.

As the Division 4 Councillor, Lorne was enthusiastic about working with all members of the community on projects and initiatives geared towards creating new opportunities for the benefit of local residents and businesses. He dedicated many years to his service as an RM councillor, and he continued to work hard in his role as the Division 4 Councillor up to his final weeks.

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Beyond the local community, Lorne developed strong working relationships with neighbours, including local First Nations leaders. He was well-respected for his honest approach at the council table and his willingness to have an open mind to new ideas and opportunities. The relationships Lorne built, the passion he brought to his role, and the work he carried out were of great benefit to the RM of Edenwold and will continue to serve the municipality and our citizens for many years to come.



**Glen Linton**  
**RM of Chaplin No. 164**  
**In Memoriam**

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Glen E. Linton of Drayton Valley on December 6, 2019 at the age of 74 years. Glen was a man of great integrity, honesty and humility. He could sometimes be a man of few words as he believed his actions spoke clearly. However, he was never one to turn down a chance to socialize, dance or listen to good music with friends and family. He was very involved in the community, and he spent a lot of his time coaching. His abundance of care would help change many young lives and mould them into the people they have become. A lover of all sports, baseball, curling and golf were among his favorites. He also had a great fondness for animals, gardening and specifically his family. Glen will be lovingly remembered by his family, extended family and life-long friends.

Glen was a councillor for Division 5 in the RM of Chaplin for five years.



**Larry Jankoski**  
**RM of Tullymet No. 216**  
**In Memoriam**

Larry (Lawrence) Jankoski of Ituna, beloved husband of Anne, father, grandfather and friend, passed away on Sep-

tember 7, 2019. He was born in Balcarres on December 30, 1947, the second child of Enid (Eyre) and Philip Jankoski. He grew up on the family farm with his siblings, Audrey and Wayne. He ran the family farm, which for a time included running the Tullymet General Store.

In 1968, he married Anne Paslawski of Hubbard. They built a house near the same spot his grandfather had homesteaded in 1903. There, they raised four children. Except for the last two years, Larry spent his whole life in Tullymet.

Larry took great pride in his family, farm and heritage. He believed deeply in the value of community service. That is why he devoted much time and energy to the RM and various clubs and committees. He served as reeve and councillor for the RM of Tullymet for 25 years. He also served on the Wyber Community Club, the Ituna Curling Club, the Balcarres Housing Authority, the Rural Economic Development Committee, and the District 39 Ag Board, to name a few. He was instrumental in the 310 Partnership to get Highway 310 repaved. He was also involved in bringing Hypor Pig Barns to the RM. He was a people person, local historian, and a storyteller. He loved being with his family, especially his 13 grandchildren. He liked visiting with neighbours, reminiscing with friends, and meeting new people.



**Roy Powell**  
**RM of Wolverine No. 340**  
**In Memoriam**

Roy was born on August 6, 1929 to Arthur and Elizabeth Powell in the Brithdir District. After finishing school, he worked for farmers and the PFRA Pasture. Farming was Roy's main passion, and he purchased his first quarter of land in 1945. Roy and his brother, Edgar, took over the family farm in 1949. They continued to farm together until they both retired.

In 1954, the 'Powell Brothers' began raising purebred Hereford cattle. They worked hard building a successful brand, winning many awards and selling their cattle to buyers around the world. In 1967, Roy met a very special lady, Joyce Kyle. They were married on November 2,

1968. Roy and Joyce took pride in their farmyard and won the Master Family Farm Award in 1971.

Roy was devoted to his community, serving on several boards. His work with the RM of Wolverine began with his election in 1956. He served as a councillor and then as reeve for 52 years. His interest of the area made him extremely knowledgeable and a local historian. Of the many awards he received for his community service, one of his greatest honours was the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Outstanding Service to Rural Saskatchewan.

Roy was known for his hard work, commitment and dedication to family and farm life. He will be remembered and missed by his family and friends.



**Kevin Melle**  
**RM of Lomond No. 37**  
**Retirement**

The RM of Lomond No. 37 thanks retired administrator Kevin Melle for his 28 years of dedicated service. Kevin started with the RM of Lomond on March 1, 1991 and retired June 28, 2019. Reeve Desmond McKenzie presents Kevin Melle with an engraved portrait in appreciation of the hard work and years of service Kevin has contributed. The municipality wishes him well in his retirement.



**Ron Konjolka**  
**RM of Ituna Bon Accord No. 246**  
**Retirement**

Ron Konjolka, grader operator for the RM of Ituna Bon Accord, retired October 31, 2019. He began his career as grader operator in April 1988 and was employed by the RM for 31 years. Over the years, he developed an excellent working relationship and a wonderful friendship with each member of the RM council, employees and ratepayers.



On November 23, 2019, family, friends and neighbours gathered together for an afternoon social to honour Ron on his retirement. This special occasion began with speeches by RM Administrator Wilma Hrenyk and Reeve Ed Datchko, expressing thanks and best wishes on behalf of the RM council, staff and ratepayers for Ron's dedication and commitment to his job and all the hard work he has done for the RM. Then, the reeve presented Ron with a gift in appreciation of his years of service to the RM. After opening his gift, Ron gave a short speech expressing his thanks to everyone for coming and for making this day special for him. For the remainder of the afternoon, everyone visited and enjoyed a delicious lunch and a piece of Ron's retirement cake.

On behalf of the RM council and all the ratepayers in the RM of Ituna Bon Accord No. 246, we wish to express our thanks to Ron and let him know how much we appreciate him and value him. We wish him all the best in his retirement.



**Eugene Harter**  
**RM of Buffalo No. 409**  
**Retirement**

Eugene Harter began his service as councillor in Division 2 in January 2011. He retired in March 2019. Eugene has made many significant contributions as he served on council and various committees.

A celebration was held on January 10, 2020 where Eugene was presented with an engraved, framed print and a Public Service Award Certificate.

We thank Eugene for his dedication to the RM, and we are grateful for the knowledge he provided throughout his service. We wish him the best in the future.



**Mike Sander**  
**RM of Buffalo No. 409**  
**Retirement**

On behalf of the RM of Buffalo, we want to recognize Mike Sander for his years of service as a public works employee from 1995 to 2019 and congratulate him on his retirement.

A retirement party was held for Mike to honor and recognize his achievement of 25 years of dedication and hard work for the RM where Mike was presented with an engraved plaque and a gift certificate.

Thank you for your hard work, knowledge, loyalty and dedication. The ratepayers, council and staff wish you all the best in your retirement.

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