



RC

RURAL COUNCILLOR

VOLUME 54 number 2
Summer 2021 ISSUE

PUBLISHED BY THE SASKATCHEWAN
ASSOCIATION OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES

Publications Agreement #40062693

Recreation & TOURISM

Tourism and Recreation for the Win; Find Your Sense of Adventure;
Building Thriving Rural Communities for Tourists and Residents Alike;
Protect and Preserve Saskatchewan Fish Populations; Agriculture Key to
Province's COVID-19 Recovery; Take a Day Trip and Explore Your Own Backyard;
Saskatchewan Tourism and RIRG; Support Local Tourism and Recreation

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Official publication of the
Saskatchewan Association of Rural
Municipalities and the Rural Municipal
Administrators' Association of Saskatchewan.

Published four times per year by:

Benchmark Public Relations

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our vision

our mission

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

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 Don McMorris
Minister of Government Relations
Minister Responsible for
First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs

THANK YOU to SARM for providing me an opportunity to share an update from the Government of Saskatchewan to the membership. Through my experience as Minister of Government Relations and managing the family farm in the Lewvan area, I know first-hand just how important the rural values of common sense, helping your neighbours, and hard work are to Saskatchewan's future.

That's why we're continuing to make key infrastructure investments in rural communities to protect Saskatchewan's economy, as we continue to emerge from the pandemic.

Projects that improve our drinking water and wastewater projects help protect our environment – both of which support the economic growth of communities.

Street, road, culvert and bridge projects improve the transportation network. They make it more efficient to get goods – such as grain and other agricultural products – to worldwide markets to grow Saskatchewan's export-based economy.

Culture and recreation projects play a unique role. They strengthen the heart of a community. They provide venues where leadership and teamwork are taught through organized sports, inspire creativity with arts programs, encourage physical activity to keep us healthy, and foster a sense of belonging, thanks to clubs and events for youth, adults and seniors.

When these projects are complete, they provide places where people can gather to volunteer to make their communities and province a better place.

To enhance that sense of community when it's safe to gather again, the Government of Saskatchewan is investing in halls, arenas, playgrounds, parks and others recreational facilities, as part of its plan to help stimulate the economy.

More than \$10.9 million of provincial funding through the Ministry of Government Relations will go toward 33 of these types of projects, under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. Examples of provincial investments include:

- The Beardy's and Okemasis Cree Nation west of Duck Lake, which will receive **\$250,395** to support the upgrade and expansion of the existing Veteran's Memorial Hall.
- The Sturgeon Lake First Nation's Children's Playground Project northwest of Prince Albert. It will see **\$74,650** to help install accessible, safe and modern playground equipment.
- The Town of Pense will have **\$285,338** to support their Arena Flooring and Piping Upgrades Project. It involves replacing the brine piping system in both the skating arena and curling rink, along with the installation of a new flooring base.
- In the RM of Willow Bunch No. 42, the Jean Louis Légaré Regional Park Authority will see a **\$26,664** investment to improve its existing shower house building.

- The Northern Village of Denare Beach's Community Hockey Bunk Revitalization Expansion Project will receive **\$25,831** to create a skating ring around the main skating surface, allowing for both hockey and skating simultaneously.
- The Town of Hudson Bay's pool project will have **\$532,547** to help it become a reality.
- The Resort Village of Coteau Beach's Community Centre Construction Build Project will receive **\$31,837**. The facility will ultimately be able to host gymnastics, dance, yoga, basketball and other team sports and community events.

The Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport (PCS) will also continue its Community Rink Affordability Grant Program. It provides \$2,500 per ice surface to eligible projects with a total allocation of **\$1.7 million**. Funds can be directed toward rink operating costs, COVID-19 related costs or minor capital improvements. PCS expects more than 600 ice surfaces in more than 350 communities will be eligible to receive this support.

When completed, these projects create lasting memories and, in turn, even stronger bonds to rural Saskatchewan for its residents and newcomers alike. Thank you.

Strengthening communities

\$10.9 million
provincial
investment for
culture & recreation
projects





Agriculture

key sector in province's COVID-19 recovery

By Ray Orb
SARM President

GREETINGS to everyone,

Once again seeding is underway in rural Saskatchewan and agriculture continues to be one of the main drivers of our provincial economy. It has even more importance during this period of economy recovery in our nation that is struggling under the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the Saskatchewan ministry of Export & Trade, in 2020 Saskatchewan farmers' exports were approximately \$16.9 billion; this was a new high for the province and amounted to 55% of the province's total exports. There was also good news in the value-added export sector that produced \$3.2 billion.

There is no doubt that our value-added sector needs to expand! This includes food processing, which sheds a whole new light on the Lake Diefenbaker irrigation expansion project, that when completed, will see another 500,000 acres of land under irrigation. The value of growing food under dependable irrigation is invaluable, especially during periods of drought as we may be facing this year.

It is important to note the drought warnings in many of the western states in the USA, including California, the state that produces about 25% of the US food supply.

SARM is extremely pleased with the provincial announcement of the irrigation expansion and is supportive of the stakeholder consultations that are taking place, including those with rural municipalities.

Now I'd like to discuss a different way of farming. Farmers have been doing their part to reduce greenhouse gases in the way they farm, including zero till, for a long time. There are also some who have planted trees (for various reasons), which also contributes to the sequestration of carbon in the soil. For many decades ranchers have also been stewards of the rangeland in this province.

Yet, because the federal government does not appear to value agricultural Carbon Offsets that are retroactive, most of Saskatchewan's farmers will not qualify to sell in an Offset market unless organizations like SARM and the Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association convince the federal government otherwise.

SARM has been working with our province to create an Offset program that is meaningful for agricultural producers, and that is equivalent to a federal program.

We've also been working closely with the Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association and have completed projects that have shown contrary to what was once thought... that more carbon can be stored in the soil each and every year. But there needs to be a verification process that is trusted, based in science, and rewards farmers to an extent that is acceptable. It also needs to recognize past sequestration amounts that farmers have sequestered in their fields.

Agriculture continues to be one of the main drivers of our provincial economy. It has even more importance during this period of economy recovery in our nation that is struggling under the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SARM has done a lot of work on this file and we have confidence that a reasonable start date, and a reasonable verification process, will be adopted that yields reasonable amounts of cash for farmers. If it sounds like a new way of farming, in essence it is.

One last thing to mention is the upcoming vote among the SUMA membership to decide whether the name Municipalities of Saskatchewan will continue to be used or whether the membership will revert back to the original (and legal name) SUMA... one that the SARM membership prefers. Please note that by the time this article goes to print, the decision may have been made.

In the meantime, I wish you all a safe and enjoyable summer. If you haven't already, please get your vaccinations for COVID-19 and stay healthy.



Tourism and Recreation *for the* WIN

By Jay Meyer
SARM Executive Director

AS WE ALL LIVE in our own bubbles, trying to protect ourselves from COVID-19, I sit back and wonder most nights how many have been able to make it through the many issues that come with a pandemic.

Go out and support these local, regional and provincial tourism businesses. Not only will you be helping the economy during a difficult time, you will also get some much needed TLC.

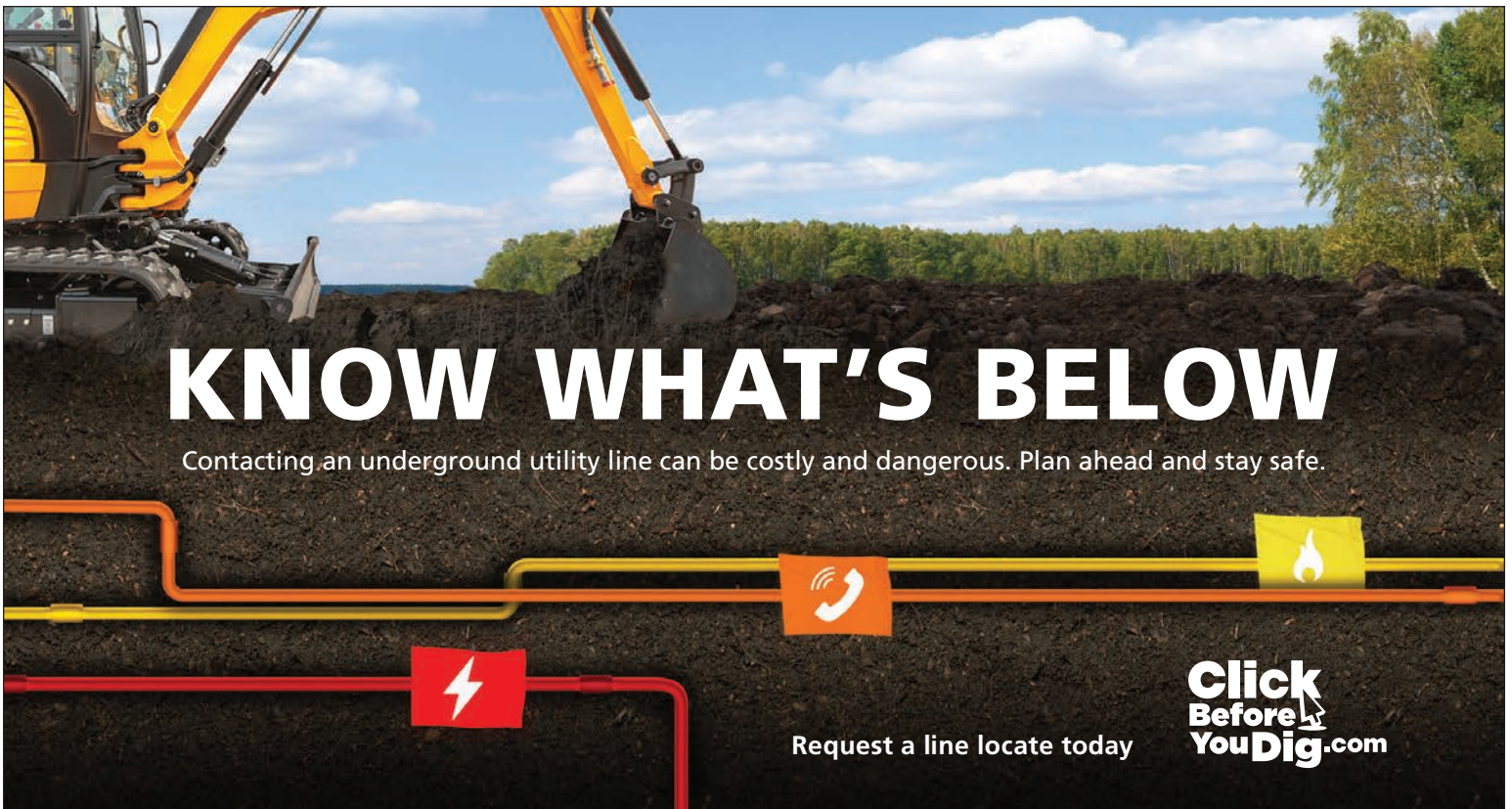
Being locked in your own house for the protection of the population is a significant challenge. Many short and long-term challenges have presented themselves over the past 15 months. The major challenge is how mentally exhausting this has been on each of us. There are many forms medicine can take to

try to cure the problems we may have. One of the healthiest medicines many have taken advantage of has been tourism and recreation. Think of the positive impact tourism and recreation has had on many of us during the COVID-19 pandemic. Municipalities invest in tourism and recreation, whether through local rinks, golf clubs, museums and parks to regional ventures supported by multiple municipalities.

Tourism and recreation may not fix our problems, but it sure does a good job of keeping our minds off things for a certain amount of time. It is not easy being in business, never mind the tourism industry, where the season is short and you cannot predict the weather. So go out and support these local, regional and provincial tourism businesses. Not only will you be helping the economy during a difficult time, you will also get some much needed TLC.

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Take a day trip and explore *your own backyard*

By Norm Nordgulen

SARM Director, Division 2

HAPPY spring everyone,

Somehow I was appointed SARM's tourism minister, and I have elected to write today about how to beat the COVID blues by being a homegrown tourist.

I have never seen the appeal of leaving a crowded bustling city just to go to a crowded bustling campground (if you can get a spot) and race there to save the spot you have. Instead, my favourite outing has always been a day trip (or maybe two) in your own time and at your own pace. How often we take our own areas for granted – let that nosey neighbour down the street talk about their fancy expensive trip to an exotic place you care nothing about, while you quietly assure yourself that life is good in your own backyard.

My favourite outing has always been a day trip (or maybe two) in your own time and at your own pace. Day trips are the perfect solution to everyday boredom. You'll be surprised at what you may have forgotten – or never really saw, no matter how many times you have gone by it.

The best trip I ever had was supposed to be a day trip but ended up being three days with not so much as a change of clothes, toothbrush – nothing! We had to wash our clothes in a bathtub and hang them to dry. Even so, the kids and my late wife never stopped talking about it. The best times are always the unplanned ones.

Day trips are the perfect solution to everyday boredom. You'll be surprised at what you may have forgotten – or never really saw, no matter how many times you have gone by it. There is so much to see and do right here in our own backyard. Things like Roche Percee in the southeast (one of the landmarks for early traders), or take a ride on the tourist train at Ogema. How about a visit to Aust's General Store in Big Beaver, where they really do have everything. Look over the coal mine in Coronach before Trudeau shuts it down, then head on to Assiniboia to see a world-class art museum and the world's biggest windmills to date. How about a trip to Old Post at Wood Mountain to see some of the nicest country in Saskatchewan – Sitting Bull thought so, too. Continue on to Val Marie where the world's best native prairie exists, and see the Grassland Park – home to prairie dogs (the larger version of our best game animal, the gopher), and who hasn't seen the



Backcountry camping in Grasslands National Park.
Photo credit: George Stone | Shutterstock.com

town of Eastend and Cypress Hills country? If you're saying "I haven't," you haven't seen anything yet.

Pine Cree Park south of Tompkins is the world's best kept secret. Go north from there and visit the Sandhills east of Leader and south of Sceptre – a living desert managed and preserved wonderfully for eons by local ranchers. The Batoche battle site is one of my favourites – see the Gatling gun bullet holes in the buildings and the gun pits facing in and out of the village, giving a feeling of reality to real strife. While there, visit the grave of Gabriel Dumont, Saskatchewan's greatest general, as well as those of many others who risked it all.

If you are up Canora way, check out the outdoor grotto in Buchanan during July/August – a true religious experience you won't forget, and I'm told there's an abandoned oil storage and refinery somewhere northeast of there, a place I have yet to find. Going south from Tisdale, you will go through some really nice river and bush area you might not have expected to find in Saskatchewan.

There really is so much to see right in your backyard that it can't all be written in anything less than a book – or in your memory. You choose which.

Until next time adventure is calling.



Saskatchewan Tourism and the Rural Integrated Roads for Growth

By Terry E. Hoeving

SARM IDC Advisor and RIRG Lead

SASKATCHEWAN lives for its warm weather and outdoor activities. After a long cold winter, there's nothing better than taking a day trip or holiday to any of the wonderful parks and beaches around the province.

Saskatchewan boasts the most kilometres of rural roads in Canada. It's these roads that lead us to Regina to watch the Saskatchewan Roughriders or simply a trip to your favourite ice cream stand for a treat, not to mention the beauty and hidden gems of days gone by on Saskatchewan's rural back roads.

The roads we travel to reach local regional parks are under the jurisdiction of the rural municipalities (RMs). The Ministry of Highways provides funding for SARM to distribute to RMs to help support the upgrade of these tourism roads, bridges and large culverts though out the years with their funding. This year saw a huge inflex of stimulus funding for SARM to manage on behalf of the province.

\$44.2 million dollars to be exact and that was just for roads!

Saskatchewan boasts the most kilometres of rural roads in Canada. It's these roads that lead us to Regina to watch the Saskatchewan Roughriders or simply a trip to your favourite ice cream stand for a treat, not to mention the beauty and hidden gems of days gone by on Saskatchewan's rural back roads.

So far, the Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG) Stimulus Funding has provided road funding to 166 RM projects throughout the province, some providing access to parks and beaches.

Rural Saskatchewan also has bridges, lots of bridges, for fishing off at your favourite spots! Approximately 1,400! In Phase 1 of 2020, 28 bridge projects in 20 RMs were approved for a total estimated project cost of \$23,506,645.00 and total estimated grant funding of \$9,609,822.50.

In Phase 2 of 2020, 20 bridge projects in 18 RMs (the RM 152 project is shared with RM 151 as the Qu'Appelle River serves as an RM boundary between them) were approved for a total estimated project cost of \$17,035,983.00 and total estimated grant funding of \$6,950,491.50.



Not only does the warm summer weather get us thinking of hitting the road and exploring, it also enables contractors around the province to use those long, warm days; conducive to good road construction.

Remember as you travel to your favourite tourism spot to watch for the "Slow to 60" signage on project construction sites and to adhere to the work zones signage for your safety and the safety of the contractors working on the roads.

SARM wishes you a safe, healthy fun-filled summer exploring rural Saskatchewan!



JOHN DEERE



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a privilege and honour **Serving Rural SK**

By Carmen Sterling

Former SARM Vice-President

WHEN I WAS FIRST ELECTED to council in 2002, I knew very little about the inner workings of our municipality and even less about the municipal sector as a whole and the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM). I quickly came to understand the valuable role a municipal association plays in elevating municipal issues, provincially and federally. Prior to pursuing a position on the SARM Board of Directors, I had the opportunity to interact with board and staff on issues and challenges our municipality experienced. I always appreciated their willingness to hear our concerns and assist where they could. These experiences, coupled with a keen interest in doing what I could to support rural Saskatchewan, sparked my interest in getting involved at the provincial level.

Fast-forward 12 years to March of 2014 when I was elected Division 1 Director and then Vice-President in 2016. The support I received in both of those elections was so meaningful as I took on the important role of representing rural municipalities. It truly has been a privilege to have had the opportunity to represent SARM members over the past six years. The opportunity to talk with you, the members, and to get to know and understand your issues so I could advocate and inform government is one of many things I sincerely miss about the work I've grown to love.

I was 29 years old when I was first elected to council, and I've learned so much over the years about municipal government, leadership, integrity and myself during my 18 years on council. Though life sometimes throws us an unexpected curveball, I firmly believe everything happens for a reason. Although my involvement has changed, I continue to have a passion for rural Saskatchewan and will continue to look for opportunities to support and celebrate rural municipalities and agriculture and the valuable contributions they make to the success of Saskatchewan, Canada and the world! I have thoroughly enjoyed

meeting and getting to know so many of you from across the province. I've had the privilege to work with some great people over the years and have made some great memories and friendships I will cherish. Thank you for supporting me

It truly has been a privilege to have had the opportunity to represent SARM members over the past six years. The opportunity to talk with you, the members, and to get to know and understand your issues so I could advocate and inform government is one of many things I sincerely miss about the work I've grown to love.

during my involvement with SARM. I wish nothing but success for each of you and your municipalities. It truly has been my pleasure and privilege.

Stand up for what you believe in, speak up when you need to and never forget how important rural Saskatchewan is!



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Farewell and *Thank you*

By Wendy Gowda

Former SARM Ex-Officio Director

CONTRIBUTING TO SARM, through participation as an Ex-Officio Director from 2015-2020, was one of the highlights of my administrative career. This period was a period of growth in SARM's activities and staffing, and an ever-changing environment culminating with the new office construction and moving into SARM's first owned office building on Windsor Park Road in Regina.

Contributing to SARM, through participation as an Ex-Officio Director from 2015-2020, was one of the highlights of my administrative career.

Perhaps the most honourable role during my tenure on the SARM Board was participation on the Lieutenant Governors Award Selection Committee; which involved, along with SARM and Lieutenant Governor's Officer staff, and SARM Board member representation, reviewing the many outstanding nominations for the award, meeting the recipients and their families, and the Lieutenant Governors of Saskatchewan and celebrating and recognizing the contributions of the recipients to their communities and to Saskatchewan.

Larger than any specific accomplishment or event – reflections that stand out are the friendships founded on the SARM Board, the many opportunities for meeting and learning of Saskatchewan regions, acquaintances with SARM delegates, officials and employees. The high regard SARM maintains with local, provincial and federal government levels of government office, and the multiple organizations, associations and individuals continued to impress me whether attending the annual lobby trip to Ottawa, meeting RM delegates throughout Saskatchewan or members of the Saskatchewan Legislature in Regina, or in more recent times – participating in virtual or telephone meetings as may be permitted with current provincial guidelines.

Officially, my position as Ex-Officio to the SARM Board, brought an administrative perspective and insight to the many areas SARM relates to – and unofficially in the beginning, joining the breakfast club with board co-harts, walks to the Hamilton Street Office with Rod, Norm, Larry and Carmen, and later (pre-COVID) the many dinners with the board and family members – all insightful to building consensus and considerations for the board meetings.

Lastly, I must recognize the councillors, reeve and staff from the RM of LeRoy, who supported my involvement with the RMAA and the SARM Board through my administrative career in the RM of LeRoy No. 339. The importance of local official

and family support is paramount when one is considering the additional contributions to another level of office – there will be times concessions around scheduling RM business and personal matters to accommodate the RMAA or SARM schedule of activities. I have been most fortunate with the RM of LeRoy Council acknowledging the benefit to their administration through my personal growth and experience gained through participating and contributing to both the RMAA and SARM. I have enjoyed the opportunity to participate and contribute to both SARM and the RMAA and encourage others to pursue an interest in becoming more involved through their community and provincial associations when an opportunity presents.



2021 is a revaluation year when all properties in the province receive updated assessments.

SAMA conducts revaluations based on a four-year cycle. 2017 was the year of the last revaluation, and the 2021 Revaluation will see assessed values updated to reflect a new base date of January 1, 2019. The legislated base date means that 2021 values reflect a property's value as of January 1, 2019.

As of April 28, 2021, SAMA has delivered revaluation packages to 97% of our clients. If you have any questions about your new assessments, please do not hesitate to contact SAMA.

Thank you for your continued support as we look to provide service for our municipal clients while being mindful of the health and safety of our staff and the public.

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

Building thriving rural **COMMUNITIES** *for tourists and residents alike*

By Joanne Vanderheyden
President, Federation of Canadian Municipalities



RURAL COUNCILLOR

AS MAYOR of a wonderful rural community in Ontario called Strathroy-Caradoc and a councillor for the surrounding region of Middlesex County, I get to see first-hand the important contributions smaller communities make. As FCM's new president, I'm ready to be a strong voice for all our rural towns and villages.

Across the country, rural Canada drives key industries that support our economy – from agriculture to manufacturing to natural resources. We're also home to beautiful natural settings and a welcoming way of life that make our communities popular tourist destinations.

Last summer, our advocacy led to \$70 million in emergency federal funding for Saskatchewan's municipalities through the national Safe Restart Agreement.

Like so much else these days, COVID-19 has hit the rural tourism industry hard. We've seen far fewer hotel and motel reservations and far fewer customers in local shops and restaurants – even during peak season. During last year's shutdown, Canada lost nearly a million tourism jobs.

As your national voice, FCM has been there to help every step of the way. Last summer, our advocacy led to \$70 million in emergency federal funding for Saskatchewan's municipalities through the national Safe Restart Agreement. That money was key to shoring up local budgets at a time of unprecedented revenue losses, like those in tourism.

That's not all. All pandemic long, FCM has pushed rural priorities to the top of the national agenda. When COVID-19 drove home that rural Canadians can't wait any longer for a decent internet connection, we secured \$2.75 billion for the Universal Broadband Fund. We've driven landmark investments in rural and remote transportation and ensured smaller communities can access new disaster mitigation funding. And we got the federal Gas Tax Fund transfer doubled for a year, so local leaders can move forward on job-creating infrastructure projects faster.

FCM's Western Economic Solutions Taskforce (WEST) – chaired by Yorkton councillor Randy Goulden – has been busy,

too. In addition to last year's \$1.7 billion to clean up orphaned and abandoned oil and gas wells, our WEST taskforce secured major new funding in Federal Budget 2021 for trade infrastructure and regional economic development, as well as compensation for farmers facing added costs of carbon pricing.

So whether it's ensuring faster internet for small businesses, repairing and retrofitting the infrastructure that supports our quality of life, creating local jobs and growth, or strengthening transportation links to underserved areas, FCM is helping to build more vibrant rural communities – not just for the tourists who visit, but for the residents who call them home.

As FCM President, I'm eager to build on this progress, and I know the best way to do that is to continue working together with all of you. I'm so proud of FCM's strong partnership with SARM and with Saskatchewan's rural leaders. That includes President Ray Orb, who chairs FCM's Rural Forum and is such a strong advocate on the national stage.

Our communities are where Canadians have been living the realities of this pandemic. They need to be at the centre of our nationwide recovery. The truth is, there can be no recovery without a strong rural Canada. We drive nearly a third of Canada's GDP, and we're home to 10 million people. That makes FCM's call for a "rural lens" in the federal government more important than ever.

Applying a rural lens means adapting funding criteria and processes to account for rural needs. It means prioritizing issues that matter to rural leaders – whether it's getting broadband investments out the door quickly, addressing the economic anxiety facing western communities, or tackling ongoing municipal operating shortfalls, so we can gear up for recovery.

Applying a rural lens also means bringing rural expertise to the table more often as national solutions are developed. After all, as the governments closest to daily life, we know what our communities and our residents need, and we know how to deliver.

COVID-19 has changed so much. What hasn't changed are the unique strengths and values that rural communities bring to our national fabric. So let's continue working together to bring prosperity and opportunity to rural communities. Canada's future depends on it.

Joanne Vanderheyden is President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and Mayor of Strathroy-Caradoc, ON. She's also a Councillor for Middlesex County, ON. FCM is the national voice of Canada's local governments, with more than 2,000 members representing 90 per cent of Canadians.



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Support local Tourism & Recreation

By **Barry Hvidston** RMAA Division 4 Director

Saskatchewan is a place that has an immeasurable amount of recreational and tourism opportunities. . . . This year, let's make our local recreational and tourism areas as busy as they can be and reinvest our money at home.

A FEW YEARS AGO, my three-year-old daughter was diagnosed with leukemia. COVID-19 has taken me back to that time when self-isolation, occasionally wearing masks, and washing hands with Purell was the norm. Just like during the last year, we made it through that journey by joining social network groups through Facebook and other sites, the assistance and constant contact (in many cases virtual or over the phone) of family and friends, and outdoor recreational activities. According to SunLife, "Lifting your mood and lowering anxiety are two ways being outdoors may be good for mental health. When in nature, people generally experience a more positive mood and better cognitive function. Memory improves as does the ability to focus. Some people also experience a boost in creativity."

Now, as I sit writing this article while waiting for the golfing season to open, it has been 13 months since COVID-19 was first documented in Saskatchewan, closing down our beautiful province and forcing people to search out recreational opportunities locally instead of traveling across the globe. It is absolutely amazing what we can find in our own backyards.

Saskatchewan is a place that has an immeasurable amount of recreational and tourism opportunities. There are over 100 federal, provincial and regional parks along with thousands of little local gems, which people are eager to explore. I am sure most of the people reading this just took a moment to think about their favourite local gem and smiled.

We are blessed with approximately 10 per cent of our province being covered by water, including over 100,000 lakes and thousands of miles of rivers, seven ski hills, numerous hunting, quad-ding and snowmobiling trails – including sections of the Trans-Canada Trail – a nationally recognized zoo in Saskatoon, and enough golf courses that we could golf a different course every day in which there is no snow on the ground for a year.

Nearly every community has a trade show or festival, and some are very unique like the SaskPower Windscape Kite Festival in Swift Current or the Annual Goose Festival in Kindersley. I would also be remiss if I did not mention the Winter Lights Festival in Canora. On the other hand, if you enjoy sitting in your backyard listening to the birds, visit the bird sanctuaries around Watrous and

Chaplin or enjoy a trip to the Redberry Lake Migratory Bird Sanctuary, home of the only United Nation's recognized Biosphere in Saskatchewan. On the way there, stop by the Crooked Bush in the RM of Douglas.

As a rural municipality, unless we have a resort-type of area, the recreational portion of our budgets are very low and our tourism budget is almost non-existent. We should all take a step back, investigate our local areas and promote what we have. There are lots of trails, camping and picnic areas, museums, historical forts and fort locations, village sites which have disappeared and many other recreational and cultural areas in your rural municipality. Take time and promote them! If the municipality has a website, think about creating a Places of Interest section.

If anyone is at a loss as to where to go, there are some great websites dedicated to recreation in Saskatchewan, or follow the SaskatcheWanderer on their adventures across our vast province. This year, let's make our local recreational and tourism areas as busy as they can be and reinvest our money at home.

Photo credit: Shutterstock.com

Lake Water Webinars

pointing to the need for protecting our lakes

THE THEME of the 2021 edition of the *Rural Councillor*, “Recreation and Tourism”, fits in nicely with the theme of PARCS’ 2021 Spring Webinar Festival, “Welcome to Lake Water Wednesdays”, scheduled for five consecutive Wednesdays from May 19 to June 16. This report was written prior to the event, but it was intended to highlight the importance of lakes for everyone in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan’s lakes typically score high in the dialogue when we consider the topics of tourism and recreation. Please note these speakers and their planned messages for our Spring Festival:

- **Pamela Martin** teaches at the Coastal Carolina University Department of Politics. Martin’s research and writing focuses on global environmental issues. She was awarded the Best Book Award by the International Studies Association for her first book, and she has recently released another book explaining the legal tools needed to protect our lakes. When invited to lead off PARCS Festival, Martin was especially excited by PARCS’ recent newsletter (March 22, 2021) describing how a rural municipality and a First Nation in Quebec had been jointly successful in passing two parallel resolutions (based on national and international laws) asserting their joint guardianship of the Magpie River in Quebec.
- **Peter Leavitt** is the research chair for Canada’s Institute of Environmental Change and Society. Leavitt teaches Biology at the University of Regina, and he has published dozens of papers about the factors that influence the safety and quality of lake water in Saskatchewan. Leavitt has published dozens of papers about the effects of nitrogen and society on lake water quality. Leavitt is an expert on how lakes regulate climatic process and how, in turn, climate influences lakes.
- **Jeri Geiger** is Saskatchewan Environment’s Invasive Species Coordinator. Geiger has achieved much in her zeal to keep invasive species out of our lakes, working with and training provincial conservation officers and the staff in Provincial Parks, officers with the Canada Border Service Agency, and her own cadre of inspectors who make up the watercraft inspection program on Saskatchewan’s highways. Geiger has enlisted the assistance of several dozen agencies in supporting her program to protect our lakes from invasive species.
- **Joe Jozsa** once worked as a park planner for both Parks Canada and Saskatchewan Parks. Jozsa is also a registered community planner who provides consulting help to resort village in their community planning. He strongly believes that the best way to protect lakeshores is for lakeshore communities to build their expectations into their official community plans and their accompanying zoning bylaws.
- **Bob Haliday** is a professional engineer whose specialty is prairie hydrology, including interjurisdictional water management, floodplain management and drainage issues. Haliday is the author of the flooding chapter in the recent Saskatchewan Flood and Natural Hazard Risk Assessment.

PARCS

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LAKE WATER WEDNESDAY WEBINARS

5 FREE WEBINARS | 7 PM

WED. MAY 19, 7 PM Pamela Martin, United Nations Regional Centre for Sustainable Development, speaks on the rights of water.	WED. MAY 26, 7 PM Peter Leavitt, Institute of Environmental Change and Society, explains why our lakes are no longer clear.	WED. JUNE 02, 7 PM Jeri Geiger, Saskatchewan Invasive Species Coordinator, will describe the province's effort to keep invasive species out of our lakes.
WED. JUNE 09, 7 PM Joe Jozsa, former parks planner and current community planner, will speak to plans and zoning bylaws that keep one eye on the environment.	WED. JUNE 16, 7 PM SPEAKER PANEL Alice Davies, Lower Qu'Appelle Watershed Stewards, speaks on protecting our source water. Bob Haliday, Prairie Hydrology, explains how our waterways are connected. Jeff Olson, Citizens Environmental Alliance, speaks on how wetlands are important to your lake.	

To Register [CLICK HERE](#)

Questions? Contact PARCS at
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Thanks to our sponsors  

- **Alice Davis** is the Manager of the Lower Qu'Appelle Watershed Stewards. Davis has faced many challenges with the six recreational lakes and asserts that she is proud to be part of “changing the challenge” along with the First Nations and cottage communities from the Craven Dam to the Manitoba Border.
- **Jeff Olson** is the Managing Director of the Citizens Environmental Alliance who worked for 36 years in the environmental field, a group of forward-thinking citizens working on innovative solutions to contemporary environmental problems. Olson has extensive knowledge about farmland drainage and wetland loss. As a former conservation officer, Olson speaks passionately about the important role played by wetlands in filtering and cleansing the run-off water into our lakes.

PARCS Spring Seminar was co-sponsored by Ducks Unlimited and the Calling Lakes Eco-Museum. PARCS community members include resort villages, along with those rural municipalities and organized hamlets that are cottage communities.

FROM FARM *to table and tap*

Visit these agri-tourism operations in Saskatoon and area to experience the bounty of the land on your plate and in your glass. Take a day trip and meet the farmers and producers who are working to bring your food and drink to table and tap.



Black Fox Farm & Distillery
©Tourism Saskatchewan/Chris Hendrickson Photography

Black Fox Farm & Distillery

245 Valley Road, Saskatoon

Black Fox Farm & Distillery was started by John Cote and Barb Stefanyshyn-Cote with the intent of connecting people to agriculture. Growing 90 per cent of their ingredients on the farm, the Cotes harvest acres of fresh fruit, flowers and grains and distil it into award-winning gin, whisky and liqueurs.

Crossmount Cider Company

5 km S of Saskatoon on Hwy 219

Established in 2016, Crossmount Cider Company has grown into the largest craft cider company on the Prairies, producing hard apple cider from 100 per cent Canadian apples. Tour the 1,500-tree apple and 500-tree pear orchard and taste its five delicious flavours of cider.

Farm One Forty, near Vanscoy

21 km W of Saskatoon on Hwy 7 to Vanscoy and 4 km S on Grid 762

Farm One Forty is all about connecting people with real food, and owners Arlie and Brett LaRoche do that by hosting farm-to-table dinners and farm tour lunches. Tours offer a glimpse into daily life on the 140-acre farm. Guests can stroll out to the pasture, mingle with the animals and explore the gardens where most of the dinner ingredients are grown and harvested.

Odlā

801 Broadway Avenue, Saskatoon

Odlā – a unique, farm-direct restaurant and market – is the brainchild of Arlie and Brett LaRoche, who also own Farm One Forty. The holistically managed farm supplies the restaurant with its meat, grains, honey, fruits and vegetables. Chef and co-owner Scott Dicks creates seasonal menus inspired by the fresh ingredients.



Petrofka Orchard ©Tourism Saskatchewan

Petrofka Orchard, near Waldheim

54 km NW of Saskatoon on Hwy 12

Petrofka Orchard is a 19-hectare fruit orchard and vegetable farm located along the North Saskatchewan River. Its main fruit crops include apples, plums, sour cherries and haskaps, which produce over 58 gourmet products that can be purchased onsite at its Country Store. Enjoy a meal on the deck of the Prairie Sensation Café or explore the 1.5 km of trails that lead to the riverfront beach or picnic spot.

SaskMade Marketplace

1621 – 8th Street E, Saskatoon

Partnering with local farmers, processors and artisans to provide a wide range of gourmet ingredients, grocery items, souvenirs and gift baskets, SaskMade Marketplace is the perfect destination for tourists and locals to experience (and eat) all that Saskatchewan has to offer – from Saskatoon berry jam to bison jerky.

Sunnyside Dairy, near Martensville

20 km N of Saskatoon on Hwy 12

Sunnyside Dairy's creamery has the distinction of being the only place in the province to offer "milk on tap," where customers can fill their own reusable glass bottles and jars. Its farmyard market sells beef and pork, as well as a variety of food products made onsite and from other local farmers and growers, including perogies, pies, soups, cabbage rolls and baking.



Odlā ©Tourism Saskatchewan



The Night Oven Bakery ©Tourism Saskatchewan

The Night Oven Bakery

629B – 1st Avenue N, Saskatoon

Taste the difference of handcrafted breads and pastries that are baked in a wood-fired brick oven at The Night Oven Bakery. Using organic Saskatchewan heritage grains, the bakery stone mills its own flour and uses seasonal ingredients from local producers to create delicious products.

Wolf Willow Winery/ Camp Wolf Willow, near Outlook

56 km S of Saskatoon on Hwy 219 and 14 km W on Grid 764

With views of the South Saskatchewan River, tour the orchard, participate in some fruit wine tasting and enjoy pizza on the patio at Wolf Willow Winery, one of Saskatchewan's newest wineries. Stay overnight and glamp in a luxury canvas or wooden A-frame tent at Camp Wolf Willow.

To make more culinary and agri-tourism discoveries in your own backyard this summer, visit TourismSaskatchewan.com.

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Find your sense of **ADVENTURE**

By Felipe Gomez 2021 Saskatchewaner



L-R: The Berry Barn, Black Fox Farm & Distillery, Floral Acres Greenhouse, Crickle Creek and the Poplar Bluffs Conservation Area.

I LOVE TO COMBINE my three favourite things – cycling, music and adventure. In 2018, I strapped my bass guitar to my back and set off on my bicycle to share music and storytelling in communities all over northern Saskatchewan. To increase the adventure-factor, I started my journey in September and rode until December. After riding across frozen lakes and having many up-close encounters with wildlife, I can confidently say Saskatchewan is a land of limitless adventures, however you may choose to get around!

What I've learned as a newcomer to Saskatchewan is no matter what you're in the mood for, you can find it here. The people of Saskatchewan have been so helpful suggesting their favourite lakes, camping spots, activities and restaurants all across the province to explore. They always say that variety is the spice of life, so my top travel tip for adventurers is to mix it up.

To make this upcoming summer one to remember, think of different ways to combine activities that you love into the perfect Saskatchewan staycation. Have a picnic and write a haiku along the riverbank you may have looked at countless times but never visited, or hop on your bike and cycle to a restaurant you have

never tried, or check out an intriguing bookstore then read a book on a beach you enjoy. Putting two or three activities or destinations together will give you that sense of adventure we all love.

In the mood for an adventure in rural Saskatchewan? Here is a sample itinerary of a perfect Saskatchewaner day trip. Just outside of Saskatoon, Valley Road is a gorgeous 20-km route. It is the perfect place to plan a full day of adventuring by car or bike. Here's what I recommend:

1. Start your day at **The Berry Barn** and power up with a cup of coffee (get yours to go). A legendary saskatoon berry pastry is a must. You will need the fuel for the rest of the day. Trust me.
2. Next stop is **Clubs Driving Range**, where you can show up, pay for a bucket of balls from the machine and practice your drive in peace.
3. By this time, it is almost noon, and the weather is perfect for a stop at **Poplar Bluffs Conservation Area**. Plan to have a picnic and bring some towels with you to enjoy the river beach. This is the best time to soak up the prairie sunshine.
4. Dust the sand off of your shoes because what's next will be bouncy.

Keep heading north on Valley Road and you will see **Crickle Creek**, a stop for mini golf, ice cream and a KID FUN ZONE (bouncy castles – how is that for mixing it up?).

5. After all of the excitement, you will need to relax and smell the flowers. Drive north and hit **Floral Acres Greenhouse**. The sheer number of flowers and plants in the exhibition and for sale is stunning. Pick up a few for that special someone in your life.

6. It's starting to get dark, so **Black Fox Farm & Distillery** is the perfect ending to an epic day in rural Saskatchewan. Make sure to try its brand-new, award-winning whiskey.

It's safe to say that adventure can be found around every corner in Saskatchewan. Now it's your turn. How will you mix it up in Saskatchewan this summer?

Join the journey. Follow the Saskatchewaner on Facebook (facebook.com/skwanderer), Instagram (instagram.com/saskatchewanwanderer) and Twitter (twitter.com/SkWanderer). To keep up-to-date on the latest blogs, visit saskatchewanwanderer.ca.

Keep calm and adventure on, amigos!



POLICING

in Saskatchewan again

By Assistant Commissioner Rhonda Blackmore
Saskatchewan RCMP Commanding Officer

COMING BACK to Saskatchewan feels a bit like coming home. I'm a farm kid from rural Ontario, where you know all your neighbours and don't hesitate to help them when needed. When I was posted in Assiniboia after graduating from Depot, I was happy to find Saskatchewan had the same kind of values. When I returned as Commanding Officer this spring, I was even happier to see nothing had changed.

I spent the first seven years of my career in Saskatchewan, later transferring to the Regina (now called White Butte) and Buffalo Narrows Detachments. I am so grateful I've had the opportunity to live and police in southern, central, and northern Saskatchewan because it's provided me valuable insight. Even though we have things that unite us – like that friendly Saskatchewan spirit – there is diversity within our province. Policing in Carnduff is not the same as policing in Meadow Lake. Policing in Carrot River is not the same as policing in Swift Current.

Each community has unique needs and priorities. My commitment to the communities of Saskatchewan is that I will ensure we have strong lines of communications and productive dialogues about them. I will seek opportunities to discuss what is working and what is not. I will work collaboratively with Saskatchewan communities to fulfil our 2021-2022 mandate of "Partnering for a safer and healthier Saskatchewan."

I have spoken with some of our rural municipality partners. I know rural crime is a priority for many of them. I want to assure you those concerns are being heard and addressed. The Saskatchewan RCMP is committed to addressing rural crime in the province by working with our stakeholders, communities and citizens. Through these partnerships, we will work towards preventing crime, increasing police officer visibility and reducing response times.

We're using intelligence-led policing, collecting and analyzing data that allows us to conduct strategic patrols and to efficiently deploy resources. We continue to focus on disrupting gang and drug activity. We have a number of resources dedicated to this disruption, including our Gang Task Force and Crime Reduction Teams, which conduct high-visibility, strategic enforcement.

We are also introducing innovative new lines of communications with Saskatchewan residents. Our Online Crime Reporting tool, <http://ocre-sielc.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/saskatchewan/en>, allows residents to report certain crimes online. The Saskatchewan Crime Watch Advisory Network allows Saskatchewan

RCMP detachments to send credible, accurate and timely Crime Watch Advisories to subscribers via a mobile messaging application, text messages, emails or phone calls. We encourage everyone across the province to subscribe at www.saskcrimewatch.ca. When residents are informed, they are in a better position to provide information to their local RCMP. The RCMP has made several arrests based on tips received after Crime Watch Advisories.

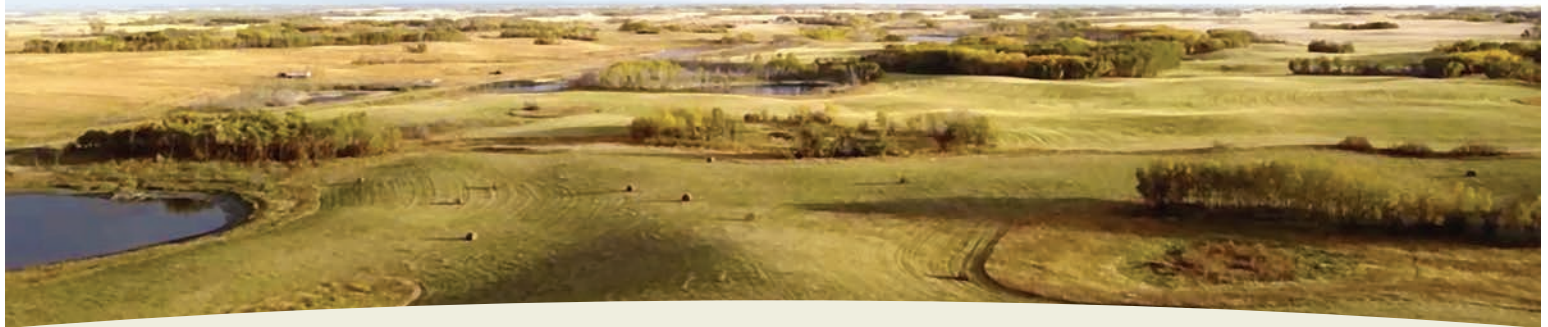
The Saskatchewan RCMP is committed to addressing rural crime in the province by working with our stakeholders, communities and citizens. Through these partnerships, we will work towards preventing crime, increasing police officer visibility and reducing response times.

This is just one example of the power of community-RCMP collaboration. I look forward to keeping communication lines open to continue building strong relationships with our partners and stakeholders. Let's keep Saskatchewan's communities safe, together.

Assistant Commissioner Rhonda Blackmore started her role as Commanding Officer of the Saskatchewan RCMP on April 12, 2021. She has 25 years of service in the RCMP and has served in Saskatchewan, Ottawa and Alberta. In addition to performing general duty policing, Assistant Commissioner Blackmore has completed a secondment with the Ottawa Police Service as a Patrol Inspector, served as a Travel Officer for the Governor General under the RCMP's VIP Protective Services, and was appointed Officer in Charge of the National Use of Force Program as well as Director of Operational Policies and Programs. Prior to returning to Saskatchewan, Assistant Commissioner Blackmore was District Commander of Western Alberta. She is originally from Hanover, Ontario and has a Bachelor of Physical Education from McMaster University.

“A Ducks Unlimited Canada conservation easement hits all cylinders for our beliefs in conservation and for how our operation runs, including soil health and grazing. It was also a huge financial boost for our operation!”

– CHRIS AND JENNA HUBICK, STRASBOURG AREA RANCHERS AND DUC PROGRAM PARTNERS



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*Some conditions apply. Contact DUC for details.



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UNSOLVED CASE

On November 24th, 2020, Melfort Conservation Officers were advised of a dead White-tailed deer near the road on the South end of Wolverine Lake, 11km SE of Birch Hills, SK. The investigation determined the animal was shot nearby before it died at this location, and that someone had made an attempt to remove the antlers before leaving the deer to waste. It is believed the animal died sometime between November 20th - 23rd, 2020. Officers need your assistance in helping find who shot this deer and/or who tried to cut off the antlers.

Visit **www.sasktip.com** for all of the latest cases.

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U of R researchers hook up with anglers to **PROTECT & PRESERVE** Saskatchewan fish populations

By **Greg Campbell** University of Regina

MANY SASKATCHEWAN ANGLERS will be bringing along something extra in their tackle boxes when they head out on the water this summer. Along with their hooks and lines, lures and floats, they'll be packing their smartphones to help gather fish data for University of Regina researchers. Smartphones are opening new doors for researchers to collect much-needed data with the help of so-called "citizen scientists." In this case, a downloadable app called MyCatch has Dr. Chris Somers, professor of Biology at the University of Regina, excited about the possibilities of enhancing and expanding his research program on fish in Saskatchewan.

"My research focuses on the interactions between people and animals, which are sometimes negative, and to try to ease those conflicts through scientific research," he explains. "Fish are one of the most impacted groups of species, so this research can tell us about the health of fish and the waterways where they live."

MyCatch is a recent product of Anglers Atlas, a company established in 1999 in Prince George, BC, that maps fishing activities across Canada.

Anglers use the app to gather information about the size, weight and condition of the fish, and where it was caught. This information is then shared with biologists and researchers. For Somers, the app opens a lot of doors to wider data collection by recruiting thousands of anglers that contribute many thousands of hours of fieldwork – well beyond what researchers could achieve on their own. The data also provides information leading to better catch-and-release methods, minimizing the effects on fish.

The many fishing tournaments that are held across Canada each year, in conjunction with MyCatch, are proving particularly useful for gathering information. Anglers can fish the same bodies of water on the same days, catching, photographing and then releasing their catch, or participate in regional tournaments over larger areas and longer time periods.

"What is it about how a fish is treated that affects how they survive, is one of the questions we want to answer," Somers says. "Another goal," he adds, "is to learn more about which waterways are critical, since we know that fish can travel huge distances over a year. We need the big-picture view of what is important to the fish."

While he is still in the early stages of assessing the potential of the data being collected by anglers through MyCatch, Somers is excited by how angling enthusiasts and landowners can augment the work of researchers.

He points to two observations reported a few years ago of an invasive species, the Prussian carp. In one case a rancher reported seeing large fish in a water body where there should be no fish. In another case, a rancher in the Outlook area noticed unfamiliar fish swimming across a flooded field. He took photos of them and sent a report, triggering awareness that the Prussian carp was present in large numbers in Saskatchewan.



MyCatch, a new app that allows Saskatchewan anglers to share valuable fish data, is helping researchers like U of R biology professor Chris Somers (left) and his graduate student Shayna Hamilton learn more about Saskatchewan fish stocks and the waterways they call home. Photo courtesy of Chris Somers

Concerned, the Ministry of Environment reached out to Somers for help. At the time, one of his graduate students, Shayna Hamilton, was part of a team tagging fish over the summer, a job that sparked her interest in fisheries research. Growing up in a family of avid outdoors people in southeast Saskatchewan, Hamilton says she knew at an early age that she wanted to work in wildlife conservation. Besides being close to home, she chose to do her science degree at the U of R because of a course on animal behaviour that particularly interested her. The appearance of the Prussian carp became the focus of her master's degree, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment.

While she was in university, Hamilton became more interested in the science and the background behind decisions made to manage and conserve wildlife. She observed that hunters and wildlife managers shared the common goal to ensure the sustained existence of the resource. Now, in her new role as a scientific advisor with Anglers Atlas, she can confirm the story is the same for anglers and fish populations. Hamilton is now preparing for the summer fishing tournament season and communicating with anglers about fisheries research and raising awareness of the MyCatch app.

"I see that many anglers are interested in the research about fish; it's a personal passion of mine to try to bridge the gap between anglers and biologists, and to encourage the exchange of information for the benefit of both groups," Hamilton says.

To learn more about Dr. Somers' research, visit his website at www.somersbiology.ca. If you're an angler and want to help researchers ensure Saskatchewan fish stocks remain healthy and plentiful, why not download the MyCatch app at www.angleratlas.com.



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UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

New online therapy program supports mental health of Saskatchewan's first responders

A NEW ONLINE TOOL is now available to provide support to current, former and volunteer Public Safety Personnel (PSP) such as police officers, paramedics, firefighters, corrections workers, dispatch and communications officials, border service officers, and other first responders.

PSPNET, which is based out of the University of Regina and is funded by the federal government, is a new online therapy program to help Public Safety Personnel manage mental health challenges, such as depression, anxiety and trauma in a healthier way.

PSPNET services are entirely free of charge for current and former Saskatchewan Public Safety Personnel, can be accessed from the privacy of their home, and do not require a referral or a diagnosis.

The services are also confidential. Registration for the course is done by the individual, eliminating the need to

advise employers or colleagues of their participation in the program.

PSPNET services are entirely free of charge for current and former Saskatchewan Public Safety Personnel and do not require a referral or a diagnosis.

The online course is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with optional therapist support via telephone Monday to Friday, when the individual needs support.

Employers from various sectors of Public Safety are supportive of this innovative mental health support pathway and are encouraging their employees to access the program.

"Having resources like PSPNET to help manage through anxiety and depression in a year such as this one, has been really important," said Corporal Joy Prince, Royal Canadian Mounted Police "F" Division.

If you are, or if you know someone who is, an active or retired Public Safety Personnel, who are/is experiencing symptoms such as depression, anxiety, trauma or stress, please encourage them to access the program by visiting www.pspnet.ca or calling 306-337-7233 or 1-833-317-7233.

PSPNET





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20 YEARS

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RM of Hudson Bay No. 394
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RM of Douglas No. 436
RM of Winslow No. 319
RM of Prince Albert No. 461

25 YEARS

RM of Eyebrow No. 193
RM of Wolverine No. 340
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RM of Corman Park No. 344
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RM of Heart's Hill No. 352
RM of Dundurn No. 314
RM of Grant No. 372
RM of Prairiedale No. 321

30 YEARS

RM of Argyle No. 1
RM of Big Quill No. 308
RM of Martin No. 122
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RM of Pense No. 160
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UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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2020-2021 The Agricultural Health and Safety Network SARM Student Scholarships

IN 1995, SARM auctioned off the first copy of its history book *The Building of a Province: Commemorating the 90th Anniversary of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities*. This auction netted the sum of \$2,600, which the SARM Board of Directors contributed to the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture (CCHSA).

These funds initiated the SARM 90th Anniversary \$1,000 Student Scholarship in Agricultural Safety and Rural Health. The Founding Chairs Program at CCHSA now maintains the scholarship. This year, two scholarships of \$1,500 each were awarded to grade 12 students – Rochelle Wright from the RM of Vanscoy, No. 345 and Tyler Moore from the RM of St. Andrews, No. 287. Students were asked to submit essays about

either the importance of safety and health on our farm or safety and health hazards on our farm

On April 22, 2021 at the virtual Network AGM, the two \$1500 scholarships awards were presented to the grade 12 students.

The students were awarded the scholarships based on their essay submissions. Thank you to the Agricultural Health and Safety Network Steering Committee for their evaluation feedback of the selected finalists' essays.

The 2021-2022 Scholarship Application Guidelines are available on our website, aghealth.usask.ca. The deadline is **January 14, 2022**. Submissions are accepted by email only: suei.bizetto@usask.ca. If you have any questions, please call (306)966-6644.



ROCHELLE WRIGHT **RM of Vanscoy No. 345**

"Being safe on the farm has been an important value to my family and by working together, using effective communication, and limiting health hazards we have been able to maintain our overall health and wellbeing. Our family has continually worked towards creating a safer living and work area by teaching safety precautions and identifying risks that can be avoided or removed. By recognizing possible hazards on our farm and understanding the importance of safety, my family has developed skills and techniques that preserve our health."

TYLER MOORE **RM of St. Andrews No. 287**

"When we hear about health and safety on the farm, people usually think about physical risks such as electrocution, entanglement, suffocation, fire, falls and roll overs. Or about the safety equipment that they can see farmers wear like dust masks, gloves, safety goggles and work boots. As I have become more involved in our farming operations, the more I am realizing that the biggest risk to health and safety on the modern farm is something no one ever talks about- stress! Finances, volatile markets, weather, uncertain crop yield, equipment breakdowns, workload, long hours, lack of sleep and isolation all contributing to high levels of stress and poorer mental health in farm families."



Saskatchewan Budget

continues to support highways

THE FUTURE of Saskatchewan's transportation network is front and centre with the recent release of the province's 2021-22 budget.

The Government of Saskatchewan's 2021-22 provincial budget was released on April 6, 2021 and lays out the provincial spending plan for the year. Budget 2021-22 expands on our commitments made in the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth* and has three important areas of focus:

- Protect Saskatchewan people through the pandemic with record investments in health care, education and social services;
- Build Saskatchewan through investment in new long-term care facilities, hospitals, schools, highways and vital municipal infrastructure; and
- Grow Saskatchewan through incentives and key investments that will keep life affordable for families throughout the province.

Introduced in 2019, the Growth Plan set out a series of ambitious goals for all of government to help Saskatchewan grow its population to 1.4 million and a strong economy with 100,000 more jobs by the year 2030.

The Ministry of Highways plays a key role in building and growing Saskatchewan over the next 10 years. For 2021-22, the Ministry will be investing \$830 million across the province, which is an increase of \$115 million, or 16 per cent, over the 2020-21. With \$520 million earmarked for capital expenditures, the province will see 1,350 kilometres of highway improved this year, putting the Ministry ahead of schedule in achieving its Growth Plan goal to build or upgrade 10,000 kilometres by 2030. The Ministry is also investing \$300 million of economic stimulus over three years to further grow and maintain our provincial transportation network. These contributions build on nearly 15 years of strong investments that have allowed the improvement of more than 17,100 kilometres of highways and the spending of \$10.6 billion since 2008.

These construction and maintenance projects represent a major opportunity to get Saskatchewan residents back to work and help recover the economy as we move through this pandemic and ensure that our highways are in great shape when the province opens up fully once again.

Safety lies at the heart of the Highways budget, with multiple sets of passing lane projects on Highways 2, 3, 12, 14, and 16 will help reduce congestion and make for safer driving. Three sets of passing lanes will be constructed on Highway 7, from Kindersley to the Saskatchewan/Alberta border. Two more sets of passing lanes and widening will be added to Highway 5 between Saskatoon and Highway 2 and passing lanes will be completed on Highway 39 between Estevan and Corrine.

Twenty-two million dollars will be invested in the installation of intersection and spot safety improvements across Saskatchewan, part of the government's five-year, \$100 million commitment to safety upgrades. These infrastructure upgrades include installing warning lights, adding rumble strips, installing pedestrian crosswalks and improving sight triangle and right-of-way sightlines in many areas.



Views of road improvement work at Douglas Provincial Park.



Budget 2021-22 pledges \$44.5 million to help rehabilitate or replace 14 bridges and many culverts across the province. An additional \$1.6 million has been maintained in the pavement marking program and \$450,000 will be added to the province's mowing program, thereby increasing our mowing program by 22 per cent, meaning many RMs will get a second cut this year.

The Ministry has worked with rural municipalities, and as a result, municipal initiatives include \$28 million to support economic growth and safety on rural roads, \$6.6 million for construction and maintenance partnerships with urban municipalities, \$800,000 in partnership fund for low-volume Thin Membrane Surface and gravel roads and \$1.5 million to support community airport improvements. \$530,000 in new funding is also being provided for improvements to Saskatchewan's short line railways.

The Ministry is working to improve access roads leading to a number of provincial parks including:

- Highway 219 to Danielson Provincial Park;
- Highway 229 to Good Spirit Lake; and
- Highway 322 to Rowan's Ravine.

In addition to access road improvements, more than \$2 million of paving will occur within Saskatchewan Provincial Parks, including:

- Douglas Provincial Park;
- Good Spirit Lake Provincial Park;
- Great Blue Heron Provincial Park;
- Greenwater Lake Provincial Park;
- Katepwa Lake Provincial Park; and
- Rowan's Ravine Provincial Park.

These extensive investments are continued evidence of the government's commitment to improving Saskatchewan's transportation network, increasing safety and facilitating economic activity. Once the COVID-19 pandemic is behind us, improvements to the provincial highway system, municipal roads, bridges and airports will be ready for Saskatchewan residents and visitors to explore and enjoy safely.

Alan Arthur

earns Lieutenant-Governor's Award for Outstanding Service to Rural Saskatchewan

DURING THE OPENING CEREMONIES of the 116th SARM Annual Convention, the first ever virtual convention, His Honour, the Honourable Russ Mirasty, Lieutenant-Governor of Saskatchewan presented the Lieutenant-Governor's Award for Outstanding Service to Rural Saskatchewan to Alan Arthur.

Alan was born and raised on the family farm in the RM of Reciprocity No. 32. After graduating high school, Alan attended the University of Saskatchewan where he completed a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture in 1968, followed by a Masters of Science in Agriculture in 1972. After convocating from university, Alan worked for the Alberta Department of Agriculture and Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture before returning home in 1974 to farm with his family, in which he is still engaged in today.

Alan and his wife, Kathleen, were blessed with three daughters and seven grandchildren. Alan was quick to point out during his acceptance of this award that he could not have done all that he has without the support and understanding of his family.

Alan began his municipal tenure as councillor for Division 4 for the RM of Reciprocity No. 32 beginning January 1986. He served as Division 4 councillor until January 2001, at which point he began serving as reeve of the municipality, the seat he still holds today. During Alan's 35 years on council, he has served on many committees and several sizeable, time consuming projects have been accomplished. Notable projects include the procurement of land for and the construction of a new municipal office and shop, the updating and expansion of the municipality's fire fighting trucks and equipment, and multiple road construction projects, including partnering with the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure for the reconstruction, asphalt surfacing, and jurisdictional transfer of a portion of Highway 318 and the rehabilitation of 10 miles of Highway 361. Some of the many committees Alan served on include the Lower Souris Watershed Committee, the Antler River Watershed Advisory Committee, the Redvers and District Health Foundation, and Redvers Veterinary Services Boards.

Aside from Alan's involvement at the municipal level, he has served in many other capacities. Alan has dedicated 30 years to the health and well-being of the community, during which time he was involved in the construction of the Redvers Health Centre and Redvers Long Term Care home, was a founding member of the Redvers and District Health Foundation, and served on many health boards at the local and regional level. Some of Alan's community involvement includes sitting on the Redvers Co-op Association board, the Dannevirke Lutheran Church Board, and the Agri-Food Appeals Committee.

Alan's lifelong commitment to rural Saskatchewan is admirable and was previously recognized in 2012 with a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.



Alan was epitomized well by a previous administrator who said, "Whatever Alan did, whatever role he played, three things were clear: no one was going to out work him, no one would go into any job or meeting more prepared and possessing a clearer vision of the goals to be accomplished that day, and perhaps most importantly, no one had the best interest of rural Saskatchewan at heart."

Congratulations Alan. You are most deserving of this recognition!

Reducing the Spread of Invasive Weeds

By Chelsea Neuberger

SARM Division 5 Plant Health Officer

SUMMER has finally arrived, bringing with it tourist season. Saskatchewan is home to beautiful parks, lakes, forests and grasslands, providing many areas for hikers, campers, trail riders, and outdoor enthusiasts to explore. However, having an increase in tourists to Saskatchewan's natural wonders has the potential to move invasive weeds into these natural areas, which can threaten native plants and biodiversity.

An invasive plant species is a non-native plant, with growth and reproductive characteristics that allow it to adapt and thrive in new habitats very quickly. These weeds can cause economic, environmental and human harm. When invasive weeds are introduced to an area, they can reduce native and beneficial plant numbers by outcompeting desirable species for water, space, and nutrients. This leads to environmental impacts, including decreased biodiversity and reduced habitat for wildlife. Economic harm is caused when invasive species reduce the productivity of pastures, hay lands, croplands, riparian areas, roadsides, and gravel pits. These weeds are expensive and challenging to control, causing an economic impact on municipalities, landowners and producers. There are also invasive weeds that are poisonous or can cause skin burns, which threatens human and animal health.

Unfortunately, accidentally and unknowingly picking up and transferring invasive weeds is very easy to do. Weeds move via seeds and/or plant parts such as roots. Seeds and plant material can be transferred via soil as well. The seeds of invasive weeds can attach to clothing, footwear or onto pets' fur and paws, which can transfer to other areas or in and out of vehicles, possibly spreading hundreds of kilometres away. Vehicles, travel trailers and all-terrain vehicles can pick up plant material and soil and move it around unintentionally, especially in wet conditions. Another way invasive weeds can be spread is by being intentionally picked and moved around. For example, Baby's-breath is a noxious weed under *The Weed Control Act* in Saskatchewan. This weed can shed over 10,000 seeds and is an aggressive grower. Baby's-breath is often picked from ditches or fields and used for wedding flowers and bouquets, further spreading the invasive weed.

So how can we spend time in nature and not spread invasive weeds? By using good biosecurity practices. Biosecurity refers to preventing the spread or introduction of harmful organisms to humans, animals or plants. Biosecurity can be as simple as brushing off clothing to remove plant matter or removing visible debris from the bottom of footwear. Checking vehicles, trailers and ATVs for soil and plant debris and removing them can stop weeds from spreading to other regions. Other bios-



security methods are to take a brush to tires to remove soil, washing your vehicle at a car wash, or staying on paths when hiking to reduce your interaction with plants. The goal is to try not to take any seeds, soil or plant material home with you.

Unfortunately, some plants and seeds are purposely brought home as many invasive weeds have beautiful flowers. Several prohibited and noxious weeds have been brought into Saskatchewan from neighbouring provinces and states to be used as garden ornamentals. Before bringing in plants or seeds to Saskatchewan it is important to check if they are a weed species under *The Weed Control Act*. Purple loosestrife is a noxious weed that has been listed under the Act for years, yet it is still grown as an ornamental. Other invasive weeds that continue to be grown as ornamentals are Dame's rocket, Common tansy, Oxeye daisy, Saltcedar and more. It is also important to be cautious of "wildflower" seed mixes as many contain invasive plant species such as Baby's-breath. There are many non-invasive options to grow instead of invasive weeds.

Visitors need to be aware of the threat that invasive plant species pose, so that they are not brought into, spread around or transported out of the area. If you find a prohibited, noxious or nuisance weed that is listed under the Act you should contact the local RM, their appointed weed inspector, or your Division's plant health officer to report the location. The site of the weed should be added to the **iMapsInvasive** App.

Getting to Know SARM

Legal Services



MICHAEL MORRIS, Q.C.



ANDREW SVENSON



COURTNEY RIVIERE



TERESA EDWARDS

MICHAEL

Director of Legal Services

Q When did you start at SARM?

January 2, 2000 (along with Teresa, we were the start of the SARM Legal Department).

Q What advice would you give to new employees starting at SARM.

That's a tough one. I guess if you do not have a rural background, you should take every opportunity you can to get out on the road to get to know what goes on in an RM.

Q Hometown?

I grew up on a farm north of Moose Jaw, near Tuxford.

Q Favourite summer memory?

Trips to Lake Diefenbaker with Sandra and the kids.

COURTNEY

Legal Counsel

Q When did you start at SARM?

I started working at SARM as a summer student in the Policy Department in 2018. After completing my final year of law school, I returned to SARM as an Articling Student in the Legal Department in the spring of 2019. My current position as legal counsel began after I passed the bar in the spring of 2020.

Q What advice would you give to new employees starting at SARM.

My advice to new employees at SARM is to not be afraid to reach out to other members of the staff, whether it be for help or just to become acquainted because the staff are always happy to help where they can.

Q Hometown?

I was born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan.

Q Favourite summer memory?

Growing up, my family had a cabin at Katepwa, and I have many fond memories of spending my summers there. We would spend our time swimming in the lake, getting ice cream, playing mini golf, and visiting with my grandparents.

ANDREW

Legal Counsel

Q When did you start at SARM?

I started at SARM on March 1, 2011, a week before convention.

Q What advice would you give to new employees starting at SARM.

SARM is a well organized and run association. It has a long history of representing rural Saskatchewan and has maintained a good balance between staying connected to the past and looking to the future. Working at SARM is rewarding and meaningful. We have an open door approach, so anytime you have questions you can feel free to approach another colleague to discuss them.

Q Hometown?

I was born and raised in Regina, but I have lived in Alberta and Manitoba. I even lived all over Jamaica for two years.

Q Favourite summer memory?

When I was 12 my family and my mom's sister's family did a week-long canoe trip in northern Saskatchewan on the Churchill River. We stayed in a different place each night by pulling our canoes up to the shore and putting up our tents. We have a beautiful province, and I was amazed to see it from the water. We spent the last day at Otter Rapids where we body surfed the rapids wearing two lifejackets. It was better than any water park I've been to.

TERESA

Legal Assistant

Q When did you start at SARM?

I started at SARM on January 2, 2000.

Q What advice would you give to new employees starting at SARM.

Be curious and ask questions! Enjoy learning about SARM and our member municipalities. No one knows SARM like the current team, so asking a lot of questions is encouraged.

Q Hometown?

Regina

Q Favourite summer memory?

Annual camping trips to Cypress Hills with my husband, Darren, and our two sons, Nick and Adam. We spent countless hours swimming, hiking, biking and staying up late playing cards. Our boys are grown now, married, and starting families of their own so these days we're making new summer memories fishing, golfing and enjoying backyard bonfires with our growing family!

New Faces at SARM



Brian Rakochy

Brian joins SARM as our Manager, Policy & Research. Brian's background includes work in public policy as well as in government relations. He is responsible for leading the policy department and is excited about advocating on behalf of rural municipalities.



Nicole Lane

Nicole's role at SARM is the Infrastructure Program Coordinator. She brings a wealth of experience from her diverse positions which have led her from PEI to Saskatchewan. She is responsible for supporting the infrastructure program and working to ensure the program is administered effectively.



Robyn Rechenmacher

Robyn is SARM's Senior Community Planner. She loves seeing communities thrive and brings to her expertise as a registered professional planner to every project. Robyn is responsible for managing and executing planning projects.

SARM's support of STARS reaches new heights

THIS YEAR'S VIRTUAL SARM annual convention was especially meaningful for STARS as it was announced that cumulative giving from rural municipalities in Saskatchewan to the not-for-profit air ambulance passed a new milestone, at more than \$3.1 million.

"As you represent the communities who support us and the people we serve, you have all been a big part of our success since day one. And we're honored by your generosity through good times and even through a pandemic," said Jeri-Lynn Johnston, director of donor relations and development, STARS Foundation. "From the SARM Board and administration to the Reeves, delegates, local councillors and staff – we can't thank you enough for being such important allies in our fight to save lives."

Also speaking during the session was emergency physician Dr. Jon Witt, who described the largely unseen role STARS transport physicians play in the co-ordination and delivery of care of missions across the province – whether flown by STARS, fixed-wing airplane or ground ambulance. "Even when you don't see the helicopter coming, transport physicians are there, 24/7, regardless of the weather or the mode of patient transport," said Dr. Witt. "We're there; we're engaged with your communities."

Many transport physicians are originally from rural Saskatchewan or have practiced medicine across the province, so they know the needs of rural patients and health care providers and the challenges of emergency medical care outside of major centres. "Being a transport physician with STARS really



gives us the opportunity to stay connected with the communities and give back," he said. "We're really providing care to our friends or our neighbors, often in places where our parents still live."

Dr. Witt thanked the SARM delegates for their important role in enabling STARS and its transport physicians to keep providing the very best in critical care to people living, working and playing across Saskatchewan. "I understand you're putting your faith in us, that we'll be there for you and your loved ones. And I thank you for that," he said. "We work every day to provide a level of care that is excellent."

Member News



Oscar Bernhard Hammer
RM of Big Stick No. 141
In Memoriam

Oscar passed away on February 11, 2021 at Maple Creek after a short hospital stay. He was born on October 11, 1926 to Clemens and Meta (Schmidt), along with his twin brother, Oswald. He was raised in the Thunder Hill District, south of Golden Prairie, SK. He and his brother farmed with their father on the original homestead until he retired in 2002.

November 20, 1953, Oscar married Eileen Countryman and lived on the family farm, ranching and farming. They raised three children, Sharon, Stewart and Edward. They were active in various service clubs and were an integral part of the Thunder Hill community. He was a lifetime member of the B.P.O.E. Elks of Maple Creek for 53 years and a dedicated committee member of the Agricultural Society and Rodeo Committee. He was a councillor for the RM of Big Stick from 1981-89. He also dedicated time to the Jasper Cultural and Historical Centre building picnic tables, saddle stands and other jobs that needed to be completed.



Clifford Biller
RM of Indian Head No. 156
In Memoriam

Clifford Paul Biller was born July 1, 1938 in Lemberg, SK and passed away peacefully in Indian Head on February 17, 2021.

He moved with his parents to the family farm, South East of Indian Head in 1944. He attended Fair Play country school and later Luther College in Regina.

He started his employment with the Department of Highways in the lab and travelling around the province. He began farming as his family grew, while continuing to work off the farm. He was also employed for many years with the PFRA and later with the Indian Head School Division as a Maintenance Supervisor. He continued grain farming and served with the RM of Indian Head as a councillor from 1998 to 2000 and reeve from 2001 to 2003. Clifford retired from farming in 2013. He leaves behind his family to remember and mourn him.



Keith Kyle
RM of Wallace No. 243
In Memoriam

The family of Keith Kyle, age 71 of Yorkton, sadly announce his sudden passing on February 4, 2021. Keith was born on August 22, 1949 in Yorkton to parents George and Catherine (Bartlett). He attended Mapleside School and Yorkton Composite and graduated from VocAg, University of Saskatchewan in 1971.

His love of curling drew him to a bonspiel in Hanley where he met Lexie Bohrsen. They were married on October 28, 1972 and started farming in Hanley with Terry and Henry Bohrsen. They farmed there for 17 years and had three children before moving to Yorkton to farm with the Kyle family. Keith was an avid hunter, fisherman and curler. He was a member of the Wheat Pool Committee water board, an RM councillor for over 20 years, and contributed to the Yorkton Heritage Brick Mill. The love

of his grandkids kept him young at heart and travelling the province.



Gerald Holowaty
RM of Foam Lake No. 276
In Memoriam

Gerald served as reeve in the RM of Foam Lake for 15 years from 1993 to 2008. He was very committed and always said he learned a lot along the way. He valued his experiences with the RM and frequently shared these stories.

He had many hobbies. He was an avid reader, and he enjoyed playing cards, hunting, fishing and daily drives. He loved nature and had a passion for the outdoors. Anyone who knew Gerald would recognize the kindness, generosity, loyalty, honesty, humility and friendly nature of this man. He always made others feel special and enriched their lives. Gerald was always a welcome sight in the RM office; he will be missed.



Richard Paley
RM of Foam Lake No. 276
In Memoriam

Richard was a big part of the Hamlet of Tuffnell and a contributing member of council. He will be greatly missed by all that had the privilege of knowing him.



Aime Brochu
RM of Colonsay No. 342
In Memoriam

Aime Brochu was born and raised on the family farm east of Colonsay. He farmed in the area for over 50 years, first with his two brothers and later with his two nephews. He retired from farming in 2016 and moved his family to a small farm at Elbow. He served on the RM of Colonsay Council as councillor for Division 3 from 2007 to 2015. He had a great love for his family, farming, community and his animals. He enjoyed spending time with his family hooking up the horses and going for a wagon ride. (August 17, 1953 – March 1, 2021)



Earl Stewart
RM of Shellbrook No. 493
In Memoriam

In 2002, Earl came on as Division 2 councillor with the RM of Shellbrook. He served on several committees, including the Fire Committee, Road Committee, Gravel & Clay Committee and the Nisbet Forest. He took great pride in his division, and he had a special connection with his ratepayers and council. He left his seat with the RM in October 2018. The RM of Shellbrook's Council and staff were saddened to hear of Earl's passing on April 26, 2021. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.



Robert Forrester
RM of Souris Valley No. 7
Retirement

Robert, retiring reeve of the RM of Souris Valley, is presented with an engraved clock by Reeve Glenn Walkeden.

Forrester served as Division 4 councillor from 2003 to 2016 and reeve from 2016 to 2020. We thank him for his hard work, and we are grateful for the knowledge he provided throughout his service. Due to COVID-19, we were unable to hold a celebration, but we wish him all the best in the future.



Larry Skjerdal
RM of Souris Valley No. 7
Retirement

On behalf of the RM of Souris Valley, we want to recognize Larry, retiring councillor for Division 3, for all his years of service. He is shown being presented with a personalized picture by Reeve Glenn Walkeden on behalf of the RM. Skjerdal served as Division 3 councillor from 1981 to 2020. We thank him for his dedication to the RM. Due to COVID-19, we were unable to hold a celebration, but we wish him all the best in the future.



Edward Feil
RM of Big Stick No. 141
Retirement

Ed began his service as councillor in Division 5 from 1977 to 1981. After taking a few years off to focus on family and farming, he returned to council as reeve in 1993 where he served until 2020. Ed has made many contributions to the municipality and community while on council and various committees. He is always willing to lend a hand and share a joke. A community celebration could not be held due to COVID-19 restrictions. He was presented with an engraved watch and Public Service Award Certificate at a small gathering of council and staff.

We thank Ed for his hard work, knowledge, loyalty and dedication, and we congratulate him on his retirement. We wish him the best in the future.



Neil Mehrer
RM of Churchbridge No. 211.
Retirement

Neil served as reeve of the RM of Churchbridge from 2003 to 2020. He also served as Division 5 councillor from 1989 to 1992. He was very involved and served on many boards and committees. He would jokingly say that he needed to hire others to do his work for him, as being reeve took up most of his time. He was just a phone call away if you ever needed him. He always took the time to listen to ratepayers and the public. Any decisions made on behalf of the municipality was always made for the betterment of the ratepayers. In his words "This is not my RM; this is your RM". His leadership, professionalism, experience and dedication has positively impacted those around him.

On behalf of the ratepayers, council and employees we wish to thank Neil for his time and commitment, and we wish nothing but the best for him. We would also like to thank his wife, Wanda. We are sure that Neil would not have been able to dedicate so much of his time without her support. Neil's experience and knowledge will be greatly missed.



Kelvin Wiebe
RM of Churchbridge No. 211
Retirement

Kelvin served as councillor for Division 5 for the RM of Churchbridge from 2005 to 2020. He was involved in many boards and committees throughout his time. Much of his time was dedicated to the RM and to the ratepayers over the years. On behalf of the ratepayers, council and employees, we wish to thank Kelvin for his commitment and dedication to the municipality. We would also like to thank Kelvin's wife, Dawn, as we are sure he would not have been able to do such a tremendous job without her support.



Gordon Houston
RM of Pleasant Valley No. 288
Retirement

Gordon Houston served as councillor for Division 6 in the RM of Pleasant Valley for 18 years. Pictured (L-R) is Ford being presented with a Public Service Certificate and a Bernie Brown art print by Reeve Blake Jefferies. We thank Ford for his dedication to the RM and are grateful for the knowledge he provided throughout his service. Best wishes in your retirement.



Jim Basler
RM of Reford No. 379
Retirement

On behalf of the RM of Reford, we would like to recognize Jim for his years of service as a public works employee from 1990 to 2020. We send congratulations to him for his retirement. A private presentation was held to present Jim with a gift certificate and personalized drinking glasses. Pictured above is Reeve Gerald Gerlinsky (left) in appreciation of Jim for 30 years of hard work and dedication to the RM. Thank you, Jim, for your generosity, knowledge and loyalty. We wish you all the best in your retirement.



Allan Bleile
RM of Reford No. 379
Retirement

On behalf of the RM of Reford, we would like to recognize Allan for his years of service as a public works employee from 1998 to 2020. We send congratulations to him for his retirement. A private presentation was held to present him with an engraved crystal, watch and

personalized drinking glasses. Pictured above is Councillor Phil Ulrich (left) thanking Allan for 22 years of dedication to the RM. Thank you, Allan, for your hard work and loyalty. We wish you all the best in your retirement.



Tom Brown
RM of Mervin No 499
Retirement

Tom, reeve for the RM of Mervin retired in November 2020 after serving on council for eight years (2012-2020). He served on various committees and boards as well as being the APAS Rep from 2008 to 2020. He was presented with a monogrammed RM logo watch and Public Service Award Certificate on Jan. 28, 2021 at an awards presentation. The RM would like to thank Tom for his knowledge, dedication and commitment. We wish him all the best in his retirement.



Ryan Domotor
RM of Mervin No. 499
Retirement

The RM would like to thank retired chief administrative officer Ryan for his 26+ years of dedicated service. Ryan was presented with an Employee Recognition Certificate and retirement gift a recent awards presentation on. He started as RM administrator in 1994 and stayed until his retirement in 2020. He served on several committees and boards, including 12 years as the administrator for the North West Heavy Oil Committee. He was also the driving force in bringing the North Sask River Municipal Health Holdings to fruition in 2005.

In 2017, he received the Fraser-Gatrell Citizen's Planning Award in recognition of significant contributions to the promotion of planning. In 2010, he initiated a collective agreement between neighboring municipalities to implement an Official Community Plan and Zoning

Bylaw and bring the existing ones into compliance with the *Planning and Development Act, 2007*. Together these municipalities applied for the Planning for Growth Grant, which enabled them to form a coalition and implement the Planner Shared Services Agreement.

Ryan has been very active and involved in his community. He is currently a board member of the Turtleford and District Co-op Association. We were sad to see him retire, but we always knew that a run for provincial politics was something he dreamed of. He was elected MLA for the Cut-Knife-Turtleford Constituency in the 2020 Provincial Election. On behalf of the council, staff and ratepayers, we thank Ryan and wish him all the best.



Georgina Pilling
RM of Mervin No. 499
Retirement

Georgina began serving as Division 1 councillor in 2008, retired in 2020 and was awarded the name "first lady" as she was the first woman to serve on the RM's Council. An awards presentation was held on Jan. 28, 2021 where she received a monogrammed RM gold watch and Public Service Award Certificate for her years of service. While on council, she served on many committees. We thank Georgina for her 12 years of dedicated service and commitment, and we wish her all the best in her retirement.



Wayne Duncan
RM of Redburn No. 130
Award

Wayne served as councillor for Division 1 for the RM of Redburn for 16 years. Pictured is Reeve Doug Thul presenting an Yvette Moore painting to Wayne. The RM thanks Wayne for his dedication to the RM, and we are grateful for the knowledge he provided over the years. We wish him all the best in his future adventures.



Ronald Hughes
RM of Redburn No. 130
Award

Ronald, retiring reeve of the RM of Redburn, is presented with an Yvette Moore painting by Reeve Doug Thul on behalf of the RM. Ronald served as councillor for Division 4 from 2004 to 2009 and reeve from 2010 to 2020. The RM thanks him for his dedicated service, and we would like to wish him success in all future endeavors.



Sophie Kreptul
RM of Insinger No. 275
Recognition

Congratulations on celebrating your 100th birthday! Sophie, the daughter

of Sam and Mary Husulak, was born December 28, 1920 at Insinger. She attended Yemen School to grade 8, and then stayed home to help out on the farm. In 1940, she went to Regina where she worked as a housekeeper. In 1941, she moved to Oshawa, ON, where she worked at the Ajax Factory, which manufactured ammunition. She was later employed at General Motors working on an assembly line putting screws into aircraft wings. In 1945, she returned to the family farm to help out.

Sophie is an avid reader and is noted for her perogies, pickles, cabbage rolls, poppy seed buns, as well as her delicious meals made from all-natural ingredients.

In the summer she plants a huge garden, preserves fruits, vegetables, jams, etc., digs up and stores her own potatoes, NO HELP WANTED! She also keeps herself busy maintaining her yard, repairing her picket fence and spends countless hours mowing her grass.

Sophie proved to be a compassionate, loving caregiver to her husband, parents and her sister, Ann, who lived with her for six years. Sophie's kindness, generosity and love are felt by all who meet her. She is a strong woman who everyone looks up to.



Evelyn Bloom
RM of Mervin No. 499
Award

Evelyn served on the RM Council from 2012 to 2020 as councillor for Division 5. She served on many committees while on council. An award presentation was held on Jan. 28, 2021 where she received a monogrammed RM watch and Public Service Award Certificate. We would like to thank Evelyn for her years of dedicated service and commitment, and we wish her all the best in the future.

Dwight Shiels
RM of Tecumseh No. 65
Recognition of Service

Dwight served as a councillor for Division 5 for the RM of Tecumseh for 10 years. We thank Dwight for his years of service, knowledge and dedication to the RM and Division 5 councillor. We wish him the best in his future.





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