

# RURAL COUNCILLOR

20  
25

SUMMER

VOLUME 58 / #2

*A chat  
with SARM  
President,  
Bill Huber*

*Saskatchewan  
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6-7 A chat with Bill Huber



18-21 Saskatchewan Open Farm Days



# CONTENTS

4

Knowledge is Power

By Laurel Feltin, Executive Director, SARM

6-7

Learning by Doing

A chat with SARM President, Bill Huber

By Carmen Hrynchuk, Features Writer

8-9

The Lieutenant Governor's Award  
for Outstanding Service to Rural  
Saskatchewan

11-13

Working Together to  
Manage Invasive Plants

By Joanne Kwasnicki, PAg, Plant Health  
Technical Advisor, SARM Division 2

14-15

A Look into the Rural Municipal  
Administrator Internship Program with  
Michelle Buechler and Katelyn McCracken  
from the RM of Paynton No. 470

17

Your Community and You

By Rose Zimmer, RMAA  
Executive Director

18-21

Saskatchewan Open Farm Days  
A Growing Celebration of Rural Life  
and Local Food

22-24

So, a resolution has been carried  
at convention, now what?

By Deanna Nichols, Policy Analyst, SARM

26-27

Protecting Your Community

By Colin Warnecke, Manager, Risk  
Management & Lisa Shordee, Insurance  
Program Administrator, SARM

28-29

Seven Reasons Communications  
Matter to Rural Municipalities

By Mary-Lynn Charlton, Martin Charlton  
Communications

30-32

Coping Alone, Thriving Together:  
Rural Communities Responding to  
Flooding, Drought, and Wildfire

By Dr. Amber Fletcher, Ph.D.  
Professor, Department of Sociology  
& Social Studies, University of Regina

33

Getting to Know SARM

Rural Integrated Roads for Growth  
(RIRG) Program

35-42

Member News

**Our Vision:** Strong, autonomous  
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economies that build a sustainable future  
for rural Saskatchewan.

**Our Mission:** To foster rural  
development in Saskatchewan  
and build strong, sustainable  
communities.

# KNOWLEDGE IS POWER



By  
Laurel Felton,  
Executive  
Director, SARM

As leaders in your respective communities, it is often a challenge to learn how to be most effective.

Throughout my career, I've been fortunate to work alongside many inspiring community leaders. One of the most impactful pieces of advice I've ever received came from a wise female leader who often said, "Knowledge is Power." This simple yet profound statement has guided my leadership style and my approach to working with others, and it continues to resonate deeply in both professional and personal settings.

Effective community leadership isn't about being the solitary expert in every area. In fact, it's quite the opposite. True leadership is about surrounding yourself with people who are experts in fields where you may not be. It's about recognizing that leadership is a team effort, and that the most effective RM council decisions are made when diverse perspectives come together.

As leaders, we must take the initiative to learn. Whether it's attending a class, asking a thoughtful question, or simply doing your homework, it's important to understand what we don't know. One of the most valuable lessons I've learned from my mentor is the importance of preparation. She often emphasized how crucial it was to be the person who had read through all the documents before a meeting. This preparation, she said, not

only shows respect for the work being done but also ensures that you can contribute meaningfully to the discussion.

In leadership, one of the most underutilized resources is our network. Meeting new people, forming connections, and building relationships with others who specialize in various fields can be invaluable. Not only does it help expand your knowledge base, but it also opens the door to opportunities for collaboration and support.

***"Remember leadership is not about doing it all yourself. It's about harnessing the collective knowledge, experiences, and skills of those around you, your community."***

Being a community leader doesn't mean you're alone in your challenges. Whether it's human resource issues, operational hurdles, or communication breakdowns, you're not the only one facing these obstacles. This is where networking with other leaders becomes crucial. Attending local meetings, SARM conventions, or calling up a neighbouring council member allows you to share best practices, ask for advice, and find innovative solutions to common problems. In these spaces, the exchange of ideas is where true growth happens.

One of the most powerful tools in any leader's toolbox is the ability to listen. It's easy to think that leadership requires being the loudest voice in the room, but sometimes, the best leaders are those who choose to listen first. God gave us two ears and one mouth for a reason. Listening—really listening—allows you to learn from others' experiences, understand different perspectives, and gain valuable insights that can inform your decision-making.

As rural community leaders, it's important to recognize that we don't have all the answers, and that's okay. Sometimes the best way to lead is by learning from those around you. The stories, experiences, and advice shared by others can be powerful tools that you can later use to guide your council and make informed decisions for your RM.

Whether you're sitting around the local rec board table or your local RM council table making decisions for your community, the dynamics of meetings play a significant role in decision-making. If you're ever in a position to evaluate how your meetings are functioning, take a step back and ask: *Is everyone contributing to the conversation?*

As community leaders, it's our responsibility to ensure that every voice is heard. If someone is silent, it's important to encourage their input. A simple round-table discussion can be incredibly effective in ensuring that every participant feels valued and has an opportunity to share their insights. By fostering a culture of open communication, you can make more well-rounded decisions for the best of the entire community that truly take into account the full range of perspectives from across your RM.

Remember leadership is not about doing it all yourself. It's about harnessing the collective knowledge, experiences, and skills of those around you, your community. Whether through preparation, networking, or active listening, knowledge truly is power. The more we learn from others, the more effective we become as community leaders. And by encouraging collaboration in our meetings, we ensure that every decision is made with the fullest understanding of the situation at hand. So, take every opportunity to learn, listen, and connect.





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# LEARNING BY DOING

## A CHAT WITH SARM PRESIDENT, BILL HUBER

*By Carmen Hrynchuk, Features Writer*

Ask Bill Huber what he's most grateful for, and he'll tell you a story about growing up in rural Saskatchewan. In fact, he'll probably tell you a few. What they'll all have in common though? Learning by doing. Whether alongside his father on the farm or in the boardroom with the SARM team, Huber has always believed in "better together." Better for learning, better for doing, and better for rural Saskatchewan. Meet Bill Huber.

### Tell us about the importance of community in rural Saskatchewan and how that's influenced your path.

I've lived in rural Saskatchewan my entire life and am proud of it. I was born in a little place called Balcarres, just north of the Qu'Appelle Valley, and resided in the Lipton area all my life. I grew up on the family farm, so agriculture is a community that's near and dear to my heart.

Community life and public life have always gone hand-in-hand for me. Strong communities foster a supportive environment for local businesses to thrive and are vital for economic growth, social well-being, and the overall quality of life. Yet despite rural economics being the foundation of Saskatchewan's economy, many rural communities face challenges accessing proper healthcare, education, and other essential services. Being in a position now to advocate for those communities that have meant so much to me is both an honour and a privilege.

### What qualities overlap in being a farmer and an advocate? And what has each role taught you about yourself?

First of all, the essential characteristic of a farmer is a never-give-up attitude. It's the mark of someone who will stay in it for the long-run. Only patience, perseverance, passion, and hard work make it possible to push through the challenges.

It's the same with advocacy. Advocacy is about amplifying the voices of rural Saskatchewan and promoting concerns in a way that bridges gaps and addresses misconceptions.

In my roles at SARM, I've found that being transparent and listening to what others have to say is what I do best. It helps build trust and creates public awareness about the realities that rural Saskatchewan faces. I also often share my own experiences and am quite open about my farming practices, which is important to building relationships and fostering discussions that lead with empathy.

### Tell us about the best advice you've ever received and who gave it to you.

All the best advice I've ever received was from my parents, especially my father, who was a farmer. I remember when I was finishing high school and thinking of university, he said to me in a very nice, calm way: "You know, maybe if you get too smart, you won't want to come back to the farm, so be careful what you learn." And I have to say, I have all the respect in the world for education and for farmers and ranchers who have diplomas and agriculture degrees, but a lot of what I learned



in life, I learned from watching other people—not only what they did right, but what they did wrong. And that was (and still is) the best way for me to evaluate things. We always had good neighbours and good people in other communities that I watched and admired. So as a young man starting out, I wanted to be like them, or even better—but never in a greedy way. I just wanted to do things a little differently and efficiently so that I'd be able to help others learn from what I had learned.

### Who's someone inspiring you right now?

That would be the entire team at SARM—and everyone who's gotten me here. You know, years ago when I was about 25, I got defeated when I ran for municipal politics, and it crushed me. And after a few weeks when that feeling went away, I decided that politics was out of my system, and that was that. Well, fast-forward many years, and I'm glad I was wrong.

In 2011, after being elected a councillor, I started attending SARM conventions. Of course, I had no plan of ever becoming an executive member or president, but when those opportunities arose, I met the challenge and am so thankful to the people who supported me and asked me to take on those roles.

I've met some wonderful people through this organization and work with an amazing staff. Henry Ford always said, "Together we survive. Divided, we fall." And I'm a true believer in that. By working together, you get more done and learn more, too. You know, some days we go to meetings and come away a little disappointed, but there's no use getting rude or putting your fists up. I think sometimes if you just go back a week later with the same question and a little different approach, you can accomplish a lot of your goals. We win some, and we lose some. But I'm always inspired by our team and the legacy of those who came before us.

### It's a perfect day off. How do you spend it?

I don't take many days off, but when I do, it's usually with our grandkids. Whether it's to watch hockey, figure skating, dance, or curling, I enjoy being with them. If they aren't available, we'll catch up with friends or relatives and tell stories for hours.

We do have a camper that we take out once in a while, but I'm always driven by what I've got to do the next day. I guess I'm a guy who can't relax much. Even when we take a vacation, I always have to find something to do and will think of ways to be busy. My dad was the same way, so I guess I was born and raised that way. It's in my DNA.

### What makes you hopeful these days?

Things are tough right now around the entire world. In fact, I'd say these are some of the most difficult times in my lifetime. I'm very fortunate to have been born when I was and to have lived through the 60s and the 70s. I always say we had the best music, and the best cars, and that things were cheap to buy. You could buy gas for 25 cents a gallon—not a litre! Compare that to today, and it's absolutely devastating for some families when they live day-to-day on a paycheck. I've always believed though that being hopeful is crucial in times of uncertainty and in dealing with adversity.

What really brings me hope though is our kids and our grandkids. They're going to lead the country in the years ahead, so we have to make sure, while we're still here, that we're leaving this world a better place for them. I just love kids and the way they find the truth in things—especially our grandkids. You know, I often say that we should have had the grandkids first, before having our own! So that's what I'd say brings me the greatest hope: that our kids and grandkids are going to lead this world. In a lot of ways, they've already begun.







# THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S AWARD

## FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO RURAL SASKATCHEWAN

**NOMINATE  
SOMEONE  
TODAY!**

As the saying goes, we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give. That celebration of community service is exactly what the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Outstanding Service to Rural Saskatchewan is all about. The 2026 nominations are officially open, so if you know a reeve, councillor, or administrator with an inspiring story, nominate them today! Everything you need to know is right here.

### Nomination Guidelines

- The Lieutenant Governor's Award for Outstanding Service to Rural Saskatchewan is awarded to a reeve, councillor, or administrator for their lifetime contribution to rural Saskatchewan.
- Retired and/or actively working individuals are eligible.
- Age is not a determining factor.
- Emphasis is placed on the candidate's community service and leadership.
- All candidates must be nominated by an RM and be approved and signed by council.
- A completed nomination form must be submitted along with biographical information.
- Nominations close December 31, 2025.
- Applications are valid for a two-year period.

### The Selection Process

- The selection committee reviews all nominations and selects one individual who has not yet been formally recognized for their contributions to making rural Saskatchewan a better place to live.
- The committee includes representatives from the following organizations: The Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan's Office, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), the Ministry of Government Relations, and the Rural Municipal Administrators' Association (RMAA).
- The award is presented at the opening ceremonies of the SARM Annual Convention.

**START YOUR  
NOMINATION  
TODAY!**

To request a nomination form or submit a nomination, please contact:  
Kathleen Israel | [executivecoordinator@sarm.ca](mailto:executivecoordinator@sarm.ca) | 306-761-3731



**Ernest (Ernie) Gutzke received the 2025 Lieutenant Governor's Award for Outstanding Service to Rural Saskatchewan at this year's SARM Annual Convention.**

- Ernie was first elected as Division 1 Councillor for the Rural Municipality of Francis No. 127 in 1987 and has served continuously on council for the past 38 years!
- He's been an AG producer since 1956 and received the 100 Year Centennial Family Farm Award in 2003.
- Ernie has been a Regina District Association of Rural Municipalities board member since 1988 and has served on the Odessa Co-op Board periodically from the 1990s to the present.
- He was also a volunteer firefighter for 33 years with the Odessa Fire Department and received the Saskatchewan Protective Services Medal.
- Ernie is a musician and cherished member of the Parish Council Choir.
- He's also been a drummer in the "Oldtimers" band and can still be caught dancing up a polka storm!
- In her nomination of Ernie, RM Administrator Shala wrote, "Ernest Gutzke has become the heartbeat of our community, infusing it with a sense of unity, empathy, and shared purpose. His actions speak to his character and a profound understanding of the interconnectedness of our lives and the importance of uplifting others."

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*Baby's breath - credit Colleen Fennig*

# WORKING TOGETHER TO MANAGE INVASIVE PLANTS



By  
**Joanne Kwasnicki, PAg**  
Plant Health Technical Advisor  
SARM Division 2

Summer brings many good things to the prairies—warm temperatures, long sunny days—but unfortunately, it also brings *weeds*. Dealing with invasive plants can feel like an endless, thankless, chore. However, it is a great benefit to your land, your neighbours, and your community when everyone plays an active role in weed management.

There is a whole list of reasons to keep weeds under control, such as maximising crop yields, producing clean hay and feed, and in the case of poisonous weeds, protecting human and animal health. For regulated weeds under *The Weed Control Act*, it is provincial law to control prohibited and noxious weeds. There are several things you can do in your municipality and community to help encourage weed management, including developing a weed management plan, appointing a Weed Inspector, and educating landowners on weed identification.

## Weed Management Plans

Creating a weed management plan will help an RM outline its priorities for weed management and measure progress year to year. A well thought out plan can make the task of controlling and containing weeds achievable and not so overwhelming. Weed management plans should be reviewed annually to evaluate how weed strategies are working and updated as new weeds are found. Make your weed management plan available to ratepayers, neighbouring municipalities, and other



*Invasive Weeds Workshop - credit Joanne*



Weed Inspector Field Day - credit C. Neuberger

stakeholders, especially any organizations that the RM may want to coordinate with for weed control efforts. Municipalities can set a good example by keeping their roadsides and ditches clear of weeds, either by mowing, herbicide application, or other integrated weed control methods. Everyone is more likely to invest in weed control on their land if the neighbouring land is also being managed.

## Appoint a Weed Inspector

A Weed Inspector is your “boots on the ground” to work with landowners to ensure that regulated weeds are controlled. The primary role of the Weed Inspector is to enforce *The Weed Control Act*; they have the power to enter agreements and issue orders for the control of regulated weeds with landowners and occupants. Weed control can be overwhelming for landowners. It can be hard to know what control method to use for an unfamiliar weed and what timing will be best for control. A Weed Inspector can help landowners come up with an effective plan to manage invasive weeds.



Sprayer Calibration Clinic - credit J. Kwasnicki

A common problem that many RMs run into is finding an individual qualified and willing to be a Weed Inspector. Try reaching out to local agrologists, retired farmers, or former councillors in the area to see if a casual position would interest them. If your RM does not have a weed inspector – consider becoming one! Your local Plant Health Technical Advisor can provide training and help host community events to raise awareness of invasive weeds in the area.



## Provide Resources and Education to Ratepayers

While the primary role of a Weed Inspector is enforcement of *The Weed Control Act*, the secondary role is coordinating the municipality's weed control activities. This includes actively monitoring for weeds and educating ratepayers. Weed Inspectors can be an amazing resource for the community by providing education on which weeds are typically found in the area and how to identify them. They can also organize community weed control efforts, such as weed pulling days or workshops. Include municipal staff, including mowers and graders, in these events to ensure they also know how to identify invasive weeds and can flag any weeds they spot in the course of their work for treatment.

The more knowledge that landowners have, the more informed choices they can make. Things that seem small, like avoiding baby's breath in ornamental bouquets or removing the common tansy and purple loosestrife that are growing in a flower garden, can have significant impacts on the

establishment and spread of these weeds throughout the surrounding area. Encourage and empower landowners and ratepayers to notify the municipality and the Weed Inspector when they see invasive plants. Identifying and applying control methods early will reduce the impact of the invasive plant. Invest the time and money to control invasive species while infestations are small, and you will reduce the financial burden of having to deal with larger and more aggressive weed infestations in the future.

It is in everyone's best interests to keep weeds under control for you, your neighbours, and your community at large. A collaborative effort is always going to be more effective than individual efforts. Reach out to your Plant Health Technical Advisor for assistance in creating or updating a weed management plan, finding a Weed Inspector, and providing weed resources and education.

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# A Look into the Rural Municipal Administrator Internship Program

with Michelle Buechler and Katelyn McCracken  
from the RM of Paynton No. 470

One of the greatest strengths of community is the opportunity it provides for mentorship and shared growth. Within a supportive network, individuals can learn from each other's experiences, insights, and skills.

This exchange not only improves knowledge and experience but also deepens connections and fosters mutual respect. Mentorship strengthens bonds and empowers individuals to reach their potential.

SARM administers the Rural Municipal Administrator Internship Program (MAIP). The program provides funding for rural municipalities to train selected interns in the field of municipal administration; host rural municipalities (RMs) receive a grant to cost-share the intern's salary. This program not only provides an opportunity for interns to experience working in a rural municipal office but may also help to meet the certification requirements of the Rural Board of Examiners.

In this article, we will explore a current MAIP mentorship arrangement to understand how it offers valuable learning opportunities that encourage positively serving your community and support effective succession planning.

## About Michelle and Katelyn:

Michelle began her municipal government career in 1987 with a summer job in the Town of Kerrobert. She has previously worked with three municipalities and has served as the administrator for the RM of Paynton No. 470 since 2017. That same year, she was elected as the Division 6 Director for the Rural Municipal Administrators' Association (RMAA) Board and in 2024 was elected as the Vice President. From 2019 to 2024 she was the RMAA designate for the MAIP Committee, so she knows both sides of the program. This was her fourth time training a potential administrator and the second time in the MAIP program.

Katelyn worked as an insurance broker for approximately 15 years before she decided it was time for a change. She met Michelle through the insurance brokerage and when she saw the job posting come up for the office assistant position in the Village where she lived, she didn't want to miss an opportunity to be able to walk to work. She had no idea the job would have the potential to introduce her to a new career path and she is excited to see where it continues to lead. She started at the RM of Paynton in August 2023.



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## Interview Questions:

**Q: Michelle, you've been involved in the MAIP in a few different capacities. In addition to mentoring an intern both now and in the past, you were also on the MAIP committee. What inspires you to keep being involved in this program?**

**A:** One of my past Reeves told me that we need to keep promoting the Local Government Administration (LGA) program to the assistants in our office. He believed that even if we trained them and they move to their own RM, we did something good for municipal government. His comment was instilled in my memory even to today. If every Class A administrator trains just one potential administrator, the quality and competence of this province's municipal administrators would be second to none. This would also fill vacancy issues that municipalities are facing. I believe I have skills to offer someone starting in the municipal field. Therefore, I will continue to train whenever the possibility arises.

**Q: Katelyn, what drew you to apply for the MAIP program as an intern?**

**A:** I'm currently taking LGA courses through the University of Regina and have been working as an office assistant for the RM since August 2023. Michelle and Council have been very supportive of furthering my education and the MAIP program is just an excellent way to do that.

**Q: Michelle, what do you personally get out of serving as a mentor in the MAIP program?**

**A:** The joy of sharing my skills and knowledge that I've learned over the last 20 years and seeing trainees' personal growth and professional development as they work towards running their own office.

**Q: Katelyn, what do you hope the MAIP program will contribute to your career development?**

**A:** I'm hoping that it will give me a broader understanding of the role that I'm eager to step into once I finish my training. Having an in-depth look into the daily life of an administrator isn't something I would have been able to do otherwise.

**Q: Michelle, what have you been learning through having an intern?**

**A:** I've learned that it's a good refresher for seasoned administrators to review the MAIP Checklist and update ourselves on newer processes and procedures currently not being utilized in our offices.

**Q: Katelyn, what are you learning about in the MAIP program that you may not have had the opportunity to learn without it?**

**A:** As an office assistant, I understood the basic daily customer services like permits and receiving, accounts receivable and payables, but didn't really have an understanding on how

much more was involved in the administrator role. I knew Michelle was always busy but didn't exactly know with what. Being involved in the MAIP program, they provide the mentor with a competency outline with the tasks I should learn. I'm learning the fundamentals of why our municipalities need administrators and the activities required to help the municipality succeed. I get to see firsthand, start to finish, what Michelle does every day and why, that's such a valuable tool. Every month has a different task that needs to be completed, and you really do need at least a solid year to even touch on everything. I don't think that I could get that kind of one-on-one training opportunity any other way.

**Q: Michelle, why should other RM administrators consider getting their A or Superior A certification and why should they consider taking on an intern?**

**A:** There is no reason any C certificate holder who is established in an office and has completed two audits shouldn't apply for their A certificate. By holding this certificate, it initiates an increase in wages and the ability to train their peers. It can be a challenging process to secure a mentor to provide the supervision needed to complete the one-year requirement for certification. I encourage all administrators out there to pay it forward.

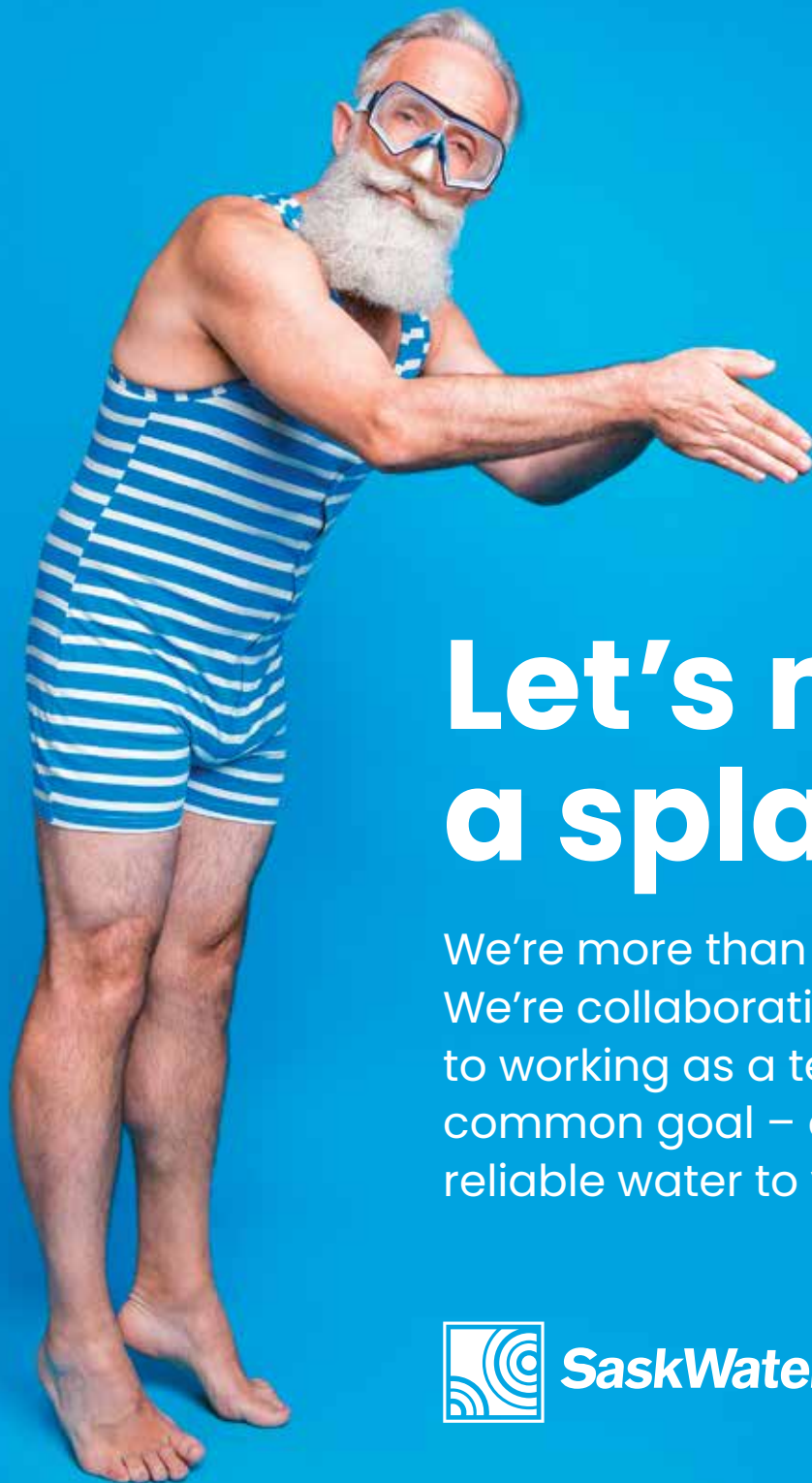
**Q: Katelyn, why do you think people should consider a career in RM administration?**

**A:** I think that if you want a fulfilling career where you can give back to your community, RM administration is a great choice. As an administrator, you're able to take concerns from residents and create an action plan that helps to improve their quality of life. Also, if you have a thirst for knowledge, there are so many different aspects to the job. It's always changing and there is always something new to learn. It's been a great experience for me so far and I'm grateful to have been given this opportunity.

**Q: Michelle, what role does succession planning play in the MAIP, and how does the program ensure the growth of future administrators in RMs?**

**A:** MAIP is a great resource for succession planning. Council is compensated for employing another person but also benefits from the extra help in the office. It is the ideal situation to have an intern trained by the current administrator; it provides history on how things were done and are currently being done in the office. There is no better scenario for a trainee to make a smooth transition into an administrative role than by the current administrator or mentor.

A great thing about community is the chance to learn from those around us through mentorship and shared experiences. Communities thrive when knowledge and guidance can be passed on to foster growth and confidence and strengthen connections. For more information on the Rural Municipal Administrator Internship Program please visit [sarm.ca/programs/rural-municipal-administrator-internship-program/](http://sarm.ca/programs/rural-municipal-administrator-internship-program/)



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# YOUR COMMUNITY AND YOU



By  
Rose Zimmer,  
RMAA Executive  
Director

## THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY

Small or large, rural communities have many similarities that collectively highlight our Saskatchewan roots and values. Every community has 'their thing'. Perhaps it is home to the largest 'something,' or maybe it is known for tasty pierogis or the home of a famous athlete. Whatever your community's claim to fame, it is your home, and you should be proud.

Communities are important; they provide a sense of belonging that fosters community spirit. Strong communities have a place for everyone. Many types of people contribute to their community

in many different ways. Local leaders contribute by creating financial policies and public programs that benefit community members. Volunteers contribute by working a shift at the rink canteen, being a 'Welcome Wagon' participant, knitting items for the local charity craft sale, or being involved in a service group. No one is too young or old to get involved in community projects. It can be as easy as setting or clearing tables at your local fall supper or helping to get the ball diamonds ready for the season. This is a great way to teach children, by example, about the importance of community.

When the majority of residents have a sense of community spirit, it really inspires others to do good things for their community. If you are already someone who pitches in a lot in your community, you may notice that others are hesitant to help. Have you ever wondered why? Some people just need to be asked; start small by asking for their assistance in easy ways so they are not too overwhelmed. Be encouraging when listening to their ideas and recognize

their contributions, no matter how big or small. Once most people get their feet wet and are comfortable, they readily volunteer the next time.

Community involvement adds to community spirit. If you talk to anyone in any given community across the province, you are likely to hear similar stories. For example, often you hear of community members who have worked together to help a person or family that was affected by a tragedy like a fire, accident, or health issue. Sometimes we work together for celebratory reasons to host an annual event, such as a rodeo or a milestone festival where people from other communities attend and celebrate alongside you. Communities do not have to be in competition; rather, they should encourage each other; all are important and play a vital role in shaping our province. Working with your neighbours does not necessarily mean contributing financially; it could simply be moral support, encouragement, and speaking about them in a positive manner. Unless it is sports related, then it's 'elbows up' and all bets are off! These types of friendly rivalries can actually be positive and add to community spirit.

*Small communities have a lot of heart; this is a wealth that has no price tag.*

While it may not be realistic for each community to be diverse in a variety of services or facilities, every community has something to be proud of and to celebrate. Economic activity does not have to be the measure of success. Small communities have a lot of heart; this is a wealth that has no price tag. Wherever you are from, reflect on the importance of your community and be proud to share your story with others.

**SASKATCHEWAN  
OPEN  
FARM  
DAYS**

# A GROWING CELEBRATION OF RURAL LIFE AND LOCAL FOOD

An unforgettable weekend  
of discovery, connection,  
and down-to-earth fun.





From the rolling hills of Val Marie in the south to the boreal forest of Thunder Rapids in the north, Saskatchewan Open Farm Days 2024 welcomed thousands of visitors for a weekend that was anything but ordinary. Held on August 10 & 11, this province-wide event opened the gates to 36 farms, greenhouses, distilleries, museums, and artisan food producers, giving people of all ages the chance to experience the heart of rural life firsthand.

But this wasn't your average weekend road trip. Saskatchewan Open Farm Days is part of a growing movement that's connecting consumers with the land, the people, and the processes behind their food. For many visitors, it's an eye-opening and heartwarming chance to step into the boots of a local farmer, taste the fruits of the land, and learn what makes Saskatchewan's food system so special.

Whether you're a foodie, a curious traveler, a young family looking for something fun and educational, or just someone who loves to explore, Saskatchewan Open Farm Days is an experience that sticks with you – long after you've brushed the dust off your boots.

## A Weekend to Remember

On the second weekend in August, fields turned into festival grounds, barns into classrooms, and farms into community hubs. Visitors were invited to pet baby goats, walk through grain fields, watch robotic milking systems in action, and learn how honey gets from hive to jar. Many tried their hand at milking cows, harvesting veggies, or taking part in hands-on demonstrations – turning curiosity into connection.

One visitor from 2024 summed it up perfectly:

*"The opportunity to visit a nearby farm was, in itself, the most fascinating part. I got to milk cows, extract honey, and feed animals. Plus, we bought something from nearly every farm – great products!"*

And that's exactly the spirit of Saskatchewan Open Farm Days – authentic, welcoming, and packed with the kind of experiences you can't find just anywhere. Saskatchewan Open Farm Days is hosted by Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan, an organization dedicated to bridging the gap between farmers and consumers. Their belief is simple but powerful: *getting to know our farmers is getting to know our food.*

Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan brings together a wide network of producers – from grain and cattle farmers to horticulture experts and artisan makers – and gives them a platform to tell their stories in their own words, on their own land. Every farm has something different to offer, but they all share a few things in common: warmth, hospitality, innovation, and a whole lot of pride in what they do.

For many urban visitors, the weekend offers the rare chance to ask questions about how food is grown and raised – directly from the source. It's a way to reconnect with what's on your plate and the people who help put it there.

## Not Just for Farms

While farms are at the heart of the event, Saskatchewan Open Farm Days embraces anyone with a connection to food, agriculture, or rural living. That includes museums, community markets, flower farms, distilleries, and businesses with unique agricultural stories to tell.

One first-time participant – a small-town museum – took the event as an opportunity to host a collaborative community experience for visitors.

*"We hosted a special farmers' market and concert inside our museum, and it was an incredible success. Over 100 people attended the concert – we've never seen our building at capacity before! Saskatchewan Open Farm Days gave us the push we needed to try something ambitious. Even though we're not a farm, we're happy to be part of this community."*

It's this kind of spirit that makes Saskatchewan Open Farm Days so special. It's about more than farm visits – it's about rural storytelling, local pride, and coming together to celebrate what makes Saskatchewan unique.





## Saskatchewan Open Farm Days returns! August 9 & 10, 2025

Here's a taste of what you can expect in 2025:

- **Cypress Hills Winery**  
Enjoy wine tasting with prairie views near Maple Creek.
- **Bendy Creek Botanicals**, Swift Current  
Wander through vibrant flower fields and bring home your own bouquet.
- **Sixteen Grains**  
Learn about modern grain farming and how it comes from the field to the fork.
- **Seager Wheeler Historic Farm**, Rosthern  
Step back in time and learn about Saskatchewan's early agricultural history.
- **Riverbend Trading Post & Sunflower U-Pick**, Hillmond  
Pick sunflowers, book a campsite, and explore local crafts.
- **Lucky Bastard Distillery**, Saskatoon  
Sample small-batch spirits and see how this urban producer turns Saskatchewan-grown ingredients into award-winning drinks.
- **Prairie Bee Meadery**, Caron  
Taste honey wines and learn about beekeeping from the experts.

And that's just a glimpse. Hosts across Saskatchewan are busy planning exciting activities for 2025, there's sure to be something for every taste, age, and interest. When planning your own farm-filled weekend in 2025: good news – there are more ways than ever to explore.

**Hop on a bus tour:** Leave the planning to someone else! Guided tours will be departing from Regina, Saskatoon, and Moose Jaw, complete with local hosts, snacks, storytelling, and even prize giveaways. It's a great way to dive in without worrying about directions or timing.

**Create a self-guided itinerary:** Love the freedom of the open road? Plan your own route using the online map and build a day of stops that interest you – whether it's cheese tasting at a dairy, sipping mead at a honey farm, or picking sunflowers by the armful.

**Make it a full weekend getaway (ag-cation!)**  
Why not go all in? Plan a weekend escape to a new region and pair your farm stops with a stay in a local bed-and-breakfast, dinner in a charming town, or a hike in one of Saskatchewan's stunning natural areas.

Every host farm offers at least one free experience, with many also offering add-on activities like tastings, hands-on workshops, exclusive farm tours, and one-of-a-kind items to bring home.





## A Festival of Community

Open Farm Days isn't just about exploring – it's about celebrating the community around our food and what is grown across the province, building relationships between farmers and the families who enjoy their products.

Many communities are now forming Saskatchewan Open Farm Day hubs, where multiple nearby farms, markets, and businesses coordinate to offer a full weekend of activities. These hubs make it easier for visitors to plan a full-day itinerary – with lots of local flavour packed into each stop.

Farmers' markets are also offering pop-up events and partnering with nearby farms to bring even more value to visitors. Whether you're nibbling on artisan cheese, sampling cherry wine, or chatting with a producer about sustainable growing practices, every encounter adds to the richness of the experience.

At a time when many of us are looking to reconnect with the land, understand where our food comes from, and shop more locally, Saskatchewan Open Farm Days is a breath of fresh air – literally and figuratively. It's a reminder that agriculture isn't just an industry. It's a way of life. It's hard work, deep tradition, and bold innovation. It's family-run

businesses, multigenerational farms, and passionate people who care deeply about feeding their neighbours and caring for the land.

And when we take the time to listen, explore, and support those efforts – even for a day or a weekend – we become part of something much bigger. New to the 2025 event, each host profile will outline what produce and farm to table ingredients can be purchased at each location. So, while packing the car up for a road trip, leave some space in the cooler to fill up along the way.



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**Saskatchewan Open Farm Days  
returns August 9 & 10, 2025**

Whether you go with friends, take the kids, or enjoy a solo adventure, one thing's for sure: you'll leave with a full heart, new memories, and probably some really good snacks. Explore over 30 locations across the province, and start planning your adventure at [skopenfarmdays.ca](https://skopenfarmdays.ca)

# SO, A RESOLUTION HAS BEEN CARRIED AT CONVENTION, NOW WHAT?



By  
Deanna Nichols,  
Policy Analyst, SARM

## THE RESOLUTION PROCESS: FROM ADOPTION TO ADVOCACY

When a resolution is carried at a SARM convention, it signifies more than just an administrative milestone; it represents the collective will of rural Saskatchewan communities coming together to advocate for meaningful change. Resolutions are not isolated actions but part of a broader tapestry of community-driven advocacy, where collaboration and shared purpose amplify the voices of rural municipalities (RMs).

The process that follows the adoption of a resolution is designed to ensure that the concerns and aspirations of your communities are effectively communicated and addressed. This journey, overseen by SARM's Advocacy Department, transforms grassroots ideas into actionable policies that resonate with the collective needs of rural Saskatchewan.

## BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH POLICY REVIEW

After the convention concludes, the Advocacy Department rolls up its sleeves and begins a more in-depth review of each adopted resolution. This step involves determining which governmental or organizational entities are best positioned to address the issue at hand. This step requires a nuanced understanding of jurisdictional complexities and policy-making processes across various levels of government. By evaluating resolutions, the Advocacy Department determines the best fit, and SARM can begin the advocacy process. SARM works to ensure that the initial analysis starts to reflect the lived realities of rural communities.

## AMPLIFYING COLLECTIVE VOICES THROUGH TAILORED ADVOCACY

Once the review is complete, SARM crafts correspondence for each resolution. These communications are designed to articulate the shared concerns and requests of rural Saskatchewan. Each letter serves as a bridge between local communities and decision-makers, ensuring that the voices of rural residents are heard at higher levels of government.

Community collaboration doesn't stop here. As responses are received from government or other entities, SARM shares them with the submitting RMs, fostering an ongoing dialogue. This feedback loop not only maintains transparency but also strengthens trust among member communities by keeping them actively involved in the advocacy process. SARM's resolutions and responses are also posted on our website so members review as well.

**We all influence policies.**

By working together, we can ensure that rural Saskatchewan thrives—not just today but for generations to come.

## COMMUNITY-LED LOBBYING: A UNIFIED FRONT

For resolutions requiring more than correspondence, SARM engages in active lobbying efforts. This involves leveraging relationships with policymakers and using evidence-based strategies to advocate for policy changes that align with community priorities. Fundamentally, these lobbying efforts are informed by the work of SARM's division directors and through SARM's engagement with members, ensuring that advocacy remains rooted in the overall needs of rural Saskatchewan.

## RESOLUTIONS AS LIVING DOCUMENTS: GUIDING LONG-TERM COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

Resolutions remain active for five years, serving as guiding principles for SARM's advocacy work. Even after this period, many resolutions continue to shape long-term strategies and priorities. This longevity underscores their importance as living documents that evolve alongside community needs. By revisiting these resolutions and remaining open to discussion on where resolutions have been and what they are currently, SARM ensures that advocacy remains dynamic and responsive to changing circumstances.

## THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION IN ADVOCACY SUCCESS

Timing is critical in policymaking, and SARM recognizes the importance of seizing opportune moments to advance resolutions effectively. However, success often depends on mobilizing communities to actively support these efforts. Public meetings, workshops, surveys, and other engagement

strategies can help gather community sentiment and build consensus around key issues. These activities not only strengthen advocacy campaigns but also empower residents by giving them a direct role in shaping outcomes that affect their lives.

For example, when a resolution addresses an urgent issue like infrastructure funding or healthcare access, mobilizing community members to share their experiences can create compelling narratives that resonate with policymakers. By fostering a culture of participation and collaboration, SARM helps rural Saskatchewan communities transform their collective voice into tangible action.

## ADVOCACY AS A COMMUNITY ENDEAVOR: STRENGTHENING BONDS

The passage of a resolution is not just a procedural step; it is an opportunity to strengthen bonds within and between communities. Through advocacy, RMs come together to address shared challenges and work toward common goals. This sense of unity is invaluable—it fosters solidarity among diverse groups while reinforcing the idea that collective action can lead to meaningful change.



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**Resolutions help shape Federal and Provincial Lobbying:** The main purpose of passing resolutions is to guide SARM's lobbying efforts at the provincial and federal levels, helping rural voices be heard on a wide variety of issues.

Moreover, striving to involve RMs in the process—from drafting resolutions to lobbying for their implementation—ensures that advocacy efforts remain inclusive and representative. When individuals see their concerns reflected in broader initiatives, they are more likely to feel invested in the outcomes and motivated to contribute further to their rural communities' well-being.

## CLOSING THE LOOP: CELEBRATING COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS

As resolutions progress through various stages of advocacy, it is crucial to keep communities informed about their impact. Sharing updates on successes—such as policy changes or funding allocations—helps demonstrate the value of these efforts while building trust in the process.

Celebrating achievements collectively also reinforces a sense of pride and accomplishment among community members. Whether through media announcements, newsletters, or local events like SARM's June Division Meetings, acknowledging these milestones highlights the power of collaboration and inspires continued engagement in future initiatives.

## YOUR ROLE IN STRENGTHENING ADVOCACY EFFORTS

SARM recognizes that RMs often engage in advocating for the needs of their ratepayers directly. Whenever possible, SARM would encourage RMs to share feedback on independent advocacy initiatives. When communities unite to lobby for shared goals, their collective strength becomes undeniable. Local leaders and SARM can amplify advocacy efforts by sharing information, participating in consultations, and collaborating on public campaigns and initiatives. This collaborative approach ensures that all voices contribute to shaping policies that reflect the diverse needs of rural Saskatchewan's communities.

To share your thoughts and feedback on issues relating to SARM's advocacy efforts, please reach out to SARM's Advocacy Department or submit feedback to [consultations@sarm.ca](mailto:consultations@sarm.ca)

## CONCLUSION: ADVOCACY ROOTED IN COMMUNITY STRENGTH

The journey from resolution to policy change is one fueled by community strength and collaboration. Through SARM's comprehensive advocacy process—and with active participation from its member municipalities—rural Saskatchewan's collective voice becomes a powerful force for change.

At its core, this process is about more than influencing policies; it is about empowering communities to take charge of their futures while building stronger connections with one another along the way. Together, we can ensure that rural Saskatchewan thrives—not just today but for generations to come.

**SARM's Advocacy Efforts** have directly influenced the creation, maintenance, and growth of provincial funding streams for RMs, ensuring rural Saskatchewan receives the resources needed to maintain infrastructure, support economic growth, and sustain agricultural communities.



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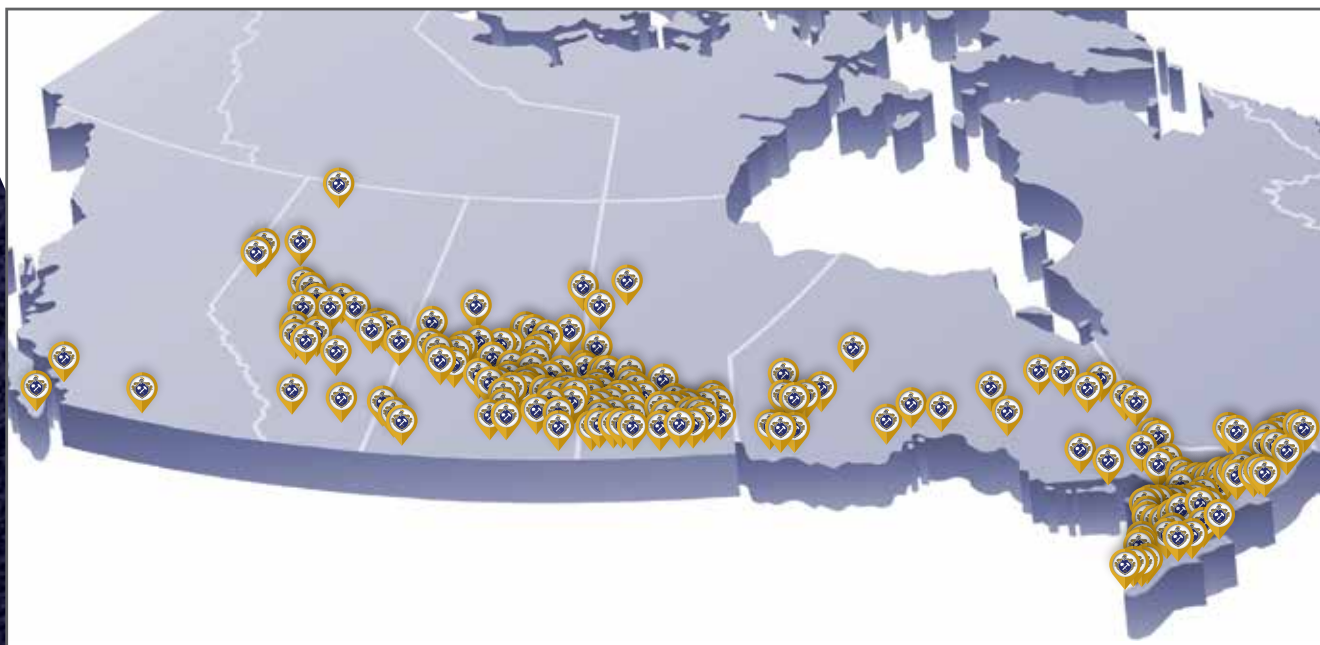


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# PROTECTING YOUR COMMUNITY



By Colin Warnecke,  
Manager, Risk  
Management &  
Lisa Shordee,  
Insurance Program  
Administrator, SARM

## Why Renewing Your Property Insurance Matters More Than Ever

Rural municipalities (RMs) are the stewards of many important structures within their communities. As a member of your local council, you take on the important responsibility of the upkeep and protection of crucial equipment and structures that allow the community to run effectively and efficiently.

Imagine this: You suffer unexpected damage to your equipment or buildings, and when you file a claim, you find out you are severely underinsured. Not a fun surprise, right? Unfortunately, this scenario is more common than you might think—and in today's world of rising equipment and construction costs, it is a bigger risk than ever.

Renewing property insurance is not just a routine task. It is an opportunity to make sure that if disaster strikes, you are fully covered. In a few months, SARM will be starting the renewal process for the Property Self-Insurance Plan (PSIP). Let us walk through the key areas that should be on your radar.

## Market Value vs Replacement Cost: Why Does It Matter?

One of the biggest mistakes people make when renewing their insurance is confusing **market value** with **replacement cost**. Sure, your building may have a market value based on real estate trends—but that has very little to do with what it would cost to rebuild from the ground up. Construction materials, labour, and even inflation all impact replacement costs, meaning the amount you need to insure your property for may be significantly higher than what the market says it is worth. This is certainly true in rural Saskatchewan.

Bottom line: Market value will not rebuild your property. Replacement cost will.

## Replacement Cost vs Actual Cash Value: Which One Should We Pick?

When it comes to picking the basis of settlement, either Replacement Cost (RC) or Actual Cash Value (ACV), you should ask yourself "If the property is destroyed, would we replace it?". If the answer to that question is yes, then RC is the coverage you should be looking at. If the answer is no, you may then want to look at insuring the item on an ACV basis, as the insured value will be less than new, resulting in a premium savings.

## Equipment Costs Are Skyrocketing—Is Yours Properly Valued?

Have you seen the prices of a new grader lately? Prices of equipment have been steadily climbing, and what you paid for your assets a few years ago likely is not what you would pay today. It is common to see motor graders added to the plan now at values more than \$600,000. If your insurance policy is based on outdated values, you could be left footing a big portion of the bill if a loss occurs.





As a reminder, PSIP will provide RC coverage on unlicensed municipal mobile equipment that is 10 years of age or newer, something the open market does not do. So, a grader that cost \$450,000 5 years ago is now over \$600,000. Do you have equipment of a similar age and how should you approach this?

A simple solution is to **review your equipment schedule and update values accordingly**. Find out what it would cost to replace each item today—not what it was worth when you first purchased and insured it. That means contacting your supplier and specifically asking how much it will cost to replace that five-year-old grader with the same model and features but at today's pricing.

## Have You Had a Proper Appraisal on Your Buildings?

If your buildings have not been professionally appraised, it is time to get that done. **Building values change, and so do insurance requirements**. A proper appraisal ensures you are covered for the right amount—neither underinsured or overinsured with coverage you do not need. If your RM has been through SARM's Property Valuation project, your values should be close as we inflate those values every year with an inflationary factor at renewal. If your RM did not participate in the SARM Property Valuation project, you can contact our office to discuss those values. We do have the ability to verify if you are underinsured by comparing your structure to others on the plan that are of a similar construction style to gauge if the values are accurate. Short of sending an appraiser out to ensure the values are correct, we can assist to try and get the values as close as possible based on our current risk profile.

## Contents Matter, too: Inventory and Update Valuations

It is easy to overlook the smaller things inside your building—furniture, tools, supplies, technology—but these items add up fast. If you were to lose everything, could you confidently say your policy covers the full cost of replacement?

A great habit to develop is keeping an updated inventory of your building's contents, complete with valuations. This makes renewals easier and ensures you are not caught off guard with coverage gaps. The most common area where we find our members are underinsured is on the contents of their shops. As an individual, it is not hard to produce \$25,000 on tools in my residential garage, an RM shop (from the ones that I have inspected over the years) will have five to ten times that in tools and supplies. So, it is important to ensure those content values are correct.



2025 is a revaluation year when all properties in the province receive updated assessments.

SAMA conducts revaluations based on a four-year cycle. 2021 was the year of the last revaluation, and the 2025 Revaluation will see assessed values updated to reflect a new valuation date of January 1, 2023.

SAMA's goal for the 2025 Revaluation is to provide fair and accurate updated property assessments for our clients and stakeholders to support their ability to provide important services to the public.

In 2025, SAMA's is looking to complete 26,700 agricultural property reviews in 19 RM's. The Agency is also planning 20,600 residential/resort property reviews and 19,500 commercial, industrial, and industrial flowline/tank property reviews in both rural and urban municipalities.

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

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

## Final Thoughts: Time to Take Action

Renewing your RM's property insurance is not just about signing papers and moving on. **It is about protecting what matters**. Rising costs mean that outdated values could leave your community dangerously exposed. To avoid unpleasant surprises, take the time to review your policy, update your insured values, and work with SARM to ensure everything is in place. It is always better to be fully covered under your policy for a loss instead of having to draw from ratepayer funds collected through taxation.

Our renewal process at SARM starts on November 1. However, starting the process earlier to verify your values sooner than later before the year end pressures start will make it a less stressful process for you.

**After all, insurance should give you peace of mind—not a headache when you need it most.**

If you have any questions regarding the renewal of your PSIP coverages, please do not hesitate to contact Lisa Shordee at [property@sarm.ca](mailto:property@sarm.ca) or Colin Warnecke at [cwarnecke@sarm.ca](mailto:cwarnecke@sarm.ca).

# SEVEN REASONS COMMUNICATIONS MATTER TO RURAL MUNICIPALITIES



By  
Mary-Lynn Charlton,  
Martin Charlton Communications

## Do Ratepayers Know What You're Doing?

Effective communication is crucial for rural municipalities.

With strong communication, people feel more connected—not just to the information, but to each other and this helps build strong communities.

When people feel heard, they're more likely to engage, participate, and support one another, and that connection is what turns a group of individuals into a true community.

For several years, Martin Charlton Communications has had the opportunity to be part of the Municipal Leadership Development Program (MLDP), a series of instructional workshops developed exclusively for elected and appointed Saskatchewan municipal leaders.

We lead the communications workshop, where we spend a day with reeves, mayors, councillors, and municipal staff talking about why communications are important, with a special emphasis on using good communications practices to build strong communities.

Over the years we've heard our participants' stories about what happens when a rural municipality (RM) doesn't practise good communications. Things such as ratepayer petitions and protests, negative media stories and social media posts, and public arguments about perceived service from graders and/or snowplows are all things that can be eased or avoided with effective communications.

We start our workshops with this quote:

*"In addition to doing the right thing, you have to let people know you are doing the right thing,"*  
- John D. Rockefeller.

Consistently, our workshop participants report that they get so busy doing the right things that they forget to tell people what they're doing or, even more important, why they are doing it.

When ratepayers don't know why you've made your decisions there's going to be trouble as they may question your motives and be suspicious of your actions.

Here's seven reasons why communications are important for rural municipalities:

### 1. Good Communications Builds Trust and Transparency

Clear and concise communication builds trust with your ratepayers. When they understand what you're doing and why, they're more likely to support your initiatives.

When you practise effective and open communication, you are accountable and transparent and your residents are more likely to trust your decisions and actions, even if they don't agree with your decisions.

And in this age where there is a general distrust of government, at all levels, by using good communications to regularly report on progress and challenges, you demonstrate your commitment to responsible and trustworthy governance. This builds trust.

### 2. Use Communications to Engage the Community

Communication is vital for local governments to engage with residents.

It allows you to inform residents about opportunities to participate, whether it is in formal public consultations



or just asking for citizens' advice or advising them of opportunities to volunteer in support of local events.

And as we look to build stronger communities, many rural municipalities use communications to foster a stronger sense of community and civic pride.

### 3. Informing and Educating

A primary role of communications is to keep residents informed about your work, such as important decisions, programs, and bylaws.

You need to educate the public on complex issues and explain the rationale behind policies and decisions.

Failure to communicate can lead people to guess what is happening and speculate about your intentions.

If your municipality doesn't tell its story, others will tell it for you, and they may not distribute accurate or complete information, which leads to dissent and complaints.

### 4. Managing Issues and Crises

Timely communication is crucial for informing residents about emergencies, service disruptions, and other important updates.

Clear and proactive communication is essential during emergencies to ensure public safety and minimize misinformation, and to address concerns before they escalate.

### 5. Promoting Local Economic Development

Communication plays a vital role in promoting your municipality as a great place to live, work, invest, and visit.

One thing we hear consistently in our MLDP workshops is the need to communicate economic development strategies to attract business and investment to the community.

One of the best strategies is to use communications and storytelling to highlight local successes and achievements to attract new businesses and residents.

### 6. Improve Service Delivery and Customer Service

Feedback received through communication channels, primarily social media, helps you understand your residents' needs and improve your customer service.

And by communicating changes or improvements, you demonstrate that you are listening and are responsive

## 7. Overall Good Governance

Ultimately, effective communication is a cornerstone of good governance. It underpins all of your efforts to serve your rural municipality effectively.

It helps you build stronger relationships with your stakeholders, including residents, businesses, and other levels of government.

These are seven of the key reasons why municipal reeves, councillors, and officials recognize the importance of strong communications.

Communications activities will vary depending on the size and nature of the municipality, and the priorities and challenges, but these seven principles apply to all Saskatchewan municipalities as you strive to build strong communities.

Our takeaway, after working with countless RMs in our MLDP communications workshop, is that effective communication is the foundation of a strong community. It creates understanding, encourages participation, and builds the trust needed for lasting connections and meaningful collaboration.

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– Ray Orb, President of SARM

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Saskatchewan

# COPING ALONE, THRIVING TOGETHER: RURAL COMMUNITIES RESPONDING TO FLOODING, DROUGHT, AND WILDFIRE



By  
**Dr. Amber Fletcher, Ph.D.**  
Professor, Department of Sociology & Social Studies,  
University of Regina

Living through a relentless drought, a Saskatchewan farmer told me: “You just keep grinding on...however, it does take a mental toll on you. You’re always carrying this around.”

For more than a decade, I have been conducting research with rural people—mostly farmers and ranchers—to learn about the lived experience of flooding, drought, and wildfire. As a social scientist, I am interested in how people are affected by these hazards, and how they cope and prepare for the future.

Across hundreds of research interviews, a common theme is the importance of community in the face of uncertainty and crisis.

Social scientists use the term “social capital” to describe relationships of trust and mutual support between people. Having social capital means having someone to call upon for help during difficult times. Rural communities in Saskatchewan are renowned for their strong social capital, but at the same time, agricultural producers are also known for their independence. During times of extreme stress, I have observed that producers often take one of two routes: turning outward by seeking

support from others or turning inward and coping alone. These routes have very different implications for mental health and wellbeing.

## ***A Climate of Uncertainty***

Farmers and ranchers in Saskatchewan have adapted well to our highly variable and drought-prone climate. Past climate events provide a good indication of what we can expect in the future. Long before written records were produced, dendrohydrological (tree ring) records show a history of dramatic fluctuation between extreme dry and wet conditions. For example, tree rings indicate a protracted drought in the late 1500s to early 1600s—a drought so lengthy and severe that it makes the 1930s look like a blip on the radar<sup>1</sup>. This severe drought was then followed by multiple years of excess precipitation. The climate is also changing, exacerbating these extremes; however, even if it was

<sup>1</sup> Sauchyn, D., Vanstone, J., St. Jacques, J.-M., & Sauchyn, R. (2015). Dendrohydrology in Canada's western interior and applications to water resource management. *Journal of Hydrology*, 529, 548–558. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhydrol.2014.11.049>



not, we can expect worse droughts and floods than we know from recent or intergenerational memory.

For farmers and ranchers, the knowledge that such extreme events can happen again causes significant uncertainty and stress. Weather-related uncertainty combines with market-related uncertainty to deepen the problem. Cattle producers have told me about the difficulty of the early 2000s, when the BSE crisis arrived on the heels of an agricultural drought. More recently, producers report the growing cost-price squeeze, exacerbated by high input costs and price variability on international markets. A livestock specialist explained the link between weather uncertainty and market uncertainty, saying:

*"It's difficult because there's variability, along with weather, fluctuating prices for grain and livestock. As well, inflation has been a large factor [...] the cost to produce agriculture goods is increasing and, a lot of these times, too, in operations, there's a very narrow profit margin. So that can definitely impact people's livelihood."*

Psychological research shows that uncertainty is a key underlying factor for mental health challenges<sup>2</sup>. Considering the high level of uncertainty they face, farmers and ranchers are at particular risk. Research shows that rates of stress, anxiety, and depression are higher amongst producers compared to the general population<sup>3</sup>.

Historically, producers have often come together to address shared challenges. The sociopolitical context of the Prairie region is marked by a history of cooperation. Producers built cooperative mechanisms like the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, and more recently, they are creating water management networks and groups to support innovative

practices, like regenerative agriculture. In many ways, social capital is alive and well in rural Saskatchewan as producers come together to adapt.

### **Together: Collective Responses to Climate Hazards**

Research shows that social capital is a significant "frontline" response to acute events like wildfires and floods in rural communities. A resident of southwestern Saskatchewan compared rural and urban emergency response, saying:

*"When a disaster happens in a city, you learn to count on the people who are paid to look after those things, to look after them for you. When you live in a smaller community, you learn to look after yourself because there isn't necessarily always that help coming in the time period you need it to come, and you know that"*

Most firefighting capacity in rural places is volunteer based (another form of social capital), and when emergency services are a long distance away, friends and neighbours often show up first. A rancher in the dry southwest told me about an informal neighbourhood fire watch system. Local people wait on hilltops during lightning storms, ready to respond if a fire ignites. Talking about his neighbours, another rancher said, "When it is dry, if for some reason a fire starts out here in the middle of the field... Before I even know it's there, they [neighbours] are probably here."

Recently, some interview participants have talked about the importance of community supports for mental health challenges—which are often a product of stressors like droughts and floods. A cattle producer in southeastern



Saskatchewan explained how informal social groups can be very important to producers' wellbeing:

*"I think the mental health piece is really big. I know some people that offer peer support groups so they connect producers with similar operations together, and they kind of meet down every now and then and talk about certain topics that they want to learn about. I think that's been really great [...] and it just allows a safe place for them to, you know, talk about their operation or what they want to do. I think if you know there's more access to [those kinds of networks], I think that would be really beneficial."*

Supportive social groups of this nature can help overcome a major barrier: mental health stigma. Unfortunately, studies show that stigma associated with mental health continues. Knowing that many other producers are experiencing these challenges—and that mental health is just as important as other health issues—can help. Others find that participating in sports and community clubs gives them a much-needed mental or physical break from the stresses of farming. Being together with others, many of whom are going through the same thing, can be immensely helpful.

2 Carleton, R. N. (2016). Fear of the unknown: One fear to rule them all? *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 41, 5-21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2016.03.011>

3 Jones-Bitton, A., Best, C., MacTavish, J., Fleming, S., & Hoy, S. (2020). Stress, anxiety, depression, and resilience in Canadian farmers. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 55(2), 229-236. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-019-01738-2>

## Alone: Mental Health Impacts of Hazards

Risks—of both climate hazards and their associated impacts—are made worse when social supports are unavailable. Many producers talk about social and cultural changes happening in rural Saskatchewan, which are negatively affecting social relations and social capital. Depopulation means that neighbours, who are often the first source of help during a flood or wildfire, are further and further away. Others tell me about rising individualism, conflicts over water management, and competition for land—all of which are causing tears in the social fabric. One farmer described it this way:

*“Right now, because there’s a certain segment of our agricultural community that are very aggressive, there are problems [...] they don’t think nothing of stepping all over their neighbour. Yes, and affluence breeds two ugly children, greed and indifference, and that’s sad.”*

These changes can decrease supportive social infrastructure, like sports and clubs, and also dissolve the social capital available when times are hard. As individualism grows, people may be more likely to turn inward and attempt to deal with problems alone. A mixed farmer in southeastern Saskatchewan described the tendency to “put our head down and just work harder, sometimes not smarter, just harder to get out from under the stress”. For some, a response to work-related stress is simply to work more and reduce social contact. Similarly, a rancher described how self-isolation can indicate that someone needs help:

*“You can tell when somebody... If you don’t see somebody in town or around the community very much, then that’s when you you’re starting to get concerned with them, because they’re not exposing themselves to others very often. And I think that’s when they’re starting to get depressed and stuff like that.”*

Rural people are experts at helping others, especially during disasters, but research suggests that individual and psychological challenges are more likely to be dealt with alone. Stigma and isolation are at the root of the problem.

## Reaching Out

Farmers and ranchers occupy a crucially important place in our food system and our communities, broadly speaking. Their wellbeing matters. Existing research shows that rural communities have strong social capital that must be protected and preserved. Producers have told me that reaching out to others is instrumental to their wellbeing during a crisis.

However, as producers face growing risks of hazards, informal support may not be enough. Droughts are widespread events that affect entire communities or regions. When such hazards occur, rural communities and producers need broad public supports and safety nets. Although they acknowledge that programs like the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program are not perfect, many producers express the importance of programs that go beyond what friends and neighbours can provide. The strength of social capital within rural communities is admirable and worth protecting, but it is not a justification for society to ignore or neglect rural people and places. We have a collective responsibility to support those who hold up our food system.

The same goes for their mental health and wellbeing. Reaching out to friends and neighbours can be a first line of defence, but systematic supports are also important. Producers want and need supports that are attentive to the distinct challenges they experience. They want to talk to people who know about and understand agriculture and its associated uncertainties. Providing these kinds of supports collectively, at the community level but also beyond, can help prevent a hazard from becoming a disaster.



***If you need mental health support, here are some free resources in Saskatchewan that may help:***

- Saskatchewan Farm Stress Line (free 24/7 telephone support): 1-800-667-4442
- Sask Ag Matters Mental Health Network (free counselling): [www.saskagmatters.ca/freeservices](http://www.saskagmatters.ca/freeservices)
- Online Therapy Unit, University of Regina (free online therapy): [www.onlinetherapyuser.ca](http://www.onlinetherapyuser.ca)





# Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG) Program



**Dustin Resch**  
Director, Capacity  
Building & Programs

**The Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG) Team** administers the RIRG program, which includes three main components:

- The **Clearing the Path** program provides RMs with maintenance funding support for eligible primary weight roadways which have strategic value within the province's overall roadway network.
- The **Road Capital** program offers funding at a 50% assistance rate for eligible expenses up to a maximum of \$500,000 per RM, per project, per program year for the construction and upgrading of rural roadways
- The **Bridge Capital** program provides funding at a 50% assistance rate for the costs for eligible expenses associated with the removal and construction of low-level crossings, bridges, or culverts up to a maximum of \$1,000,000 per RM, per project, per program year.

For both road and bridge capital projects, proper public procurement and engineering are required. Approved projects are to be completed in two years.

**Traffic Count Program:** Traffic data is collected throughout all RMs on an ongoing basis with this data serving several important functions including eligibility and evaluation criteria within the RIRG Clearing the Path and Capital Project components.

**Bridge Inspection Program:** Bridge inspection data is collected throughout all RMs on a triennial basis with this data serving several important functions including evaluation criteria within the RIRG Bridge and Large Diameter Culvert Program.

**Capacity Building & Special Initiatives:** At the direction of the Program Management Board, the RIRG program undertakes special initiatives which have a positive impact on RMs or the program itself. Past examples include educational offerings (procurement summit), efficiency improvements (bridge file digitization), and innovation (bridge barrier crash testing).

**Rural Road Classification:** The RRCC includes SARM's representation in the classification of rural roads. This Committee, established in 2000 as a joint effort with the Ministry of Highways, Government Relations, and SUMA, allows members to submit change requests for road classification. The formula for MRS is impacted by road classification. This makes it extremely important to keep current.



**Daniel Segal**  
Senior Municipal  
Bridge Engineer



**Alexander Udey**  
Municipal Bridge  
Engineer

**SARM Municipal Bridge Services (SMBS):** SMBS provides professional technical advice to SARM members, government, consultants, and contractors related to bridge and culvert issues. These issues include bridge construction, inspections, and repair procedures, as well as allowable vehicle weights, culvert design flow requests, culvert capacity estimates, and cost estimates. A fee-for-service model ensures that engineering services continue to provide high quality and specialized professional engineering that supports the work of SARM members and is offered at a reduced rate.



**Christina Berry**  
Programs  
Administrative  
Assistant



**Shelby Piel**  
Transportation  
Infrastructure Program  
Administrator



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# MEMBER NEWS

## IN MEMORIAM



**FRANK FABER**  
RM OF MOOSE CREEK NO. 33  
**IN MEMORIAM**



**HAROLD MOORHEAD**  
RM OF MAPLE CREEK NO. 111  
**IN MEMORIAM**



**ROY HARRIGAN**  
RM OF MAPLE CREEK NO. 111  
**IN MEMORIAM**



**JAMES CLIFFORD MURPHY**  
RM OF PAYNTON NO. 470  
**IN MEMORIAM**



**VERNON SMITH**  
RM OF ELDON NO. 471  
**IN MEMORIAM**

Vernon Smith passed away February 24, 2025 at the age of 93. Vernon served as Councillor for Division 4 of the R.M. of Eldon No. 471 from 1984 to 1986 and 1988 to 1997.



**BOB SWITZER**  
RM OF AUVERGNE NO. 76  
**IN MEMORIAM**

Bob was past President of the Canadian Angus Association; was a board member and President of the Saskatchewan Angus Association; a founding director and President of Red Coat Cattle Feeders; a member of the board of the Mankota Stockmans Weigh Company; was on the Saskatchewan Stockgrowers and was a member of Council at the R.M. of Auvergne No. 76 from 1977 to 1980.

Cliff Murphy was a very colorful, passionate and knowledgeable individual. He was a friend to many with his vibrant personality and willingness to help anyone at anytime, even if it meant he would have to leave what he was doing to help another. He was passionate about grain farming, cattle and politics. Cliff entered municipal politics in 1994 as Councillor for Division 6, a position he held until 1999. The R.M. of Paynton was not a wealthy municipality so Cliff, the Reeve and other councillors dedicated many hours of their time to fix the older machinery that would have been too costly to be repaired by the dealership.

During his time on council Cliff was appointed to many committees and continued to be an active member on the Paynton Cemetery Board which he was very passionate about.

Cliff had a memory like no other when talking about the history and past residents of the Paynton district. When there was an inquiry about a past resident or where someone live back in the day he knew every detail like it was yesterday.

Cliff is dearly missed by the community and the many neighbours and friends he accumulated over the years.

The R.M. of Paynton is forever grateful for his friendship and years of service as Councillor.

Rest easy our friend!





**DAVID LUNDQUIST**  
RM OF ELDON NO. 471  
**IN MEMORIAM**

David Anton Lundquist passed away at Maidstone, SK on December 21, 2024 at the age of 68 years. David served as Councillor for Division 6 for the R.M. of Eldon No. 471 for 15 years.



**ALLEN FAHSELT**  
RM OF RIVERSIDE NO. 168  
**IN MEMORIAM**

Allen Fahselt passed away on January 25, 2025 at the age of 80. Allen served nine years from 1998-2007 as the division 6 councillor for the Rural Municipality of Riverside No. 168.

He was born and raised in Cabri, SK and lived at the family farm until his passing, fulfilling his passion for farming. Allen will be fondly remembered for how genuinely kind he was, his involvement in the community including his time with the Cabri Lions Club. He helped establish the marina at the Cabri Regional Park and through his time as a councillor with the RM of Riverside.

Allen enjoyed a lot of pastimes including curling, ski trips, and a love of music.

Allen leaves behind his loving wife, Brenda, his daughter Sherri (and his grandsons Rhett and Troy) and son, David.

Allen will be greatly missed and remembered by his community and all who were lucky enough to call him a friend.

**WAYNE MARTIN**  
RM OF AUVERGNE NO. 76  
**IN MEMORIAM**



**ROBERT WIGNES**  
RM OF VISCOUNT NO. 341  
**IN MEMORIAM**

Robert (Bob) Wignes passed away February 13, 2024 at the age of 77. He grew up in the Viscount area where he met and married Marilyn Knuckey and together they raised 3 children. Bob served as Division 4 Councillor for the RM of Viscount #341 from 1994 to 2009.



**WILLIAM "BILL" PRESTON**  
RM OF CORMAN PARK NO. 344  
**IN MEMORIAM**

Bill Preston was born in Rosetown, Sask. on May 3, 1940 to Dent and Lauris Preston. Bill was the oldest of four - Jill, Dick and Tim. Bill loved helping his dad in the hardware store often making deliveries for him. Another love was guiding hunters in the fall and missing school in the morning! After Grade 12, Bill went to the University of Saskatchewan, where he received his BA and a Law Degree.

Bill loved sports - he curled, played squash and tennis and when he retired at age 75, he took up golfing. He loved to read - but only current news and never fiction. He loved The Economist and The Globe and Mail and was always ready with questions and thoughts on what was going on in the world when his Thursday coffee group would arrive. Bill loved going to Church, and holding hands with beloved wife Maureen during the service was special to him.

Bill was a people person - you could not meet Bill without him asking you 100 questions about yourself! He wasn't content with just saying, "Nice to meet you." He had to know more. Bill had a great and ready smile, and some may say it had a cheeky component to it! His smile and inquisitiveness never left him.



**PAUL KLEIN**  
RM OF WOOD RIVER NO. 74  
**IN MEMORIAM**

Paul Klein passed away on January 3, 2025, at the age of 75 years.

Paul was a lifelong farmer who found great joy in driving the rural roads of Saskatchewan, checking out crops, and perhaps stopping for a chat. He was resourceful and could fix all sorts of equipment, and no home renovation was too big to tackle. Paul was known for his gift of gab and appreciated a good debate, so much so that he was often found with his foot in his mouth, enjoying the reactions of those around him. Paul was a passionate Riders fan, though they caused him much anxiety, especially during a losing streak.

Paul proudly served as Division 1 Councillor for the RM of Wood River No. 74 from 1985 to 2002. He was also an advocate and founder for bringing producer cars to Lafleche, something he was very proud of.

Paul is survived by his wife Carol, sons Gord, Brett and Tyler; daughters Robin and Kobi.



**BRIAN CORCORAN**  
RM OF PINTO CREEK NO. 75  
**IN MEMORIAM**

It is with deep sorrow that we mourn the passing of Brian Corcoran of Kincaid, SK, on December 3, 2024, at the age of 64 years.

Brian was born at the Kincaid Hospital on Sept 25, 1960, the eldest child of James "Jim" and Eréne (Turgeon) Corcoran. Brian enjoyed spending time with his cows, riding horses, fencing, baling, tinkering in his shop, and fabricating new projects from his treasured junk collection. He also had a passion for hockey, bowling, baseball, his Chevy trucks, and his dog, Blue.

Brian was very dedicated to his positions as Reeve of RM #75, Chairperson of Thomson Lake Regional Park, and Board Member of the Meyronne Community Pasture. He never intentionally missed a meeting and was always diligent with policies. His God-given gift was his ability to listen to people, understand their points of view, and work toward solutions.

Brian is survived by his loving wife Edna Lacasse-Corcoran; daughter Mélanie Frechette (Micah Campagne), granddaughters Charlize & Catherine; daughter Christianne (Jeff) Hammond; daughter Alexie (Caley) Millar, granddaughters Sophie & Alice; daughter Sheila Rodrigues (Lane Mottl), granddaughters Addisson & Victoria; daughter SherryCorcoran, grandchildren Kameron, Logan & Ryan; mother Eréne Corcoran; brother Gary (Kathy) Corcoran; sisters Carmela Miller (Rod), Rosalie LaRose (Ken) and their families; mother-in-law Louisa Lacasse; brother-in-law Paul Lacasse; sisters-in-law Diane Lacasse & Shona Richards (David) and family.

Brian will always be remembered as a kind-hearted and gentle man.



**BILL SWIDERSKI**  
RM OF MERVIN NO. 499  
**IN MEMORIAM**

William Nick (Bill) Swiderski, beloved husband of Mrs. Marlene Swiderski of Battleford, Saskatchewan, passed away at the Royal University Hospital, Saskatoon at the age of 89 on November 16th, 2024.

Bill served on the Development Appeals Board & Board of Revision for the R.M. of Mervin No. 499 for several years and was the Division 5 Councillor from 1998 to 2001.

**WILLIAM MCKENZIE**  
RM OF AUVERGNE NO. 76  
**IN MEMORIAM**



**DON BOWMAN**  
RM OF USBORNE NO. 310  
**IN MEMORIAM**

Don Bowman was born on October 15, 1932, on the family farm near Guernsey, SK. He attended Waterloo School, often traveling by horse or on foot. After finishing school, he worked on the farm, operated road construction equipment for the RM of Osborne, and later became a welder in Alberta's oil industry.

In 1956, Don married Blanche Rosenberger, and they farmed together, purchasing their land in 1969 and 1972. They raised two sons, Roger and Glenn, and enjoyed traveling throughout Canada and the U.S. Don was an active member of Sharon Mennonite Church, later joining North Star Church.

His municipal service began in 1974 as a Councillor for the RM of Osborne No. 310. Elected Reeve in 1987, he served for 23 years, overseeing key developments such as the Canpotex Railcar Facility, BHP mine agreements, and the relocation of the RM oAice. He played a vital role in medical care access, helping establish the Lanigan medical clinic and Watrous long-term care facility.

Don dedicated himself to community service, volunteering with disaster relief, the Waterloo Pipeline Association, and the Wheatland Regional Library Board. He also helped found WUQWATR and contributed to the Guernsey History Book. Known for his leadership, fairness, and commitment, Don left a lasting impact on his community.

He is predeceased by his wife Blanche and survived by his sons, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. His legacy of service, dedication, and kindness will be long remembered.

**WALTER NIEMEGEERS**  
RM OF LAURIER NO. 38  
**IN MEMORIAM**

Walter's service to our municipality left a lasting impression, and his dedication to the community is fondly remembered and deeply appreciated. His contributions to local governance, leadership, and community spirit continue to resonate in the work we carry forward today.

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## RETIREMENT



**GREG COLLINS**  
**RM OF LOMOND NO. 37**  
**RETIREMENT**

The R.M. of Lomond No. 37 would like to recognize Greg Collins for his dedicated years of service as an equipment operator and foreman of the municipality. Greg began his career with the R.M. of Lomond No. 37 in February 2001 as an equipment operator and became the municipal foreman in 2013. After 23 years of service, he retired in October 2024. In appreciation of his contributions, Reeve Brad Irwin presented Greg with an engraved gift, and gift certificate at the annual Christmas supper. The Council and staff of the R.M. of Lomond No. 37 sincerely thank Greg for his service and wish him all the best in his retirement.

**LES KROSCHINSKI**  
**RM OF BUFFALO NO. 409**  
**RETIREMENT**

Les joined the RM of Buffalo in the fall of 2001. Joining such committees as: Emergency Measures and mutual aid committee. During his time as Division Two Councilor Les joined numerous committees and boards: District 30 AD board, RCMP advisory Board, Office Building Committee, Hiring Committee, EMO board and more. While division councilor multiple projects and purchases were made including: new fire truck in 2002, The Arena Floor Project in 2009 and numerous road projects.

Les Became Reeve in the fall of 2010 and continued to join committees and boards to help support the RM.

**CHARLIE SMITH**  
**RM OF LOST RIVER NO. 313**  
**RETIREMENT**

Charlie has just retired from Reeve after being the Reeve in Lost River for 29 years. He started as the reeve in 1995. He hired the former Administrator and retired the same year as she did. Christine had said that Charlie once told her he would outlast her! That he did. He has been in the RM for many road builds, and equipment purchases. Helping get a water utility running there along the way. Charlie has recently moved out of the RM to bigger and better things and he will be missed.



**GERALD FLAMAN**  
**RM OF MARTIN NO. 122**  
**RETIREMENT**

The RM of Martin #122 would like to recognize Gerald Flaman for his 17 years of service. Gerald served in two different divisions as well as Reeve over his tenure in the RM of Martin. Gerald became Division 6 Councillor in the fall of 2005-2011 and served in that division for 6 years. He then became Division 4 Councillor for one year in the fall of 2011-2012 and then Reeve for eight years (2012-2020). After a two-year break Gerald became Councillor for Division 6 in 2022-2024 until his final retirement. Gerald led by quiet example and was a devoted and knowledgeable member of council. The Council, Staff and Ratepayers would like to thank Gerald for his time as well as his wealth of experience and knowledge. We wish him all the best in his retirement.



**VICTOR HULT**  
**RM OF ELDON NO. 471**  
**RETIREMENT**

The R.M. of Eldon No. 471 celebrated the retirement of Councillor Victor Hult at the annual Ratepayer's Supper on April 10th, 2025. Victor served as Councillor for Division 3 from 2006 to 2024. The R.M. appreciates Vic's 18 years of dedicated service.



**DESMOND MCKENZIE**  
RM OF LOMOND NO. 37  
RETIREMENT

After 38 years of dedicated public service to the ratepayers of the R.M. of Lomond No. 37, Desmond McKenzie has retired from council. First elected as Division 2 Councillor in 1986, he served in that role until November 2012, when he was elected Reeve. He continued in that capacity until his retirement in November 2024.

Throughout his tenure, Desmond served on numerous committees and boards and played a key role in completing many municipal projects. A particular accomplishment to note is the replacement of all 7 bridges within the municipality. Desmond figured it was time to retire when he had been on council long enough to replace the same bridge twice – first in 1986, and later in 2024.

The Council and Staff extend their deepest gratitude to Desmond for his years of service and wish him all the best in his retirement.

**RICHARD MORLEY**  
RM OF FRANCIS NO. 127  
RETIREMENT

Through every challenge and achievement, you brought a steady hand and a wise heart, guiding us with courage and confidence. Your vision and commitment have made a lasting impact on our own perspectives and practices – a legacy we will cherish.

Your ability to make tough decisions and see the bigger picture inspired us all. You led us with integrity, often moving us toward progress when others might have hesitated. Your dedication drove us to be better; and your wisdom ignited the path forward.

Please know that your work here has made a difference. We are grateful for your selfless service, and we hope you look back on these years with pride, knowing the depth of respect and admiration we hold for you.

Thank you for everything, REEVE Richard Morley, we are forever grateful for the journey we shared.

## How do you deal with kochia in your R.M.?

### Herbicide-resistant kochia is on the rise.

In 2013, only 5% of kochia surveyed in Saskatchewan was glyphosate-resistant. By 2019, 87% was.\* The pace at which kochia develops herbicide resistance means herbicides alone are no longer sufficient to control it.

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\*KOCHIA RESISTANCE UPDATE: RESULTS FROM THE 2019 TO 2023 GLYPHOSATE, DICAMBA, AND FLUROXYPYR-RESISTANT KOCHIA PRAIRIE SURVEYS



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**KARTSEN FRYDENLUND**  
**RM OF LOST RIVER NO. 313**

**RETIREMENT**

Karsten has filled a few Councillor positions over the years. Most recently he held Division 3 Councillor from 2014-2024, and previous to that he was the Division 4 Councillor from 1977-1983. Karsten was always a smiling face on council. He did take a break for a bit there where he focused on his career. He was a farmer and still does alot with the Town of Allan's museum. He is always busy there. Karsten is still in the community and while retiring from a few other committees, he is still kept busy with the Museum and curling.



**RANDY DONOVAN**  
**RM OF BRATT'S LAKE NO. 129**

**RETIREMENT**

Current Reeve, Bernard Novak presented previous Councillor and Reeve, Randy Donovan an engraved watch for his 17 years of service to the Municipality.



**CLIFFORD ALLEN**  
**RM OF MCLEOD NO. 185**

**RETIREMENT**

The RM of McLeod wishes to announce the retirement of Clifford Allen, who has served as Reeve for the last 9 years. Previous to taking on the role of Reeve, he served as Councillor from 2010 - 2016. Throughout his tenure, Cliff exemplified the values of service and hard work, and he was an unwavering advocate for the growth and betterment of the municipality. His leadership will be greatly missed, and we wish him all the best and thank him for his long-term support over the last 14 years.



**JUDY HARWOOD**  
**RM OF CORMAN PARK NO. 344**

**RETIREMENT**

The R.M. of Corman Park is honoured to announce the retirement of Judy Harwood, a dedicated and esteemed leader who served our community with unwavering commitment and passion. Judy's journey began in 1994 when she was first elected to Council, a role she held until 2000. Her dedication and leadership were further recognized when she was elected as Reeve in 2012, a position she held with distinction until her retirement in 2024.

Throughout her tenure, Judy's vision and tireless efforts have significantly contributed to the growth and development of our municipality. Her leadership has been instrumental in numerous initiatives that have enhanced the quality of life for our residents and strengthened our community bonds.

In addition to her remarkable service at the municipal level, Judy also made significant contributions to the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM). She served as the Division 5 SARM Director for 10 years, where her insights and advocacy played a crucial role in shaping policies and advancing the interests of rural municipalities across the province.

Judy's retirement marks the end of an era for the R.M. of Corman Park, but her legacy will continue to inspire future generations. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Judy for her years of dedicated public service and wish her all the best in her well-deserved retirement. Her contributions have left an indelible mark on our community, and she will always be remembered as a pillar of strength and leadership.

Thank you, Judy Harwood, for your unwavering dedication and service.



## Member News Submission Tips:

- Submit photos as separate JPG, PNG, TIFF or PDF files.
- Submit original photos not ones that have been scanned from printed documents or taken off of websites.
- Photos must be 300 dpi resolution.  
Tip: check the file size. If the file is less than 100 kb, it may not print properly.
- Check your phone's camera resolution before taking photos. Ensure that the camera's settings are for High, Highest Quality or Maximum resolution.
- Write-up length maximum: 50 words.

Send in submissions using the online form at [sarm.ca/events/awards-and-recognition/submissions/](http://sarm.ca/events/awards-and-recognition/submissions/)

**THANKS  
FOR SHARING  
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WITH US!**



**WILLIAM WARRINGTON**  
**RM OF ANTELOPE PARK NO. 322**  
**RETIREMENT**

Bill truly enjoyed the 25 years of time he gave to the RM. He enjoyed representing the RM on the Kindersley & District Plains Museum and the WCMGC to name a few of his favorites. He is always ready to spark conversation on any topic and I am sure most people reading this have had a conversation with him. He was passionate on moving forward and thought any project was attainable with the right collaboration. Always an open ear to give advice to all ages, starting with "I remember when..."



**BAS FROESE-KOOIJENGA**  
**RM OF CORMAN PARK NO. 344**  
**RETIREMENT**

The R.M. of Corman Park has the esteemed privilege to announce the retirement of Bas Froese-Kooijenga, who served as Division 6 Councillor from 2012 to 2024. Bas' dedication and leadership have been instrumental in the growth and development of our community.

In addition to his role on Council, Bas is a dairy farmer and, together with his wife Martha, started the first on-farm creamery in Saskatchewan and operates a successful on-farm store. His entrepreneurialism and commitment to local business have significantly contributed to the economic vitality of our region, providing essential services and products to our residents.

Bas has also been deeply involved in various community projects, demonstrating his commitment to enhancing the quality of life. He has actively supported regional cooperation initiatives through the Saskatoon Partnership for Growth, which aims to develop a long-term vision and strategy for regional growth. This collaboration has fostered mutual benefits for communities in the area, including enhanced recreational opportunities and economic development. Bas has also been a strong advocate for local sports. His efforts have helped provide more ice and field time for athletes, promoting active lifestyles and community engagement.

As Bas steps down from his role, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for his years of dedicated service. His legacy of leadership and community involvement will continue to inspire future generations. We wish Bas all the best in his retirement and look forward to seeing the continued success of his businesses.

Thank you, Bas, for your unwavering dedication and service to the public.



**GERRY STRELIOFF**  
**RM OF BLAINE LAKE NO. 434**  
**RETIREMENT**

In the photo is Gerry Strelloff receiving a commemorative plaque from CAO Linda Klimm. Gerry is being recognized for 20 years of service on the RM of Blaine Lake No. 434 Council as Reeve and Councillor.

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