



RMAA Review

News from the Rural Municipal Administrators' Association of Saskatchewan

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“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

- Aristotle

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Lou Jacobs Award for 2024

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 honour, 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 15th**. 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. For more information please contact rmaa@sasktel.net.

Convention 2024

President Guy Lagrandeur recently announced that the 2024 RMAA convention will be held in Regina at the Delta Hotel. In early March you will receive a registration package with the Golf Tournament and Admin on the Go information. The golf tournament is undergoing some changes and will have limited participation. Please sign up for these activities as soon as you receive the information. **NOTE: convention registration is mandatory and for 2024 there will be no walk in registrations so please plan accordingly.**

Welcome New Director

With the departure of Division 4 Director Barry Hvidston the executive made provisions to fill the vacancy with a byelection. Kelly Rea, Administrator for the R.M. of Livingston No. 331, was acclaimed. Congratulations Kelly! Kelly can be contacted at div4rmaa@sasktel.net.



President's Corner by Guy Lagrandeur



As I pen down this Christmas message, it is with a heart full of gratitude, nostalgia, and a profound sense of appreciation for the incredible journey we have shared together. As my term as President will come to a close in May of 2024, I find myself reflecting on the cherished moments, the challenges we overcame, and the growth we experienced as a united RMAA Family.

The holiday season is a time for reflection and renewal, and I want to take this opportunity to express my deepest Thanks to each and every one of you. Your dedication, support, and unwavering commitment to our association have been the driving force behind our accomplishments. Together, we navigated uncharted waters, embraced change, and stood resilient in the face of challenges. It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as your president, and I am immensely proud of what we have achieved collectively. As I bid farewell to this role in May, I am confident that the spirit of collaboration and camaraderie that defines our association will endure the incoming leadership, along with your continued dedication, will undoubtedly lead the RMAA to new heights.

During this festive season, let us not only celebrate the joy of Christmas but also the enduring strength of our association. As we gather with loved ones, remember the bonds we've forged and the shared goals that have brought us together. I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity to have served you, and I look forward to witnessing the continued success of the RMAA. May the coming year be filled with prosperity, unity, and new achievements for our beloved association.

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and may the spirit of togetherness and goodwill guide our association into a bright future.

Peer to Peer: Saskatchewan's Municipal Peer Network

Municipal leaders can face diverse challenges and sometimes may need extra support. The Saskatchewan Municipal Peer Network is available to assist. The Saskatchewan Municipal Peer Network connects municipal administrators and elected officials with highly experienced peers, who can provide guidance, coaching, and a variety of options to help address local issues, use best governance practices, better understand roles and responsibilities, and other related matters.

There are currently nine volunteer mentors who have widespread experience as administrators, mayors, reeves, and councillors. Mentors can be reached by phone and all conversations are confidential and free of charge.

To learn more or to find a mentor at www.saskpeernetwork.org.

2024 RMAA Membership Dues

For **2024** - The Regular Membership fee for active members (certificate holders only) is \$425.00 while Associate Membership is \$175.00 (non certificate holders). 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 31st and a post-dated cheque for March 31st 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!



As we approach the holiday season, I would like to congratulate you all on working through another busy year of RM governance. The Rural Board of Examiners 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. The Rural BOE is primarily responsible for the certification of RM Administrators. On behalf of Bill, and Sheila I would like to recap the proceedings throughout the past year, as well as notify you of some updates and changes the BOE is implementing in 2024.

As of today's date, the BOE has approved seventeen Acting Administrator Permits in 2023. These individuals work under conditional permits with qualified mentors, while they work to meet the qualification requirements for Rural "C" Administrator certification. Additionally, twenty-two Rural "C" Certificates have been issued to newly qualified Administrators to date in 2023. Congratulations to those Administrators newly certified within the past year, as well as those working towards becoming a rural certified Administrator in the near future.

The BOE receives numerous calls annually regarding offices transitioning from their current Administrator into advertising, recruiting, and hiring a new Administrator. In many cases Councils are hiring an applicant for the Administrator position who may not be a certified Administrator. Therefore, I wanted to refresh the membership on the requirements for an applicant to be eligible to obtain a Rural "C" municipal Administrator certificate.

In order to qualify for a Rural "C" certificate, an applicant must have their LGA Certificate from the University of Regina, or acceptable equivalent education as identified in the Rural Board of Examiners Regulations; which are available for viewing on the RMAA website. I am excited to announce that the RMAA and the BOE have approved the newly created **Saskatchewan Polytechnic Municipal Administration Diploma Program** as a recognized education credential to qualify for a Rural "C" certificate. (Please contact Saskatchewan Polytechnic directly for more information regarding the Municipal Administration Diploma Program). The applicant must also complete 1,800 Hours of in-office training under a certified rural municipal Administrator mentor. This mentor must hold either a Rural "A" or Rural "Superior A" certificate.

If Council hires a candidate who does not have their RM Administrator certification, in order for the RM to be compliant with legislation, Council would need to appoint this person as an Acting Administrator, and apply to the Rural Board of Examiners for an Acting Administrator permit for the applicant to work under until they meet the qualifications above, and can apply for their Rural "C" Certificate. The Acting Administrator permit application form is available on the RMAA website under the certification tab. In order for this permit to be issued, the applicant must be enrolled in a recognized post-secondary education program, unless other education is approved. Finally, the "qualified" mentor must be identified on the application, and hold either an active, associate, or lifetime membership with the RMAA.

The BOE processed a total of twelve advanced certificate applications from RM Administrators in 2023, 92% of which were successful in obtaining their advanced certification. Congratulations to the Administrators who were awarded advanced certification in 2023! I would like to once again thank the BOE Office Inspectors Terry Lynn Zahara and Wendy Gowda for their efforts and commitment to completing office inspections. Terry and Wendy are huge assets to the BOE. They are knowledgeable, approachable, fair, and complete office inspections to the high standard the BOE adheres to. To be awarded an advanced certificate by the BOE is an accomplishment to be proud of. The next deadline to apply for an "A" or Superior "A" certificate is March 1, 2024. As a reminder, if you plan to apply for an advanced certification by the March 1 deadline, please ensure your application is *received by this date*. To ensure timely processing, I recommend advanced certificate applications be forwarded a *minimum of two weeks* in advance of the application deadline.

Lastly, the advanced certificate inspection checklist has been reviewed and updated this fall. Items have been added to the checklist to reflect current changes in legislation requirements for RM Administrators. *The new checklist will be uploaded to the RMAA website for review by January 1, 2024, and, it will be used for Spring 2024 office inspections.* Therefore, please familiarize yourself with the newly updated checklist once posted. Whether you are applying for an advanced certificate or not, the advanced certificate checklist is a great resource for all RM Administrators to review, and ensure they are implementing "best practices" in their daily, monthly, and annual Administrator duties and responsibilities.

Please always feel free to reach out to me via telephone or email if you have a question 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.

On behalf of Bill, Sheila, and myself I would like to wish you and your's a very safe, and happy holiday season. Merry Christmas and all the best in 2024.



Advanced Mentorship Program (AMP)

As introduced during the RMAA Annual Convention in May

What is AMP:

- ◆ AMP is confidential on-site time with an experienced RM Administrator visiting you at your office, spending the day together, reviewing your work, office setup, and answering questions regarding the responsibilities, duties, and tasks of the Administrator role and profession.
- ◆ An experienced set of eyes; a mentor will reiterate and provide assurances of work you are doing well.
- ◆ They will provide suggestions regarding best practices, and catch potential duties that are being missed, or could be done differently.
- ◆ Office visits are scheduled between yourself and the AMP mentor at a time that is convenient to both parties.
- ◆ There is currently no additional cost to you, or your RM to participate.
- ◆ Office visits are kept confidential between yourself, and the AMP staff.
- ◆ The program is not designed to provide an opinion of your abilities as an Administrator, but as a support tool our association is providing its members.
- ◆ AMP is open to ALL working RM Administrators, it is especially recommended for administrators holding a Rural “C” certificate who have not yet obtained their “A”.
- ◆ Administrators are encouraged to voluntarily sign up for an AMP office visit. However, as mandated by the RMAA Executive, any Administrator may be selected at random, and contacted to schedule an in-office visit with the AMP mentor.

Now taking bookings for Spring 2024 Office Visits Call or Email to Book

Spring Office Visit Deadline: March 1, 2024

Spring Office Visits to be Completed by May 1, 2024

For more information, and to sign up for an AMP office visit, please contact:

AMP Program Administrator: Jill Palichuk

Telephone: 306-882-2314 Email: ampadmin@sasktel.net



Welcome New Members!

Michelle Klein	RM of Wellington No. 97
Dawn Prince	RM of Sasman No. 336
Michael Hotsko	RM of Pleasantdale No. 398
Sarah Stockdale	RM of Touchwood No. 248
Angela Molde	RM of Wheatlands No. 163
Candice Zinn	RM of Redburn No. 130
Michelle Bednarz	RM of Hazel Dell No. 335
Chantelle Ottenbreit	RM of McLeod No. 185
Lisa Pahl	RM of Maryfield No. 91
Leah McIntosh	RM of Pittville No. 169
Jayden Boyd	RM of Craik No. 222
Joel Cardinal	

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

Cathy Legault RM of Val Marie No. 17

Rural Class 'A' Certificates

Bertha Buhler	RM of Laird No. 404
Jacquelynne Mann	RM of Kinistino No. 459
Karen Zaharia	RM of Edenwold No. 158
Rebecca Carr	RM of Turtle River No. 469
Leanne Mack	RM of Vanscoy No. 345
Shala Kanasevich	RM of Francis No. 127
Erin Simpson	RM of Loon Lake No. 561
Amanda Baumgartner	RM of Golden West No. 95
Melinda Hammer	RM of Big Stick No. 141
Bradley Wiebe	RM of Sherwood No. 159



FAREWELL BARRY!

The Executive would like to take this opportunity to wish Barry Hvidston a fond farewell! Barry has ably served the Association as Director for Division 4 since May 2019. Here is what some of the Executive had to say about Barry...

Barry has brought great ideas and knowledge to the RMAA Board. He will be missed. I wish him all the best in his new endeavour.

Barry contributed a lot to the advancement and modernization of the RMAA bylaws and policies. I will miss his "okay, but..."

I will so miss Barry's enthusiasm regarding internal policy work and RMAA bylaws! I have never seen anyone be so excited to talk about changes and amendments. Barry did a lot of general housekeeping within our policies, as well as steered us all on the right path for virtual conventions and elections during the pandemic! Thanks Barry!

When Barry commits to a role, he goes all in! In his time on the RMAA Board, he has always been quick to volunteer for any committee or task - always lending a hand and his tenacious qualities resulted in his always getting to the bottom of an issue and leaving no stone unturned. Barry's dedication to the board, Division Members and his family is so evident - in his years on the board - I cannot recall a time that Barry did not leave behind a trail of can-tabs collected in his travels for the cause he is so passionate for.

Barry has made outstanding contributions to the board and the membership. He has an amazing ability to understand policies and to make positive recommendations on how to improve them.

Barry, a man of few words but when spoken it's well received and respected. There is no judgment in this man and he plays a fair game!

The RMAA is grateful for all the work Barry achieved in bringing our policy manuals up to date. His knowledge of policies and his attention to detail was second to none. Barry is a great communicator, excellent at organizing workshops for all divisions and more importantly a good family man and friend.

BARRY'S LAST WORD

Firstly, I would like to thank the RMAA Board, and all the RMAA Administrators for their support over the past 5 years as a Director and nearly 20 years as a Rural Administrator. It has been wonderful getting to know the different personalities and working together. I will definitely miss visiting everyone at the Convention, especially on the golf course! The most important aspect about the RMAA is the comradery and friendships between the Administrators within the RMAA, and with SARM, Municipal Hail and Government Relations. The RMAA, along with the Board, are looked upon extremely highly across the field in regards to their professionalism and knowledge. After every workshop that I organized, I would ask the facility if there was anything that we could have done better and there was not a single time that they did not praise the "professionalism" of the Administrators. Keep up the great work!

I was asked what one piece of advice I would give to Administrators, whether new or experienced. People who know me directly would state that I can give advice for hours but one of the most important items would be to obtain your "A" and Superior "A" certificates. Outside higher wages, better long term disability, and that you can never lose your certificate due to time out of the field, it shows the Administrator's knowledge and dedication to the profession. This also allows you to train the next generation of Administrators. Think of how many are having issues finding qualified people to train. Open your offices and use MAIP before it disappears. Though lots of work, it is very satisfying when the person takes their own office. Have a Merry Christmas and hope to see you around again!



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 - **Carol Bellefeuille** - Moose Jaw

Division Three - **Raylene Packet** - Richmond

Division Four - **Kelly Rea** - Arran

Division Five - **Doran Scott** - Blucher

Division Six - **Michelle Buechler** - Paynton



*Christmas is not a time nor a season,
but a state of mind. To cherish peace
and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy,
is to have the real spirit of Christmas.*

Calvin Coolidge

Merry Christmas

The RMAA Board of Directors wish you a Merry Christmas!