

# The Municipal Connection

Vol 18, Issue 6

## M.D. Bursary Recipients

Congratulations to Ryan Chesterman, recipient of the Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Bursary, and Kaitlyn Gross, recipient of the Education Bursary for 2024! Ryan is pursuing a Bachelor of Agriculture Technology at Lakeland College and Kaitlyn is pursuing a Bachelor of Science (Honours) Degree with a Major in Physiology and Minor in Biochemistry at the University of Alberta.





## The Great Twine Round-Up

Round-up your used plastic twine for a chance to win prizes! Bag it. Bring it. Win it. From November 1, 2024 to May 31, 2025, bring all the used plastic baler twine you can round-up to a participating Alberta collection site for a chance to win a cash prize. How it works:

1. Pickup your free twine collection bag.
2. Round-up and bag used plastic baler twine.
3. Label your bag(s) with your 4-H club/district name, or farm name (independent entry) and date.
4. Take a photo of your bag(s) at the collection site. Submit entry with photo

Visit AlbertaAgPlastics.ca for more details.

The Great Twine Round-Up

## Winter Outdoor Recreation Areas

Enjoy the outdoors this winter season! Visit Riverdale Mini Park or Arm Lake for groomed cross country skiing trails. Or visit one of the Municipal outdoor skating rinks located at Ascot Heights, Greenshields, and Peterson Estates.



## Snow Removal

The M.D. is responsible for clearing snow from all public roads with the exception of Provincial Highways and un-maintained roads. Snow clearing on gravel roads is done by local Divisional graders and paved roads are cleared by plow/sanding trucks. During a weather event, operators will be out when conditions are safe.
Snow clearing occurs by priority of all school bus routes followed by non-school bus routes.

## AgriInvest Program Updates

Beginning in 2025, AgriInvest will require an eligible and valid environmental risk assessment to receive matching government contributions for those with an Allowable Net Sales of $1 million or more. An agri-environmental risk assessment identifies agri-environmental risks on farming operations and includes sustainability tools that support a producer in mitigating measures. Environmental Farm Plans are an eligible agri-environmental risk assessment. For more details visit agriculture.canada.ca/en/programs/agriinvest

# Rat on Rats

Did you know rats are one of the most destructive invasive species in North America? Alberta remains the largest RAT-FREE jurisdiction in the world. Rats are believed to have been introduced to Canada around 1775 through early settlers docking their ships on the eastern coast. Since then, rats have spread all over North America, causing damage to crops, property, the environment and threaten public health through disease transfer. Rats are highly adaptable and reproduce quickly, making infestations difficult to control.

Alberta's Rat Control Zone was established in the 1950's to prevent rat infestations from spreading into the province. This 600km long, 29km wide buffer zone along the eastern border with Saskatchewan runs from Cold Lake to the Montana border. Natural barriers like the Rocky Mountains, boreal forest, and short-grass prairie protect other parts of Alberta, but the eastern border remains vulnerable. The seven municipalities within the Rat Control Zone have appointed pest control inspectors who work diligently to monitor and manage potential rat activity. Their efforts, combined with public awareness, are essential to preventing establishment of rat populations.

Common signs of rats include droppings, gnaw or chew marks, burrows or nests, rub marks on walls, and strange noises. Rats can reproduce multiple times a year beginning at 8 weeks old, with up to 12 litters per year of 12-18 pups. Rats can host more than 35 different diseases that can be transmitted to humans.

Here's how you can help prevent the spread of rats:

- **Rat!** If you see rats or signs of their activity take a photo and report it to rats@gov.ab.ca, 310-FARM, contact the municipality or use the free EDDMaps app
- **Know the law!** In Alberta, all rats are listed as an agricultural pest under the Agricultural Pests Act.
- **Recognize a rat!** Norway rats and roof rats are larger in size than the mouse, vole, pocket gopher, bushy-tailed wood rats, Richardson ground squirrel, however, smaller than a muskrat.




# Hydromulch Project

Hydromulching is a vegetation process that involves spraying a slurry of water, fertilizer, cellulosic mulch, tracking dye, and binder/tackifier on damaged and depleted soils to provide fast, economical and efficient revegetation. The mixture is sprayed from a hydroseeding truck where it is kept agitated during the application, ensuring even coverage. Mulch is sprayed from the truck with a canon, or by a hose run from the truck for areas of greater distance. There are many benefits to hydromulching such as promoting quicker growth, covering large and difficult areas, and providing protection from wind erosion and water runoff.

Traditionally following road construction within the M.D., ditches and borrow pits are seeded and harrowed utilizing a spin spreader and side by side. Though this method has been effective it does come with topographical limitations.

The M.D. recently reconstructed Twp Rd 420 between Hwy 899 and Rge Rd 20. This stretch posed a series of challenges for revegetation such as excessively sandy soils and steep banks. As a trial, 1.5miles of the roadside and approximately 4.33ha of associated borrow pits were seeded by the Agriculture Service Department and Hydromulched by Instalawn Hydroseeding.

In the images, the top right photo shows one of the slopes along this stretch. Many of the slopes were sluffing due to the sandy soils and lack of established vegetation. The tackifier in the hydromulch anchors itself to the soil surface, minimizing the erosion of the slopes. The other two images show the ditches that have been hydromulched. They appeared green following the application due to the tracking dye in the hydromulch.



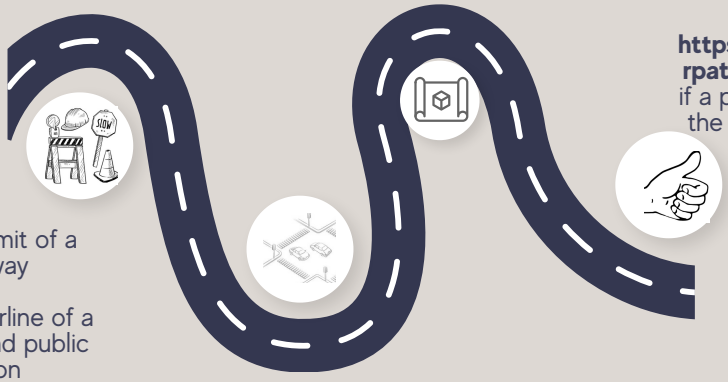
# Must Knows about Roadside Development

A **Roadside Development Permit** is required, (by Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors) for new or changes to roadside developments within the development control zone

**Which is...**

300m beyond the limit of a provincial highway

800m from the centerline of a provincial highway and public road intersection



Visit **https://roadsideplanning.lberta,ca/rpath** for an interactive map to see if a proposed development is within the development control area of a provincial highway.

Contact Dana Smith, the Director of Development Services, at **780-842-4454** with any questions

# Passing the Gavel



The Municipal District of Wainwright's long-serving Reeve, Bob Barss, has decided to step down after an impressive twenty-seven years of service. The decision, announced at the M.D. organizational meeting on October 15th, has resonated deeply with residents and colleagues who have witnessed firsthand the dedication, vision, and leadership that defined Bob's time as Reeve.

Bobs journey into Municipal Government began with a desire to give back to the community by becoming a voice for ratepayers. Over the course of nearly three decades, the Reeve became a central figure in the community, overseeing key policy decisions, navigating municipal growth, and fostering a sense of unity and progress.

Bob was first elected as Councilor for Division 7 in October 1995, and soon thereafter transitioning into the role of Deputy Reeve. In October 1997, the gavel was passed to Bob where he remained Reeve for the following twenty-seven years. He saw many changes throughout the years, of the most notable has been starting at a relatively small reserve of one million and growing to a reserve of over fifty million. Under his leadership, the Municipality saw significant improvements in infrastructure over the years. All revenue was put back into upgrading and developing Municipal infrastructure. Partnering with the oil and gas industry to develop a strategic network of roadways, was key to drawing economic growth to the community.

Bob describes the most rewarding aspect of his career as the people he has met throughout the years and the Municipal staff. Being able to work alongside the same Administrator for his entire career is unheard of in Municipal Government and something Bob is very thankful for. Together their common goals for the M.D. and time served together allowed for progress within the Municipality. Being acclaimed for his entire career has been one of the most impactful, meaningful moments for Bob as it speaks to his leadership being well-regarded by the community.

Reflecting on his time as Reeve, Bob shared, "It was an honour and privilege to be the Reeve of the M.D. of Wainwright for the past twenty-seven years. A truly humbling experience."

Some of the challenges encountered throughout the years have been brought about by Municipal staffing turnover, and Council transitions. These changes required effective communication, and as Reeve, Bob instilled the importance of teamwork and working together for the common good.

The years spent working alongside Municipal staff, advocating for his community as a Councilor and Reeve, and serving as president of the RMA (Rural Municipalities of Alberta), was made truly special by the support of his wife Susan and family. Their encouragement and belief made the many years of service as Reeve possible.

As Bob looks ahead to the next chapter of life, he is filled with a sense of gratitude for the years spent serving the community and for all the experiences and relationships built along the way. While he is stepping down as Reeve, he is not quite ready to leave Municipal Government behind. He will continue to serve as Deputy Reeve to support the smooth transition of leadership throughout this next year. This role will provide the opportunity to stay involved and lend experience to Reeve Mike Wildeboer and Council. Beyond the official duties, he is looking forward to taking more time for things that matter the most, starting with spending more time with his children and grandchildren. He intends to spend the next few years farming alongside his family, while also enjoying some well-deserved rest and relaxation at their property on the golf course. Travel is also on the horizon for Bob and Susan, offering new adventure and experiences.

Pictured in the top right is Bob Barss (right) passing the gavel to Mike Wildeboer (left) at the October 15th M.D. organizational meeting. The bottom left image is J.R. Christensen (right) passing the gavel to Bob Barss (left) in 1997. The center bottom image is the M.D of Wainwright Council in 1995. Pictured in the back row (L-R) B.Barss, P.Valleau, V.Spornitz, B.Willerton, D.Fletcher and front row (L-R): B.Heisler, J.R. Christensen, T.Timmons, R.Larouche. The image in the bottom right is Bob and wife Susan during the 2023 Wainwright Parade.

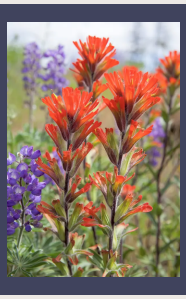






## Prairie Staples Indian Paintbrush- *Castilleja coccinea*

Indian paintbrush is a biennial wildflower. The central stem is usually green or reddish brown and covered in small hairs. The leaves are alternately attached, stemless, and medium green colored. The actual flower of the plant is small, yellowish green in color, and hidden within the large, showy fan shaped colored, bracts. The coloring on the bracts look as though they have been dipped in paint, giving the plant its common name. Paintbrush is a parasitic plant, the roots of this plant are unique in that they steal nutrients from surrounding plants. Indian Paintbrush grows best in moist conditions with full or partial sun exposure. It prefers well-drained soil types. This wildflower is commonly found growing in moist forests, moist fields and meadows, prairies, and along stream or lakeshores.


## Penalty for late tax payments

The deadline for tax payment was November 30th. A penalty of 12% will be added to all outstanding taxes effective December 3rd. Please call the Admin Office at 780-842-4454 with any questions regarding tax payments.

## Arm Lake Recreation Area Management

The M.D. of Wainwright is seeking proposals for Arm Lake Recreation Area Management. An RFP package can be obtained at the M.D. office or on the provincial APC site. Deadline for submitting proposals in December 11th at 11am.





## Safe Burning

Winter is a great time to burn brush piles, windrows, and other projects. With a good amount of snow, the risk of your fire spreading is limited. You should still:

- make sure you have appropriate tools and water on hand to manage your fire
- use caution if drought conditions are high to extreme, as the fire may dig in and burn underground
- insert a metal rod into your fire to tell if it is extinguished or if it's still burning underground; if the metal rod comes out hot or warm to the touch, you know the fire is still smouldering
- extinguish a fire by soaking it, stirring it, and soaking it again

It is required to get a fire permit before you burn and follow the conditions when burning. Visit or call the M.D. office at 780-842-4454 to get a fire permit.

## Podcasts




Want to learn how to safely preserve food at home? Tune into the Perfectly Preserved Podcast! You'll learn the ins and outs of food preservation including methods such as canning, dehydration, fermentation, and freeze drying.

## Winter Workshop Series

Stay tuned for our upcoming Winter Workshop Series! Events set to start in the new year!

## Agriculture Service Board

Thank you to Gillian Adamson for her valuable contributions and dedicated service on the Agriculture Service Board over her three-year term. As Gillian's term ends we welcome Jason Dahlgren to the ASB.



## Ginger Crinkles

**Ingredients**

1 cup butter or margarine
1 1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 large egg
2 tbsp dark corn syrup
1/2 cup mild molasses
3 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp baking soda
2 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp ginger
1/4 tsp cloves
1/2 tsp salt
1/4 cup granulated sugar, for coating



**Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. Combine the first 5 ingredients
2. Add the next 6 ingredients and mix. Roll into 1 1/2" balls
3. Roll the balls, 1 at a time, in the sugar to coat them. Bake on center rack in the oven for 12-14 minutes. Let stand for 2 minutes before removing from cookie sheets to the wire rack.

Happy Holidays from everyone at the M.D. of Wainwright. We hope your holidays will be filled with joy and laughter!