



# RMAA Review

News from the Rural Municipal Administrators' Association of Saskatchewan

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"Change is the only constant in life. One's ability to adapt to those changes will determine your success in life"

- Benjamin Franklin

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## Plan now to attend the 2023 Convention!

The 2023 Annual RMAA Convention will be held in **May 2023** at the Saskatoon Inn. New this year we will be requiring a registration form. This is in effort to help the hotel plan for food and for our association to make the convention as cost effective as possible. The Spring Newsletter will announce some of the convention plans and agenda. In the meantime please right click on the link below to reserve your room!

If the link doesn't work for you simply copy the link and paste into your browser.

<https://reservations.travelclick.com/6876?groupID=3741620>

You can also book by calling 1-306.-242-1440 ext.0 and ask to book under the RMAA Conference Block. If you book outside this block you will not receive the same rate nor will you be reimbursed for the difference.

**HEADS UP!** To assist the hotel and the board in planning meals, meeting space, etc. there will now be a MANDATORY REGISTRATION and nominal fee for conventions going forward. More information will be forthcoming.

## Lou Jacobs Award for 2023

In 1972 our Association adopted a policy of giving special recognition to persons who have made outstanding contributions to rural government and community life in Saskatchewan. The *Lou Jacobs Award* is used as a vehicle for providing this recognition and it serves the dual purpose of also honoring the late Lou Jacobs for his valuable and dedicated service in the Department of Municipal Affairs for so many years. The bylaws of the Association provide that the recipient of this award be granted honorary life membership in the Association. In adopting the program of making this award available it was stressed that it be a very special honor, with not more than one such presentation each year. However, the name of the nominee may be submitted in subsequent years if he or she is not selected on the first submission. If you wish to nominate anyone for this award, please send your nomination to me as soon as possible, but not later than **February 15<sup>th</sup>**. A brief biography of the municipal career, activities and special accomplishments relating to municipal affairs and community life in Saskatchewan, should accompany each nomination. This will provide the selection committee with the information they require.

Regards, Rose Zimmer, Executive-Director



## President's Corner by Guy Lagrandeur



Where has the time gone? It is hard to believe that we are coming to the end of another year. One of the joys of preparing a year-end address is having the opportunity to look back at all the accomplishments this board has completed in 2022. Having gone through challenging times, our board has nonetheless made significant progresses towards steering our association and profession back on a path to normalcy. This path began in May at our annual convention. Celebrating our 100<sup>th</sup> was truly challenging. A new venue, a reconstructed agenda and us meeting all together again did make it for a challenging week. I'm sure we can all agree that it was a successful event. Our convention committee did an amazing job and I'm confident our 2023 convention in Saskatoon will be equally impressive. I am excited that our committees and processes are back in motion. After being idle for a long period of time it is nice to hear that office inspections are rolling along as they should and that many Administrators are applying for advanced certificates.

This only proves that we are dedicated to learning and advancing ourselves in our profession. Our Professional Development credit hours have been reactivated. Our Executive Director will once again be managing the program to ensure we all maintain our PD credit hours.

At the end of 2022 we will be informed on the continuance of the Targeted Sector Support program for In-Person Municipal Office Inspections. This program will now be recognized by the name Advanced Peer Mentorship or AMP for short.

If funding is awarded this program will continue to serve as an important tool for administrators to ensure that our profession continues to move forward and that our procedures are up to date. Please take advantage of this program as it is a powerful tool that has received positive reviews.

In closing I would like to pass along a couple of personal items that I feel needs to be stated. From the beginning of the covid shutdown to today, the RMAA Executive have gone above the call of duty on your behalf. The commitment and dedication each member has shown has been recognized by elected officials and government ministries. They represent the RMAA at every event with professionalism and integrity.

It has been and it continues to be an honour for me to serve as your president. Serving this association will always be the highlight of my administrative career. Thank you all for your continued patience and understanding as we return back to the way we have worked for the past 100 years.

On behalf of the board and myself we want to wish all of you a Happy Holiday and enjoy the peace and serenity of the season....and share it with special people.

## 2023 RMAA Membership Dues

For **2023** - The Regular Membership fee for active members is \$425.00 while Associate Membership is \$175.00. We have enclosed a separate membership invoice as part of your package. **NOTE:** Only regular members are granted voting privileges. Active Administrators **must** purchase a regular membership. Certificate holders who work in the office but are not active Administrators **may** purchase either a regular or associate membership. It is expected that all certificate holders that are not practicing Administrators, and those wishing to be placed on the relief list, purchase at least an associate membership. Retired members are encouraged to purchase an associate membership. This is the only notice you will receive for RMAA Membership dues! For those who wish to do so, we will allow a two part payment; one half the fee (\$212.50) is to be paid no later than January 31<sup>st</sup> and a post-dated cheque for March 31<sup>st</sup> for the other half (\$212.50) must be included. Receipts will be issued to the party whose name is on the cheque and will only be issued upon request. We want to acknowledge and thank Councils for recognizing that the RMAA member fees fund valuable committee work that not only benefits administrators but also benefits the Councils and ratepayers that our members serve!

Hello RMAA Members!

The Board of Examiners (BOE) has had yet another busy year. On behalf of the BOE I would like to take this opportunity to recap the proceedings throughout the past year, as well as notify you of some updates and changes regarding advanced certificate application fees and eligibility criteria. The BOE is a three-member Board made up of the Vice President of SARM, Bill Huber, the Vice President of the RMAA, Sheila Keisig, and the hired Secretary to the Board, myself.

As announced during the May RMAA Convention, the backlog of advanced certificate applications due to the Covid moratorium was caught up in the spring of 2022 prior to the RMAA Convention in May. I'm happy to report that the Fall 2022 advanced certificate application intake was undertaken as "normal". Applications were processed, and in-office inspections were completed prior to the SARM Midterm Convention in November. I would like to once again thank the BOE Office Inspectors Terry Lynn Zahara and Wendy Gowda for their efforts and commitment to completing the backlog of office inspections as timely as possible, in order to get all the applications processed prior to the May RMAA Convention. The next deadline to apply for an "A" or Superior "A" Certificate is March 1, 2023. As a reminder, if you plan to apply for an advanced certification by the March 1, 2023 deadline, please ensure your application is received by this date, and not just mailed by the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. To ensure timely processing, I recommend advanced certificate applications be forwarded at least two weeks in advance of the application deadline.

As a reminder, a new change to the Advanced Certificate eligibility requirement that is now being enforced is the requirement to be compliant with RMAA Professional Development Hours in order to apply for an "A" or "Superior A" certificate. All administrators who apply for an advanced certificate have to provide proof of PD Hour compliance from the RMAA Executive Director to accompany their application.

In similarity to the Regulation change that was implemented in 2021 for "Superior A" application eligibility, a similar change has now been implemented for "A" Advanced certification eligibility. Whereas, in order for an applicant to be eligible to apply for a Rural "A" certificate, the applicant must have worked in the role of the Administrator (and not in a support role) for two consecutive years, have completed two-year end audits, and have had their Rural "C" Certificate for at least two years. This has not changed. What has changed is if the applicant has relocated offices while holding their Rural "C"; the applicant must have worked for two calendar years in the role of the administrator at the current office location they are applying from. This rule has been instated to ensure that office inspectors have a sufficient sample size of work to objectively inspect records for both "A" and "Superior A" level certificates.

The RMAA and the BOE have reviewed the application fees for both level "C" and Advanced Certificates in 2022. The last time the application fees were increased for the above certificate applications was in 2017. As a result, effective January 1, 2023 the application fees for both Rural "C" and Advanced Certificates will be increasing. The Application fee for a Rural "C" Certificate will be \$350.00. This is an increase of \$100.00. The application fee for a Rural "A" or Rural "Superior A" will be \$700.00. this is an increase of \$200.00. The Acting Administrator Permit Fee remains unchanged at \$200.00. I am happy to announce that the BOE has converted their application forms to PDF Fillable forms for more streamlined usability. The new application forms, including the new application fees will be replacing the existing application forms, and will be uploaded to the RMAA website this month.

Please always feel free to reach out me via telephone or email if you have a questions regarding certification at any level. I do my very best to get back to any inquiry as timely as possible I can be reached by telephone at 306-882-2314 or by email at [rural.board.exam@sasktel.net](mailto:rural.board.exam@sasktel.net).

On behalf of Bill, Sheila, and myself I would like to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and all the best in 2023.



## BOE Inspector's Notes

Welcome to "Office Inspectors Notes". It won't surprise you that office inspectors take pages of notes each inspection season! In this space we will share concerns and questions found within our notes and hope that you will find the information valuable whether or not you are preparing for an inspection.

Elections were definitely the theme for this inspection season!

Be prepared!

Consider including establishment of polling places, returning officer appointment and election officials remuneration in your annual list of committee and council appointments. These appointments may also be included in a General Election Bylaw.

If council has appointed you as the Returning Officer, sign the Oath of Office as soon as possible and place it in your election file.

Are polling places established for each division within the municipality as required by *The Local Government Election Act*?

While this may seem unnecessary when our elections are staggered between even and odd numbered divisions & Reeve, in the event of a by-election or request for plebiscite/referendum the additional polling places may be required.

Were your councillors elected by acclamation?

Remember to provide written notice to Council of the first meeting after the election.

The returning officer statement of results must still be completed and presented to council at the first meeting of council after the election.

The Statement of Results would simply state "Councillor for Division 2, Elected by Acclamation, Councillor for Division 4, Elected by Acclamation, Councillor for Division 6, Elected by Acclamation". The Statement of Results can be presented by a statement or a resolution.

When are nomination forms and ballot box contents to be destroyed?

Nomination papers: At the end of the term of office which ends at the first meeting of council after the election.

For example, in 2022 the nomination papers to be destroyed would be the nomination papers from Divisions 2, 4 & 6 received in 2018. In 2024 the nomination papers to be destroyed will be from Divisions 1, 3, 5 & Reeve which were received in 2020.

Nomination forms for unsuccessful candidates can be destroyed with the other election documents – three months after the election.

Ballot box contents: Three months after the election, unless ordered otherwise by a judge. A complete list of materials to be placed inside the ballot box can be found in the LGEA and the Local Government Election Guide.

Ensure that two witnesses are present during the destruction of the nomination papers and again for the destruction of ballot box contents. An affidavit attesting to the destruction signed by two witnesses is to be kept in your election file. There is no prescribed form for the affidavit.

Wishing you good health and happiness in 2023!

- Terry-Lynn Zahara, Office Inspector



## Welcome New Members!

Certificate	Name	Municipality	Certification Date
1643	Chris Costley	No. 102 Lake Johnston	February 28, 2022
1644	Christie Hislop	No. 63 Moose Mountain	March 21, 2022
1645	Heather Fantie	No. 345 Vanscoy	April 28, 2022
1646	Kathleen McGladdery	No. 440 Hillsdale	May 12, 2022
1647	Ashela McCullough	No. 498 Parkdale	May 12, 2022
1648	Jan McDonald	No. 71 Excel	May 13, 2022
1649	Alicia Blake	No. 44 Waverley	June 10, 2022
1650	Prabhjot Lashar	No. 499 Mervin	June 28, 2022
1651	Jessica Jelinski	No. 100 Elmsthorpe	July 5, 2022
1652	Gisele Bouchard	No. 31 Storthoaks	July 5, 2022
1653	Shawn Sylvester	Meadow Lake	July 27, 2022
1654	Kelsey Dutka	No. 399 Lake Lenore	July 27, 2022
1655	Jenna Smolinski	No. 67 Weyburn	August 11, 2022
1656	Dana Kennedy	No. 555 Big River	August 11, 2022
1657	Joanne Rependa	No. 284 Rudy	September 12, 2022
1658	Marla Shirley	No. 18 Lone Tree	September 12, 2022
1659	Kelsie Walkeden	No. 36 Cymri	September 28, 2022
1660	DeAnne Robblee	No. 315 Montrose	October 25, 2022
1661	Fay Stewart	No. 410 Hoodoo	November 30, 2022

**Good Luck in your new profession!**

## Advanced Certificates

Congratulations to the following individuals on their advanced certificate achievements. Some of these folks have had their advanced certificates for a while but were not published in a newsletter. We want to make sure you are recognized!

### Rural Class 'Superior A' Certificates

<b>Lorna Benson</b>	RM of Canwood No. 494
<b>Sentura Freitag</b>	RM of Moose Creek No. 33
<b>Robin Busby</b>	RM of Milton No. 292
<b>R. Doran Scott</b>	RM of Blucher No. 343

### Rural Class 'A' Certificates

<b>Janelle Lavallee</b>	RM of Meeting Lake No. 466	<b>Karen Paz</b>	RM of Miry Creek No. 229
<b>Rein McMillen</b>	RM of Argyle No. 1	<b>Santana Schlosser</b>	RM of Big Quill No. 308
<b>Nicole Neufled</b>	RM of Beaver River No. 622	<b>Sindy Tait</b>	RM of St. Louis No. 431
<b>Jason Pilat</b>	RM of Eye Hill No. 382	<b>Aleshia Underwood</b>	RM of Lomond No. 37
<b>Kali Tourney</b>	RM of Cana No. 214	<b>Patricia Verville</b>	RM of Gravelbourg No. 104
<b>Carrie Turnbull</b>	RM of Lakeview No. 337	<b>Randi Wood</b>	RM of Colomsay No. 342
<b>Nicole Czemerer</b>	RM of Cupar No. 218	<b>Katherine Wurz</b>	RM of Mariposa No. 350
<b>Daniell Hache</b>	RM of Rosedale No. 283	<b>Laura Delaney</b>	RM of The Gap No. 39
<b>Tracy Luscome</b>	RM of Indian head No. 156	<b>Brekke Masse</b>	RM of Wood River No. 74
<b>Tosha McCubbing</b>	RM of Chesterfield No. 261	<b>Theresa Poschenrieder</b>	RM of Grass Lake No. 74
<b>Jaime Orr</b>	RM of Connaught No. 457	<b>Rhonda Brandle</b>	RM of Round Valley No. 410
<b>Audrey Rotheisler</b>	RM of Glen Bain No. 105	<b>Kathy Collins</b>	RM of Grassy Creek No. 77
<b>Elissa Henrion</b>	RM of Storthoaks No. 31	<b>Cheryl De Roo</b>	RM of Walpole No. 92
<b>Courtney Beaulieu</b>	RM of Invergordon No. 430	<b>Jessica Green</b>	RM of Sutton No. 103
<b>Shanese Mielke</b>	RM of Lake of The Rivers No. 72	<b>Christine Hoffman</b>	RM of Maple Creek No. 111
<b>Cherie Opseth</b>	RM of Birch Hills No. 460	<b>Sarah Leck</b>	RM of Cymri No. 36



## SARM Employee Benefits 101 by Jodi Hughes

For those of you who may or may not know me, I am Jodi Hughes, the Benefits Administrator for SARM. I have been with SARM now for almost 8 years and previous to that, I worked at Great West Life for almost 17 years in health and dental, as well as disability.

It is hard to believe that we are at the end of 2022 already, time flies when you are having fun! As SARM's Employee Benefits Administrator, I strive to make the administrator's jobs as easy as possible when it comes to the benefits and claims side of things. I want to take the opportunity to share some of my most frequently asked questions along with tips to help navigate the benefits world. Where do I find the forms? Once logged into Members Only section of the SARM website, all forms are easily accessible through the Employee Benefits Plans page. Fillable PDFs make completing the forms a breeze!

What forms do I complete for new employees? SARM Group Benefits Enrollment Card must be provided along with the Blue Cross application form (included with the enrollment card). Something often overlooked when completing the form is the Annual Salary amount. Without this information, the form is incomplete.

*Helpful Tip: As the employer, you don't need to complete the information on the top right of the Blue Cross application form. Simply submit my way once the employee completes the required information and signs it.*

What forms do I complete for Councillors? – SARM Group Benefits Enrollment Card for Appointed and Elected officials, along with the Blue Cross application form if they are opting into the EHD and/or the Group Life insurance benefits.

Can you clarify the age limits for benefits? This one has come up a little bit more frequently. The age limits for the benefits are as follows:

Health and Dental	LTD	Group life	Optional Life
Age 75	Age 65		Age 65
Note: at age 65 employees are moved from account 1 to account 2 (includes a slight premium adjustment)	Note: termed out at age 64 if they are not on disability at that time, as there is a one year wait period for the benefit	Note: at age 65, the amount and premium drops to half and it terms at age 70	

What are the Conversion Options for Extended Health and Dental Benefits? We suggest you check out the two following options when considering conversion opportunities:

Blue Cross: check out benefit options offered here: <https://www.sk.bluecross.ca/personal-insurance/health-insurance/>.

Public Retiree Health Plans: They offer four plans to choose from with an option for dental to be added to each. Check out benefit options offered here: <https://www.mypublik.ca/>.

*Helpful Tip: For both conversion plans, applicants have 60 days from termination date to convert without medical underwriting.*

*Helpful Tip: Based on age and reported income, employees over 65, may be eligible assistance through the Seniors Drug Plan. <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/accessing-health-care-services/seniors-drug-plan>*

Who can apply for Vision Benefits? Vision benefits are available to employees only and are a taxable benefit as per the Canada Revenue Agency. **The deadline for 2022 claims is noon, January 5, 2023.**

*Helpful Tip: SARM does not reimburse shipping and handling charges or insurance on the package charges.*

Helpful Tip for Renewal Forms: Save yourself some time and only fill out what has changed! If the EHD benefits, life benefits haven't changed, please leave them blank on the renewal form.

Helpful Tip for SARM Group Benefits Termination forms: Did you know employees still have access to their benefits until Group Benefits Termination forms are completed? Complete and send my way as soon as possible following employee termination. The RM may be eligible for partial refunds on premiums.

**What's the most important tip of all?** I'm just an email or phone call away if you have questions or need assistance with any of the SARM Employee Benefits Plans.

Jodi Hughes, GBA

Employee Benefits Administrator

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## Peer to Peer: Saskatchewan's Municipal Peer Network

By Patrick Chastel

Municipal officials are faced with diverse challenges everyday, from budget constraints to council conflicts, and unless you've experienced a similar situation, figuring out what to do next can be difficult. That's where Saskatchewan's Municipal Peer Network comes in. The Saskatchewan Municipal Peer Network connects municipal administrators and elected officials with highly experienced peers, who can provide guidance, coaching, and advice to help address issues locally, use best governance practices, better understand their roles and responsibilities, and other related matters. There are currently nine experienced volunteer mentors who are administrators, mayors, reeves, and councillors. They are trained in coaching, communication, facilitation, and dispute resolution. Mentors can be reached by phone or met with in person, and all conversations are confidential and free of charge. Find a mentor at [www.saskpeernetwork.org](http://www.saskpeernetwork.org)

## RMAA Humanitarian Effort

By Cheryl Barrett

For our 2023 Convention our Humanitarian Initiative will be the Saskatoon Food Bank. I realize that everyone is hurting and our money doesn't stretch as far as it used to but imagine if you were a minimum wage earner, a single parent on welfare, someone with mental health or medical issues who couldn't work and how hard it may be to have enough food to eat. I'm asking each and every member to take a minute and think about how you can help. If each month you buy one "extra" non-perishable food item and put it in a bag to bring to our May Convention imagine how much food we could collect! Peanut butter, pasta, case of soup, canned meat/fish, canned fruit, beans etc are all high demand. Please start collecting food now to bring to convention and let's make a difference!

Also I'm starting to plan for the 2024 Convention Humanitarian Initiative and hope you can start thinking that far ahead. We will be collecting and donating gently used or new business attire and accessories. So do you have some "work" clothes or accessories that you no longer or don't fit any longer. Consider starting a "box" of items to bring to 2024 Convention in Regina. Also please take time to visit the Dress for Success website: <https://regina.dressforsuccess.org> to find out more information.



## 2022 - 2023 RMAA Executive

President - Guy Lagrandeur - Redburn

Vice-President - Sheila Keisig - Tullymet

Director Ex-Officio - Ray Orb - Cupar

Immediate Past President - Wendy Gowda - Christopher Lake

Executive Director - Rose Zimmer - Wolseley

Division One - Cheryl Barrett - Martin

Division Two - Cathy Ripplinger - Pense

Division Three - Raylene Packet - Webb

Division Four - Barry Hvidston - Keys

Division Five - Doran Scott - Blucher

Division Six - Michelle Buechler - Paynton

*The RMAA Board of Directors wishes you a Merry Christmas!*

