

# UrbanVoice

The newsletter of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association

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## Premier begins revenue sharing recovery

Some new directions were taken in showing respect for urban governments when Premier Lorne Calvert and new Government Relations Minister Harry Van Mulligen spoke at the 101st SUMA Convention in Regina on February 5-8, 2006. Former minister Lorne Taylor, now Health Minister, was also credited at Convention with having helped municipalities make their case over the last two years.

The first of three notable achievements was money for municipal services and infrastructure, amounting to a total of \$52 million. The Premier started with "a one-time, \$10 million top-up" to unconditional revenue sharing for 2005-06," equivalent to about \$10 per capita depending on distribution decisions still to come. This same amount is to be added to the Revenue Sharing program base starting in fiscal year 2006-07, with most of this funding going to urban municipalities.

Another one-time commitment "to reinvest and rebuild our communities" will provide \$32 million for unconditional capital funding through a Community Share 2006 program. The total of \$42 million in one-time dollars, made possible by increased oil and gas revenues, is to be distributed before the end of March. The other \$10 million will be an ongoing increase to current urban and rural grants.

The Premier also mentioned the already committed \$55 million continuation of last year's 8% education tax credit on property tax bills, but he hinted that more could come. Minister Van Mulligen also echoed that, "as the Premier said yesterday, our

work on the matter of the education share of property tax is not complete and further announcements will follow." The Education Tax Coalition, of which SUMA is a member, will want to know whether a further commitment will come by the time of the SARM Convention in early March, the provincial budget later that month, or not until next year.

By making his funding announcements at the SUMA Convention, the Premier partly exposed the recent "secrecy" myth that ongoing program announcements must await budget day. This was the second significant achievement, requiring the Premier to trump the extended deliberations of his own Treasury Board in order to carry concrete news to the Convention.

The third major achievement, saved for the Minister's speech, was "recognition that our urban municipalities – our cities, towns and villages have an important role in advancing the social and economic goals of the province, and that urban communities face issues and challenges distinct from rural and northern areas."

"As a result," Van Mulligen said, "Government Relations is developing some preliminary ideas for a provincial 'Urban Agenda' that goes beyond specific municipal legislative or fiscal issues toward initiatives and strategies that support long term urban community sustainability and that enhance urban government capacity. We recognize the shared challenge to build and support an enabling environment in which municipalities will continue to play a key role in the provincial economy."



Premier Calvert and President Don Schlosser were scrummed by the media after the Premier announced increased funding for municipalities.



In SUMA's initial response to the Premier's positive announcements, President Don Schlosser said that he was very pleased to see that the lobbying campaign by cities, towns and villages over the last year has been heard, including the special efforts by the City Mayors' Caucus in the two weeks leading to Convention.

"We knew we had made a strong case for starting a Revenue Sharing recovery," Schlosser said, "and we are very encouraged the Premier has recognized that supporting municipal services and infrastructure investments will also help to support economic development in Saskatchewan. We look forward to continuing this progress."

Delegates at the Convention appeared to recognize that further progress must include converting one-time funding into longer-term commitments.

### Inside this issue

#### DAWNING OF A NEW DIRECTION SUMA CONVENTION 2006

Convention 2006 is the main topic in this issue of UV, including the Premier's announcement of a \$10 million top-up to the Revenue Sharing pool for 2005, and the addition of \$10 million to the Revenue Sharing base in the 2006 Budget. Further, new Government Relations Minister Harry Van Mulligan revealed in his speech to delegates that the government is giving some preliminary thought to developing an "urban agenda" which would bring together various policies and programs that are important to urban municipalities. Expect to hear more about that in future issues of Urban Voice.

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## President's speech opens Convention 2006

President Don Schlosser began his speech at the opening of the convention by asking for a moment of silence in memory of Mike Badham. During the silence a visual presentation of photos from various periods of Mike's life were projected on the large screens in the meeting room.

In his speech President Schlosser touched briefly on some of the highlights of the past year, including the signing of the New Deal agreement and the greater attention paid to municipal issues during the federal election

campaign than in 2004. He also emphasized that a true revenue sharing program continues to be SUMA's top priority. (About two hours later Premier Calvert responded at least in part to SUMA's campaign as reported in the story above.)

President Schlosser also reaffirmed that SUMA has joined with SARM as a full partner in the Clearing the Path initiative. He urged delegates to attend Clearing the Path workshops being planned for March and April at various locations around

the province. The workshops will be a joint effort by SUMA and SARM. Schlosser also reviewed the activities of the Education Tax Coalition, including the coalition's call for additional funding in the 2006 Budget to bring the province's share of K-12 funding to 50 per cent this year, rising to at least 60 per cent in 2008.

"The members of the coalition see this proposal as a reasonable response to address the growing public pressure for school tax relief," Schlosser said. "It is a

positive alternative to the illegal withholding of school taxes, a practice that SUMA cannot support."

President Schlosser concluded by thanking former Government Relations Minister Len Taylor for his work with SUMA in the portfolio, and welcomed the new Minister, Harry Van Mulligan. "We in SUMA look forward to working with you to help resolve the issues we face as communities, and as a province," Schlosser said.



# President's Message

SUMA's 101st annual convention is now behind us, and an eventful one it was. One of the highlights was Premier Calvert's announcement that the provincial government will top up revenue sharing program for 2005 with \$10 million, with the same amount added to the base for the 2006-2007 budget year. He also announced a one-time, \$32 million program for 2006 to help municipalities address their infrastructure needs. The additional money is welcome news. Just as welcome was the Premier's statement that his government had listened to the arguments that SUMA members have been putting forward for the past several months regarding the need for additional revenue sharing. In his speech Premier Calvert referred to our convention theme, "Dawning of a New Direction." I hope his announcement marks another step toward our goal of a predictable long-term revenue sharing program.

Two days before the convention began the Premier shuffled his Cabinet, moving Government Relations Minister Len Taylor to Health, and moving Finance Minister Harry Van Mulligan into Government Relations. During the convention I had the opportunity to thank Minister Taylor for his good work over the past two years, and to welcome our new Minister to the GR portfolio. I am glad to have the opportunity to do so again in this column.



The Premier also announced that the \$55 million School Tax Credit will continue in 2006, but that more work needs to be done to craft a longer-term solution to the education tax issue. SUMA is one of the six members of the Education Tax Coalition which has been asking the provincial government to reduce the education property tax burden through additional provincial funding for K-12 education. During my opening remarks to the convention I repeated our position that our proposal to bring the province's share to 50 per cent in 2006 and to 60 per cent in 2008 is reasonable. I also stated that our proposal is a positive alternative to the illegal withholding of school taxes, a practice that SUMA cannot support.

Although many of us had gathered in late January to celebrate the life of our friend and colleague, Mike Badham, the convention gave many more of us an opportunity to share a moment of silence in his honour, and to view photos depicting all facets of his remarkable life. I am privileged to have known and worked with Mike.

## Donations accepted for Mike Badham scholarship fund

SUMA members were shocked and saddened by the death of past President Mike Badham, who was killed in a two-vehicle collision outside Regina on January 23rd. Many SUMA members, along with hundreds of others whom Mike touched during his life, gathered a few days later to celebrate his life at the Conexus Arts Centre.



Mike Badham, 1942-2006

Now, the University of Regina has announced it is accepting donations for a scholarship fund established to honour Badham's memory. The Mike Badham Scholarship Fund for Education will be awarded to students entering the Faculty of Education. Financial need will be the main criteria in selecting recipients, but the applicant's volunteer involvement and commitment to their community will also be considered in the adjudication process. A 50-50 draw held during Convention raised \$762 for the scholarship fund.

Donations to the Fund can be made by phone, 306-337-2521 or toll free 1-877-779-4723; by email, [urcampaign@uregina.ca](mailto:urcampaign@uregina.ca); or online at [www.uregina.ca/campaign/giving](http://www.uregina.ca/campaign/giving).

Education was a lifelong passion for Badham, who received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Regina and a Bachelor of Education from the University of Saskatchewan, before obtaining a Master of Education from Wayne State University in Michigan. Badham had a 31-year career in education, both as a mathematics teacher and a principal and vice-principal in Regina high schools.

Badham was serving in his fifth term as the City Councillor for Ward 1 at the time of his death, at the age of 64. For more information on the Mike Badham Scholarship Fund for Education, contact Darlene Freitag, External Relations, University of Regina, 585-4446.



"Are you sure these are my ad-libs?" Convention Chair Terr Alm received regular updates to his notes during his visits to the office on-site.

## Executive Director

My first experience of a SUMA convention as your Executive Director is still fresh in my mind as I write this. Of course, I had attended conventions before as a municipal government employee. However, being involved in the planning and preparing for an event of this size, and then seeing it play out from behind the scenes, is a very different experience. It was exhilarating, demanding, tiring, and in the end, a very satisfying experience.

That the convention went well is to the credit of the members of the Organizing Committee led by Terry Alm, and to the SUMA office staff, many of whom took on new roles and extra responsibilities to ensure the convention would be a success. I offer my heartfelt thanks to them for digging in to overcome sometimes difficult circumstances and for their cheerful, hard work during the hectic last few weeks leading up to the convention. SUMA members can be proud of the team that works on their behalf in the office.

By good planning or good luck, Convention 2006 turned out to be an opportunity to say "Thank You" to our former Minister, Len Taylor, for his dedicated work in the Government Relations portfolio over the past two-and-a-half years. Convention also gave

us a chance to network with our new minister, Harry Van Mulligan.

Elsewhere in this issue, President Don talks about the Premier's announcement of additional revenue sharing funding and the \$32 million Community Share 2006 program. As significant as these are, for me, one of the highlights of the Premier's speech was his recognition of what we have been saying for many months; that urban municipal governments need more support from the provincial and federal governments in order to create the livable, sustainable communities we all desire. During his speech Premier Calvert stated that his government is ready to begin developing an "urban agenda", which is a major step forward. I look forward to working with the SUMA Board, the Executive Committee and Minister Van Mulligan to develop an urban agenda that positively influences provincial policy and funding decisions for the benefit of the residents of Saskatchewan's villages, towns and cities.

We kicked off the year with an exciting convention pointing us in new directions. I expect the rest of the year will be equally exciting.



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### SUMA EXECUTIVE

Mayor Don Schlosser, President  
Mayor Phil DeVos, Vice-President, Cities  
Mayor Allan Earle, Vice-President, Towns  
Mayor Barry Gunther, Vice-President, Villages, Resort Villages and Northern Municipalities

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Northern Director ..... Joe Hordyski  
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# Senator Campbell addresses delegates

“We can’t have six per cent property tax increases while senior governments are having surpluses,” was how Senator Larry Campbell concluded his keynote speech to the 2006 convention. “When we see senior governments with huge surpluses while municipalities struggle, they have to think about opportunities lost at the municipal level. I totally agree with the idea of revenue sharing; it’s not about more taxation, but about sharing what we have.”

Needless to say, Campbell, a former mayor of Vancouver, received a sympathetic hearing from SUMA delegates for his views on the financial status of the three orders of government, among other topics he covered during his keynote address.

“It is critical to recognize that the resources that are filling Saskatchewan’s coffers now are not renewable,” the Senator said. “It is important that these monies go back into our communities to make them better places to live”

During his speech Campbell told the delegates he plans to retire to Dubuc. Having married a Saskatchewan girl, and having come here every year since 1983, there’s so much here that says “stay”, he stated. However, he also confided that his greatest fear is that Dubuc will not have the basic infrastructure that will allow him to stay.

“Instead of writing communities off, we need to ask ‘What can grow here?’”, he said.



“Regard me as your extra Senator, because eventually this is where I’m going to live,” Larry Campbell told delegates.

## Resolved to see major changes



SUMA Director and Saskatoon City Council member Donna Birkmaier chaired the Resolutions session during Convention.

Voting delegates at Convention quickly resolved to support all 22 of the resolutions place before them, including a late addition on “Exploring Enhanced Uranium Refining in Saskatchewan” sponsored by the SUMA Board of Directors. This resolution, following January’s successful Nuclear Forum sponsored by SUMA, SARM and the U. of Regina, aims to see the Provincial Government create a process to “identify the economic, environmental and social impacts as they relate to enhanced uranium refining” – a challenge previewed in the pro and con

debate on the Convention floor.

The key resolution again dealt with “Regaining \$30 Million as a Step Toward a Long-term Revenue Sharing Plan.” Given the new funding commitments made by Premier Lorne Calvert earlier at Convention, President Don Schlosser won support for a “friendly” amendment to have the resolution now focus on 2007 instead of 2006.

Other sweeping resolutions include one on “Revamping the Property Assessment System,” asking for a Provincial Government task force to look at

the property assessment system as a whole. Another was “Requesting Direct Municipal Representation in the School Grant Review Process.” This would require representation from the city sector, the town and village sector and northern municipalities on the committee reviewing the Department of Learning’s Foundation Grant Formula for school boards.

The booklet recording resolution outcomes, including minor amendments, is being sent to municipal offices along with this newsletter, and also posted on the SUMA website.



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# Reports from the sectors

## City sector looks to the future

Following a brief recap of both Provincial and Federal Cabinet changes in the preceding 72 hours, city delegates received further clarification from Government Relations Deputy Minister Harvey Brooks about the funding commitments announced by Premier Calvert. Brooks emphasized the unconditional nature of the new capital and additional Revenue Sharing funding, noting that the latter would be again split proportionately among city, other urban, rural and northern pools.

Delegates also reviewed upcoming Convention resolutions, with most discussion focused on the newly-added pitch for "Exploring Enhanced Uranium Refining in Saskatchewan," which was addressed by Saskatoon Councillor Terry Alm on behalf of the SUMA Board.

City representatives also discussed the need for close coordination between the City Mayors' Caucus (CMC) and the SUMA Executive. This is currently achieved with Yorkton Mayor Phil DeVos serving both as SUMA Vice-President for Cities and Chair of the CMC. Although a majority of delegates did not support the idea of allowing only city mayors to become candidates for the Cities' V-P position (in Executive elections at next year's Convention), it was acknowledged that any Vice-President for Cities should attend CMC meetings.

Also considered, without clear resolution, was whether provision should be made for any CMC chair to have a position on the SUMA Board or Executive

Committee. Currently, the four largest cities have a total of six representatives on the Board, but none on the Executive. While two city mayors now serve on the Executive, as President and V-P for Cities, previous Executives have not included any city mayors. Any formal adjustments would require a change in SUMA bylaws.

## Town sector shares issues and ideas

With SUMA's Vice President of Towns, Mayor Allan Earle leading the discussion, town sector delegates discussed issues such as the Education Tax Coalition, the newly implemented Municipalities Act, and the SUMA/SARM partnership on Clearing the path.

Concerns regarding the fairness of the Foundation Operating Grant for schools were raised, and SUMA was urged to become part of the ongoing review process. Questions regarding the onerous nature of environmental assessments for proposed infrastructure programs were discussed.

SUMA representatives indicated that they will be pursuing the long-standing issue of the 25% hold-back fee on fine revenue generated in communities, as well as looking at other sources whereby municipalities can generate revenue. An interesting idea regarding succession planning for municipal administrators and employees was proposed, and requests were made for SUMA to play a role in facilitating recruitment and retention best practices to help alleviate an impending skills shortage in the municipal sector.

Finally, Mayor Sharon Armstrong, one of SUMA's

representatives on the SAMA Board of Directors, gave a detailed report on SAMA's operations. Specifically, she discussed the income approach which will be implemented by SAMA in the future. Mayor Armstrong addressed several questions regarding future changes to the assessment system.

## Revenue sharing, agreements highlight village sector discussions

Revenue Sharing, the Education Tax Coalition, the Clearing the Path initiative, infrastructure programs, policing and protective services and the cost of building and operating recreational facilities all came up for discussion. In the Open Dialogue portion of the meeting much of the discussion focused on the reliance on "permanent" populations as the main factor in distributing Revenue Sharing funding. A significant amount of discussion focused on finding other sets of criteria suitable for specific circumstances. For example, property assessment values might be an alternative criterion for resort communities, but not for other villages.

Barry Gunther, SUMA's Vice President, Villages, reported that while some municipalities have good working agreements on asset sharing, staff sharing, landfill sharing, etc., with one or more other municipalities, most do not have good working agreements in place. Gunther agreed that SUMA would identify as many strong existing agreements between or among municipalities as it could find. These agreements will be shared as best practices other municipalities can follow.



The Mayor of La Ronge, Joe Hordyski, will represent the North on the SUMA Board.

The meeting also gave the go-ahead for further work on the self-insurance file, with the hope that a plan can be devised which offers SUMA members more structured and stable insurance costs.

## Northern sector meeting

The main item of business was the election of a new representative from the north to the SUMA Board of Directors. President and Chairman of New North Dale McAuley chaired the meeting, which brought two nominations, Mayor of La Ronge Joe Hordyski and Councillor Greg Ross from Pinehouse.

After short speeches from the candidates, Chief Executive Officer Al Loke supervised the election, which saw Mayor Hordyski elected by a close margin.

Following his election Mayor Hordyski responded to concerns from the floor that the per-capita funding of the Community Share 2006 program will not make much difference in northern communities. Hordyski said he will advocate for a different funding formula for northern Saskatchewan.



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# Highlights from education sessions

## New directions in local policing

Always a SUMA favorite, delegates packed the room to hear Murray Sawatsky and Dave Horn from Saskatchewan Justice discuss new directions in local policing.

Horn, the Director for the Safer Communities and Neighborhoods (SCAN) Investigation Unit, gave an in-depth presentation on how that program has been highly effective in cleaning up problem neighborhoods around the province. SCAN's aim is to improve community safety by targeting and, if necessary, shutting down residential and commercial buildings and land that are habitually used for illegal activities such as producing, selling or using illegal drugs, prostitution, solvent abuse or the unlawful sale and consumption of alcohol. When the investigation unit is called, they look at the reliability of the claim, determine if it warrants further investigation, and then, if necessary, receive an order of the court to shut the property down or serve notice to the landlord. Although Horn states that there have been more unfounded than founded claims, the program has been highly effective.

With an increase in gang activity in the province, there is a provision within the legislation that can allow investigators to target "fortified buildings" that cause public safety concerns and remove such fortifications. Fortifications can include bullet-proof glass, explosive resistant materials, armor to reinforce doors, and bars on windows or doors. Horn's presentation included before-and-after pictures of problem properties and neighborhoods that have been fully restored in the relatively short timeframe the legislation has been around. To report a property to the SCAN unit call 1-866-51-SAFER (72337).

The session was rounded out with Executive Director Murray Sawatsky from the Law Enforcement Services branch of Saskatchewan Justice. Sawatsky gave a brief run-down of some initiatives underway in the department such as the Pawn Property Recording System to

crack down on the sale of stolen property, specific chronic offender programs such as the vehicle theft strategy in Regina, the Project Hope initiative to address the grown crystal meth issue and the additional 29 officers to fulfill the 1999 election promise of providing an additional 200 officers.

## New directions in watershed management

"We have some of the best data graveyards in Canada, but we very rarely turn that data into knowledge," said Dr. Terry Hanley, Director of Monitoring and Assessment at the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority (SWA). However, he shared with delegates the ground-breaking, just released "State of the Watershed Reporting Framework," a 93-page full-colour report available from SWA.

Dr. Hanley observed that "Saskatchewan does really well on the supply side but we've only recently started looking at the

*Developing an information base is one of the challenges of getting the most value from a Geographic Information System. "Once you have your GIS system running, sit your Mayor down and tell him to pour everything he knows into the system, so it can be saved for as long as you need it," advised Todd Stone of CGIS Spatial Solutions during the new directions in municipal software session.*



demand side, including water conservation. Integrated water management is really about having a business plan for how we allocate water services."

One of the "biggest root causes" of our problems, Hanley told delegates, is that we have an economic system independent of ecological systems. "In Alberta, water management works because it is being championed by the economic departments," he said.

Gord Will, Manager of Policy and Legislation at SWA, gave further emphasis to a soon to be released Water Conservation Plan, noting that "government needs to lead by example," including greater attention to

water efficiency in Provincial buildings and parks. "We don't want to start selling water as a resource, but the price should reflect the true costs of treatment and distribution," Will said.

Testimonials to the value of municipal involvement in watershed planning were provided by Kennedy Mayor Elmer Molnar and John Van Eaton, Chair of the Pipestone Watershed Advisory Committee. "If we can all cheer for the Sask. Roughriders," Van Eaton urged, "what's wrong with working together on watershed issues?"

*Continued on Page 6*

## Awards highlight President's Banquet

Awards presentations were centre stage during the President's Banquet on Tuesday evening during convention. Several municipal employees received Meritorious Awards for their service to their employers, and for their volunteer activities in their communities. Honourary awards were given to a number of municipal politicians who have served in elected office for 20 years or more.



Keith Schneider received SUMA's Scoop Lewry Award for his years of service to the municipal sector with the provincial government and with SUMA.

Keith Schneider received the Scoop Lewry Award, both for his 13 years as SUMA's Executive Director and for his previous career working for the provincial government in the municipal area. In receiving the award Schneider particularly noted the importance of his family's support during his career.

The Life Membership Award went to Gordon Lee Hall, Mayor of St. Walburg and currently a



Elaine Brodie of Burstall was one of the Meritorious Award recipients.

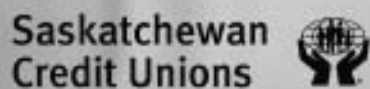
member of SUMA's Board of Directors. After accepting the award Hall recounted how his earlier career took him away from Saskatchewan. Of his return he said, "I came back to this province because I needed to give back to this place to which I owed so much."



Gordon Lee Hall, SUMA Director and Mayor of St. Walburg, received the SUMA Life Membership Award for his many years of service to his community and to SUMA. "I accept this life membership with the understanding that the glass is still half full, and I intend to keep on," Hall told delegates at the President's Banquet.

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## EDUCATION SESSIONS

continued from Page 5

Questions focused on whether regulators are going overboard in restricting shoreline developments in cottage country. Dr. Hanley had argued that “we emphasize large point-source impacts on watersheds and miss non-point sources like agricultural run-off.” But he noted that a Manitoba study had estimated that agricultural sources contributed only 12% of the pollution flowing into Lake Winnipeg. “The vast majority of our lakes in Saskatchewan are in good shape,” Hanley concluded.

## New directions in water technology

Sean Bayer, Approvals Engineer for Sask. Environment, told delegates that “there cannot be any more secrets when it comes to protecting the public” from threats to water quality.” He also observed that “the buzzword these days is a multiple-barrier approach to protecting drinking water.”

Bayer reviewed the new Waterworks System Assessment requirements which came out of the Provincial Government’s Drinking Water Strategy, put in place after the experiences of Walkerton, Ontario in 2000 and North Battleford, Saskatchewan in 2001. He noted that the future would likely see different water treatment methods applied in different parts of the province,

and he discussed some of these new approaches before fielding questions from delegates.

## New directions in energy conservation

Money is the great motivator when it comes to making changes to encourage energy conservation, said Terry White of the province’s office of energy conservation and Will Oddie of Kelln Solar in the education session on that topic.

“It’s important to take energy conservation measures for philosophical and environmental reasons, but the motivator is money,” said White. “For example, new, better lights installed in the SARM office will be paid back in four years, and there’s no 60-cycle hum,” he added.

During his talk White noted that the Town of Bengough saved \$5,000 from its swimming pool costs last season by installing a solar heating system. He expects another three communities will install the system this year. He also demonstrated how a thermal-sensing camera can identify where energy is leaving a building, making it easier to choose energy-saving actions.

Will Oddie urged delegates to focus on energy efficiency, noting that one dollar spent on efficiency is worth from three to five dollars in energy generation costs. There are also the hidden costs of fossil fuel use, he added,



“Installing a solar water heating system by a swimming pool offers the fastest payback on a community’s investment,” Will Oddie of Kelln Solar told delegates in the Energy Conservation education session.

in the production of greenhouse gases and air pollution.

Oddie lamented the current state of the housing construction industry, stating that from an energy perspective, the houses being built now are appalling. “We know that energy is getting more expensive, but the houses being built now will need a retrofit in 10 to 15 years. Municipalities can take leadership in this area by building some renewables into every new development. As a simple example, smart design would allow for future renewable energy installations such as solar panels.”

Regarding solar pools, Oddie said the payback in energy savings is five to seven years. Bengough, he noted, cut its energy bill for



During the Disaster Planning session a representative from Saskatchewan Health said governments use the 1919 flu pandemic for disaster planning purposes, but viruses can spread more quickly now because cities are larger, families have more contacts with other people in their daily activities and travel is more common.

heating its pool by two-thirds last year. Although the Town of Assiniboia was only able to operate its system for five days, boiler operation was reduced.

## New directions in tourism

“If we’re not aware of what there is to see and do in the province, then we can’t tell our friends and relatives who are visiting what there is to do and see,” West Central Tourism’s Mark England told more than 150 delegates attending the New Directions in Tourism session.

A rapidly growing economic opportunity, tourism destinations such as the Temple Gardens Mineral Spa in Moose Jaw, or the T-Rex Discovery Center near Eastend are extremely important to our communities. But if you have friends and relatives come into town, do you know where to take them? The five tourism regions and the two major cities have banded together to put in place the Resident Awareness Campaign that will be launched later this year.

Saskatchewan Tourism’s Joe Chad showed delegates how their communities can participate in the program by purchasing discounted advertisements in forms ranging from small magazine ads to massive billboards on major thoroughfares. But it’s more than just advertising, says Chad, “Listen to your customers. The clientele for fishing camps has changed over the last 20 years from guys who maybe did a bit of fishing; or maybe not, to family groups looking for a getaway experience.”

It’s all about featuring the might and beauty of Saskatchewan’s tourism destinations says Kerri Martin, Marketing Manager from the Southwest Tourism Region. Martin is in charge of the cooperative marketing program in the southwest, whereby communities can, by participating in the cooperative, have a portion of their marketing costs covered through a small grant. Hoping to ride the wave of momentum created by Saskatchewan’s Centennial, the Southwest region is aggressively pursuing a cooperative marketing approach this year. For more information on how your community can become involved, go to the Saskatchewan Tourism website at [www.sasktourism.com](http://www.sasktourism.com).

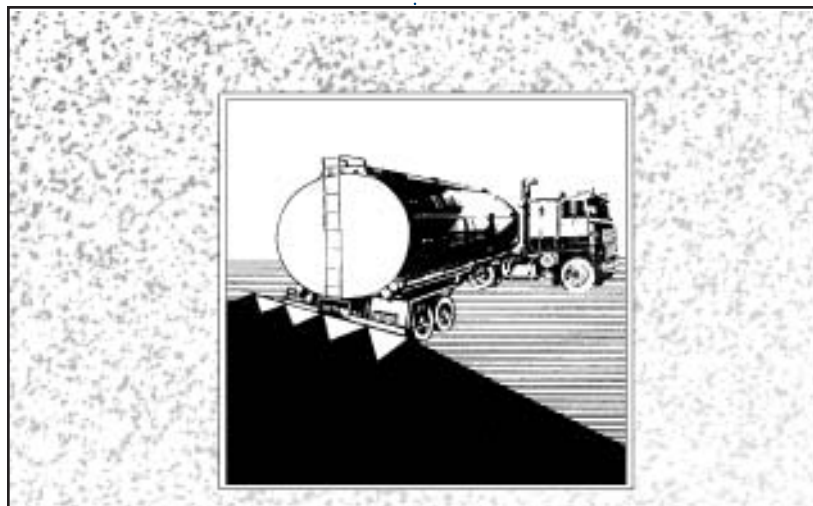


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## New trade show venue draws praise

By Terry Alm, 2006 Convention Organizing Committee

“The best municipal trade show we’ve ever been involved with,” is how one long-time exhibitor described the 2006 version of the annual show. Exhibitors and delegates agreed, the show offered plenty of room, making it easy for exhibitors to show their wares, and for delegates to circulate through the trade show area.

“Congratulations to you for an outstanding job,” another exhibitor wrote on the evaluation sheet handed out by the SUMA staff who organized the show.

Delegate evaluations were also generally positive, although a few suggested the trade show break on Monday afternoon made the day unnecessarily long. Other evaluations noted that the coffee areas were easily accessible and well-organized. Having the entire show on one floor was another positive feature noted by many delegates in their evaluations.

The 2006 SUMA Trade Show was a tremendous success; our organizing staff and all of the 168 exhibitors are to be commended for an outstanding contribution to our 101st convention. Let’s build on this year’s success and aim to exceed it in 2007.



Shauna Steffensen (right) and Tuana Kupiec fielded questions about SUMA's group benefits program in the trade show area.



The SaskTel-sponsored Internet Café was a popular stop for many delegates.



When he wasn't busy receiving the Scoop Lewry Award, former SUMA executive director Keith Schneider was playing with the big toys in the trade show.

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## Recycling task force finalizes new directions

SUMA's Task Force on Regional Waste Recycling reported to Convention on key achievements and recommended directions in their Final Report. The Task Force had been mandated two years ago to look at province-wide solutions to waste recycling challenges, including convention resolutions calling for programs for paper product stewardship, glass recycling and household hazardous wastes.

After helping to gain \$700,000 in one-time funding from the Provincial Government last year to cover paper recycling deficits of regional waste management authorities, the Task Force pushed for the planning of a Multi-Material Recycling Program for paper, plastics, glass and tin. An Advisory Committee was set up last fall by Sask. Environment to try to meet their commitment to have a program plan by this April. The Task Force also advised on the



Representatives at the various booths on "Recycling Way" fielded many questions during the trade show.

creation of separate programs for waste paint and computers ("e-waste"), both scheduled to be launched this year.

Regional cooperation was also promoted by the Task Force, both within and beyond the incorporated regional waste management authorities. The

position of the Task Force was that all viable municipal recycling operations should be accommodated under any new programs, including funding programs, but regional cooperation would enable municipalities to fully access their allocated capital funding under the "regional" criteria of

the federal New Deal infrastructure program.

Although the Task Force has completed its mandate, the Environment Committee of the SUMA Board of Directors will continue to monitor progress and involve council members in policy development on an "as needed" basis. More immediately, the Task Force won support from Convention delegates for a final resolution that "until a Multi-Material Recycling Program is established, Sask. Environment should fully compensate regional authorities and municipalities which recycle paper, plastics, glass or tin, based on the collection data compiled in conjunction with the Assoc. of Regional Waste Management Authorities of Sask. (ARWMAS)."

The full report of the Task Force can be found on the SUMA website at [www.suma.org](http://www.suma.org).

## New directions in community development

Although it's now over 100 years old, Saskatchewan is still relatively young in comparison to most of the continent. As the global economy changes and our province is forced to adapt, we're always prompted to look to new directions in developing our communities.

Doug Howorko and Sandra Blyth were up first to discuss Action Southwest, an innovative strategy that re-thinks the way that communities in the region view development. Formed as a broad coalition of business, local governments, tourism, and regional economic development authorities, Action Southwest ventured to formulate a plan for development, recognizing that a new project in an adjacent area holds a whole host of benefits for all communities within the area.

Four committees examined the region's strengths in energy, manufacturing, agribusiness and tourism, and then developed strategies and action plans to begin development. This process

resulted in the creation of over 30 possible industry initiatives. Phase Two involves implementing four of the initiatives, currently underway.

Part and parcel with the future economic success of our communities is the rejuvenation of the population base. Many of our communities have been shrinking for the past few decades. James Carr, President and CEO of the Business Council of Manitoba, says that immigration will once again play a key role in Saskatchewan's prosperity.

Carr discussed the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) which was signed in 1998 between the Province and Ottawa. A similar program has recently been announced in Saskatchewan and Minister Pat Atkinson welcomed the discussion. The PNP allows the provinces to recruit immigrants according to their particular economic and demographic realities. The Federal Government maintains control



Doug Howorko, Sandra Blyth and Jim Carr discussed actions communities can take to spur development and attract new residents.

over the final granting of a visa and all the other health checks, but the Province has control over the selection process.

A successful immigration program needs to have the "political sting" removed and Carr suggests getting municipalities involved in the process is a good starting point. This way, the communities themselves can determine what skill set and cultural background is necessary for integration in the community. In addition, being involved in the immigration recruitment process can be perceived as part of an overall strategy, such as Action Southwest, to invigorate a particular community or region.

Aside from "hard" infrastructure needs such as housing, English instruction, good public transit and competitive wages, a welcoming community is perhaps the most important element to recruiting and retaining newcomers. Carr says that before a community can get involved in immigration, it must be prepared to accept people that are different. People will not succeed in the community if they feel isolated.

Imagine moving somewhere that you have never seen before, don't know the people, everyone looks different, practices a different religion, has strange social practices, speaks a different language and has a long established community. Couple that feeling of isolation with the knowledge that none of those people want you there and it's a recipe for failure, says Carr. Minister Atkinson, who is planning on welcoming over 5000 new immigrants in the coming years, agrees, and says that projecting Saskatchewan as a welcoming community for immigrants will make all the difference to the new program.

Much like the beginning of the 20th century, Saskatchewan is showing signs of prosperity. In order to build on that momentum, our cities, towns and villages that want to succeed will need to look beyond our borders to re-energize our population. As parting words, Carr advised "Open up your minds to immigration... You (Saskatchewan) have every reason to be proud of what you have built; let's share it with the world."



Healthy Living Services Minister Graham Addley answered questions about addition treatment services during the Dialogue on Health.



## Leadership forum

Leadership is made up of many things, the speakers at the Leadership Forum told delegates on Tuesday afternoon at SUMA's 101st annual convention. In large part, they agreed, it boils down to accountability and taking responsibility.

"Accountability is basically the chain of command," said Bruce Davidson of Concerned Walkerton Citizens, as he described the breakdown of accountability in the Walkerton tainted water tragedy. "It was the blind leading the blind, and it undermined confidence in any government service. In the case of operating a water service, leadership is achieved through acquiring knowledge and adopting best practices to develop a professional water management

team. It's going to cost money to do it, but it's going to cost you a hell of a lot more if you don't," Davidson stated.

Regina City Manager Bob Linner noted a remark that Davidson had made earlier in the day, that there does not have to be malice for there to be failure. Sometimes, he said, managers and their elected leaders look too much in the rear-view mirror, and are not willing to stay the course to implement what they think are the right policies.

"This is not building an environment that will attract the best and the brightest to public service," said Linner. "Standing on ground where you have to say no is difficult, but you have to say no."



"Dealing with non-potable water adds three or four hours to your daily routine." – Bruce Davidson, Concerned Walkerton Citizens



Regina City Manager Bob Linner told the Leadership Forum that mistakes based on judgement are acceptable. "Mistakes caused by dishonesty or lack of fidelity are not acceptable."

Linner said that while the challenges facing local government leaders have changed, the leadership role has not fundamentally changed. He described the New Deal funding flowing to municipalities as a statement of commitment.

"What are you going to do with that commitment? You're going to be asked to make choices. I think we need to step back and ask ourselves, 'What are we doing to ensure we're making decisions wisely?'"

## Dialogue with Environment Minister

"I often think of Saskatchewan as one big municipality," said new Environment Minister John Nilson. "We're a community with one big global community. Municipalities are our leaders in acting locally. You prod us, and we'll prod you." Delegates prodded Minister Nilson with almost two dozen questions. Several were answered by his senior officials since he had had only one weekend to read their briefing books.

Most responses simply confirmed initiatives already underway, including soon to be launched

waste paint and computer recycling programs, the commitment to make some announcement by April on plans for a Multi-Material Recycling Program (for paper, plastics, glass and tin) and the review of whether urban parks in Weyburn and North Battleford should receive Provincial funding. Other responses acknowledged that persistent problems had still not been resolved, including inconsistent enforcement of landfill regulations and assessments on leased properties within Provincial parks.

Wearing his other new hat as Minister responsible for Sask Power, Nilson was receptive to further exploring co-generation opportunities for electrical power, but unreceptive to the suggestion that Saskatchewan's rate review process is inadequate. He said that clean coal technology seemed better suited to Saskatchewan's situation than nuclear power generation. He acknowledged that climate change issues and watershed management practices were areas deserving greater attention.



John Nilson faced many questions in his first dialogue session as Environment Minister.

## Dialogue with the Minister of Rural Development

Two days before the opening of the 101st SUMA Convention, the Provincial Cabinet Shuffle saw Deputy Premier Clay Serby maintain his current role, however with a slight change to his department's title. Now the Minister of Regional Economic and Cooperative Development, Serby made it quite clear that enhancing the current Regional Economic Development Authority (REDA) system will be a top priority in the coming months.

Serby is also hopeful that additional dollars will accompany the new title, particularly the REDA Enhancement Fund, which has been virtually eliminated over the past few years by budget cuts. This fund was intended to provide "seed money," said Serby, and in order to be effective it will need a "significant injection." Serby also made it clear that this fund was not intended to build infrastructure, but to provide marketing and feasibility studies. He suggested municipalities interested in economic development collaborate with their local REDAs to determine strategic areas to spend the newly announced Community Share 2006 funding.

Serby commended SUMA for partnering with SARM on the Clearing the Path initiative. He said the Sector Specific Planning approach, along with streamlined regulations and the attitude enhancement the report recommends, will be augmented by an enhanced REDA system. He also noted a growing trend to viewing economic growth in neighboring communities as positive, rather than as competition. Serby jokingly offered a Deputy Minister position to one delegate who said, "A job in Saskatchewan is a job in Saskatchewan. I don't care if it's in La Ronge or in Maple Creek."

Retaining skilled labour and highways were other topics raised, prompting one delegate to suggest that "the road is so bad, people can't get out (of town). Maybe we have to quit fixing the roads to keep people here!" to a chorus of laughter. Serby said that he has heard the concerns and will be suggesting budget increases in his department. He also said that there are currently over 200 economic development project proposals on his desk and he is encouraged by what he sees in the proposals.



During the jammed-to-the-doors Government Relations dialogue session, the new Minister, Harry Van Mulligan, heard about the cultural and language difficulties doctors from South Africa face in writing the assessment of their credentials. Van Mulligan states that while Saskatchewan has had overall success in recruiting more doctors in recent years, less than one-fifth of them have settled in rural areas.



"As far as I'm concerned, multinational money is welcome in Saskatchewan, and the more the merrier," Industry and Resources Minister Eric Cline told delegates in the Industry and Resources dialogue session.

The Great Daylight Savings Time debate briefly flared during the session when a delegate from Nipawin urged the Minister to consider switching to DST. Another delegate vigorously shook her head. Cline suggested the two reach a consensus and then come to him with a request.



# Cash fuels good will hunting at Cabinet Bearpit

Maybe it was the injection to the revenue sharing pool, maybe it was the one-time capital cash bag, or maybe it was just a little carryover from the Board Hospitality Night the evening before, but the 2006 SUMA Convention Bearpit was a little less confrontational than in years past. Delegates had their chance to ask questions of the recently reshuffled Cabinet on Wednesday morning with a particular focus on Saskatchewan's transportation infrastructure. Highways and Transportation Minister Eldon Lautermilch said rejuvenating our highways system is always a challenge due to the amount of roads the Province needs to maintain. He did indicate that the Highways budget may get additional attention this year.

Regina Mayor Pat Fiacco suggested to the Premier that a Saskatchewan team travel to

Ottawa to meet with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Cabinet, with municipalities playing a key role. Although the Premier didn't commit to Mayor Fiacco's proposal on the spot, he was warm to the idea, and would discuss it further with his Cabinet colleagues. Municipalities made great strides with the previous Paul Martin government, and Mayor Fiacco stated that a meeting is necessary as soon as possible to maintain the momentum achieved in recent years.

In keeping with the plenary session New Directions in Community Development, Moose Jaw's Jim Carr asked Minister Pat Atkinson what municipalities can do to help them work faster to attract immigrants to Saskatchewan. He also asked what measures the Province is taking to certify immigrants seeking professional credentials more quickly. Atkinson said a major contribution would be to provide warm and welcoming municipalities and to keep an open mind to immigration. Along the same line was a suggestion that the Province enact the recommendations from the McArthur Report on Skills Training in order to address the province's shortage of skilled labour.

The long-standing issue of reducing energy rates for recreation facilities such as skating rinks and swimming pools was once again put to the



The Bearpit session always draws a full complement of reporters and cameras.



New Finance Minister Andrew Thomson listened, but wasn't giving anything away about future spending plans, during the Bearpit.

Cabinet, and it was déjà vu all over again: no special rates for municipal recreation facilities. The Minister suggested taking an energy conservation approach such as high efficiency furnaces, electronic controls, and solar heating. Wilkie Mayor Wally Lorenz suggested that a higher rate for municipalities selling power into the grid would be one way to recover such costs. The Minister committed to look into the suggestion.

Other topics raised were a proposed PST reduction, crystal meth, closing loopholes in pawn shop legislation, removing the mandatory retirement age and enhancing cooperation and information sharing between Provincial departments. Premier Calvert closed the session by thanking the delegates for their interest and commitment to public service, saying "We're in this together; we all represent the same people."



Culture, Youth and Recreation Minister Glenn Hagel said the province plans to build on the positive momentum created during Centennial year.

## Music, fun and games on Mardi Gras night



Comedian Roman Danylo provided the words, while Battleford Mayor Gail Sack provided the matching gestures...sort of.



Hold 'em! Faces have been deleted to protect the guilty.



Can't have Mardi Gras without music!



"Oops, there goes the New Deal money!" – Good thing Mardi Gras featured play money.



Recently, the Saskatchewan Communications Network has been airing an hour-long documentary chronicling the actions of three rural Saskatchewan communities to revitalize themselves. The documentary was produced by Saskatoon-based Juxtapose Productions.

"We heard about several small communities fighting for survival and wanted to tell their stories," says director McLeay Upshall. "The residents value their small-town lifestyle, and have reinvented their communities with such a contagious attitude, it sparks the imagination."

Upshall had originally intended to profile three communities each with a population under 500, but when Mayor Sharon Dickie of Shaunavon heard about the project, she convinced the company to visit her community. After all, Town Council passed a resolution in 2001 stating the intent to "opt out of the decline of rural Saskatchewan."

### A Boost from Hockey

"We knew once we got the producer and director to come down here, we'd get them," Dickie says. She was right. Besides Ogema and Leroy, the documentary "Resurrection" also profiles Shaunavon.

Following the passage of the resolution, representatives from many organizations and institutions in Shaunavon and area worked together to create a

## A Tale of Three Towns

10-year strategic plan to make the resolution a reality. The town became the national centre of attention during CBC television's Hockey Day In Canada in 2002. It has achieved other important successes.

The town and the Cypress Hills Regional Economic Development Authority have partnered to place a business development officer in the town. The federal government chose Shaunavon for a regional service centre, which is located in the same building with the business development office, the tourism office, the local chamber of commerce and Cypress Agri-Energy, which is planning to build an ethanol plant nearby.

"It was a huge thing drawing all of those together in one place," says Dickie. "The Shaunavon Co-op is building a \$2.5 million shopping centre, so we have many good things going on here. I call it a re-birthing."

### Fire Prompts Revitalization

Mayor Morris Hartman of Leroy figures it was his town's "can-do" attitude that attracted Upshall's attention. For example, when a nearby hog barn was destroyed by fire a few years ago, Stomp Pork Farms invited local investors to participate in the rebuilding process. Investors

snapped up the 100 available shares in the Agri-Pork Co-operative within 48 hours, Hartman recalls. There are now four feeder barns in the area around Leroy.

When the local hospital was closed and slated for demolition, the town purchased the building and converted it to an assisted living residence for seniors. The community was also the only one in the province to receive funding a few years ago to bring high speed internet service to town, and also recently installed a reverse osmosis water treatment system.

"Now there's a greater demand for water, so next year we'll add another cell to our sewage lagoon system. Then we'll be broke!," Hartman laughs.

### Corner Gas First?

Ogema, too, has benefited from the expansion of Saskatchewan's hog industry. Although a local hog operation wasn't mentioned in the documentary, Ogema Mayor Wayne Myren says it is a major player in the local economy. It is one element in the strategic plan that the community developed in 2002.

"It gives us a more targeted approach to where we're going," Myren says. In fact, Ogema now bills itself as the "Job creation

capital of Saskatchewan", having created 90 jobs in the past five years. It plans to create another 75 jobs in the next five years.

Myren is excited that a local fabrication company is branching out into repairing railcars, and recently landed a contract from the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation. The company is also negotiating a repair contract with the Farmer Rail Car Coalition. The town also moved in and renovated a local motel, and Myren can't believe how busy it has been. He's also proud that Ogema this summer received a national sustainable community award from Communities in Bloom, an award which is not tied to community size.

Myren also boasts that his town has the original "Corner Gas", a community-restored British-American Oil company service station from 1925 that draws many visitors. Other heritage-related plans include restoration of a CPR station at the south end of Main Street, complete with a replica wooden water tower. Eventually, the town hopes to have a train shuttling visitors from the station to the Deep South Pioneer Museum Village just north of town.

"You also worry about maintaining what you have, but for the first time in 50 years we have more kids in Kindergarten than in Grade 12, which is a good sign for our community," Myren says.

## Watching the Numbers in Moose Jaw

Moose Jaw City Council recently passed a motion to provide \$10 million toward the construction of a new communiplex, which would replace the aging Civic Centre as the prime recreation complex in the Band City. The fund raising committee established to help make the new communiplex a reality hopes to bring in another five million dollars in private and corporate donations. The committee will also be discussing funding options with the provincial and federal governments.

SUMA Director and Moose Jaw City Councilor Dawn Luhnning will be "watching the numbers very closely" because the City will also have a large stake in the proposed project. In a recent interview, Luhnning talked about the proposal and her role in it as a member of City Council.

UV: How do you pay for this kind of project, given that Moose Jaw also has other projects coming in the near future?

DL: There are a number of projects that need to be budgeted for, and so our capital budget is strained. We will face a difficult budget planning process early in 2006, but I don't foresee it being anything Moose Jaw can't handle.

UV: As a member of City Council, how do you see your

role in taking positions for or against major decisions such as this?

DL: As a City Councilor I have two tools when looking at additional expenditures in our capital and operating budgets - will we have to reduce services or increase taxes. This is the biggest project that Moose Jaw has ever begun planning for, and I'm happy to be a part of it.

I will be watching the numbers very closely with regard to revenue projections, because its major user, the Moose Jaw Warriors, will be operating on a completely different economic model than they are now. Revenues, that currently stay with the Warriors as tenants in the Civic Centre, will in the new facility be used to operate the new facility and in other words, kept by the City of Moose Jaw to operate the new facility.

Another difference for the Warriors is the increase in their rental fee. The Warriors currently pay \$24,000 to the City and the new facility indicates an increase in that cost to \$130,000. The business plan for the new communiplex also predicts a 50 per cent increase in attendance at Warrior games in the new facility. These attendance numbers are a crucial stepping stone to having this new

communiplex operating at the level stated in the business plan. If the revenues/attendance numbers do not hit the target, the business plan doesn't work, and hence there is a possible increase in cost to the City's operating budget in terms of operating the facility. The Warriors have indicated the team wants a new facility, and our administration will work diligently with them to ensure the team can pay the rental fee.

Attendance is an uncertain number. The expenses for the new facility are fixed. You cannot say for certain that attendance will increase and be maintained. I hope it will, but it's not something I can rely on in my position as a Councilor.

There are many due diligences that have to be looked into. For example, the communiplex plan also includes a curling venue and the City's curling operation currently receives a subsidy of approximately \$50,000 from the City in the Hillcrest Sports Centre facility. The business plan indicates a break-even operation. The curling community has to be prepared to forgo that subsidy from taxpayers in a new facility.

UV: Do you think that being involved in the process of seeing a major investment like this through to completion will be



Moose Jaw City Councilor Dawn Luhnning

beneficial to your work with SUMA?

DL: Any kind of planning or challenges involved in developing a community project will be beneficial to my role with SUMA. Our experiences in Moose Jaw can be used by other communities to determine what to do, or, what not to do.

UV: Wayne Gretzky wrote a letter in support of the new communiplex. Are you going to invite him to back up his support with a donation?

DL: The fund raising committee will make the decision in this regard, but having been involved in a fund raising campaign before, I do know that if you ask, all they can say is no! If you don't ask, you never know!



# Leaders explore Saskatchewan's nuclear future

Over 200 urban, rural, business and government leaders congregated in Regina January 16th to 18th in a historic discussion about the possibilities of expanding Saskatchewan's already booming nuclear industry. The conference – Exploring Saskatchewan's Nuclear Future – was hosted by SUMA, SARM and the University of Regina.

"We set out to provide a venue for frank and open discussion about what has typically been a very hot topic," said SUMA President Don Schlosser, "I'm very confident that the people leaving here today have a very firm grasp of the realities of the industry. Sure, there are things that may not be realistic for the province today, but this discussion allows those in attendance to be better informed as to what we can do in the future, and the positive and negative aspects of expanding the industry."

Saskatchewan has benefited greatly from the uranium mining industry, particularly in the far North. Buffalo Narrows Mayor Bobby Woods said that things are different than in the past. Back in the days of the Uranium City projects, industry moved in with little consultation and brought workers in from outside. Today, according to Woods, Northern leaders are involved in decision-making processes and

environmental monitoring, and Northern people are employed at the mines.

Attendees hoping for an immediate expansion of the industry had their hopes dashed when Cameco President Jerry Grandy stated that a nuclear power plant supplying power to the province is not a realistic proposal, at least in the short term. SaskPower Vice president Rick Patrick further confirmed this projection, stating that current reactors are designed for much larger consumption levels than Saskatchewan requires. A suggestion that Saskatchewan could build a plant and sell excess power to the Alberta tar sand projects or to the United States was also rejected, because Saskatchewan's current power grid is unable to transmit the large amount of energy that would be produced.

Public acceptance is a key requirement to any expansion of the nuclear industry. Those in attendance at the banquet heard Kjell Andersson from Sweden's Karita Research discuss the measures his country has taken to involve citizens in the discussion, and how it has proven very useful in alleviating traditional fears of the industry. Doug Fast of Fast Consulting in Saskatoon has been monitoring Saskatchewan people's views on the industry for over a decade, and has found that nearly 80% of those

surveyed are in favor of expanding the industry. The numbers split dramatically, however, when it comes to the concept of nuclear waste disposal.

Ann Coxworth, a renowned environmentalist and scientist, warned those in attendance that there are very negative health concerns relating to nuclear waste disposal and that as a province, we should be very cautious when considering any expansion of our current uranium activities. Coxworth says there is no proven method to deal with spent nuclear fuel, and there is very real potential for the uranium we produce to be used in the manufacture of both weapons of mass destruction and small arms production. Malcolm Wilson from the University of Regina outlined a plan to use current oilfield technology to dispose of the spent fuel. The method preferred by the Nuclear Waste Management Association is to hollow out spaces in the Canadian Shield for storage, for possible re-use later when new technologies make it possible to extract more energy from the spent fuel.

Perhaps the highlight of the conference was the appearance of Patrick Moore, a former founder and member of Greenpeace. While current members of Greenpeace paint Moore as a "turncoat" and claim his



John Young, Mayor of Shellbrook, during one of the Q&A sessions at the conference.

presentation is "industry-run", Moore contends that nuclear power is the only way we can effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Moore also criticized Greenpeace as extremist, saying that – despite his actions in his younger years – he would rather focus on consensus building than on confrontation.

The nuclear debate will continue, especially with uranium mining expanding at a relatively rapid rate in Saskatchewan. However, presenters at the convention urged Saskatchewan to approach the concept with caution, suggesting that the most realistic option, at least in the short term, would be to consider a uranium refining and enhancement plant, much like the one in Blind River. SUMA delegates passed a resolution at the 2006 Convention calling on the Province to provide a venue for further informed discussion on the future uranium industry.

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