



Lynne Bereza, AMM Communications Coordinator

New year, NEW EXECUTIVE

The AMM has a new executive team leading the board of directors this year, with one new member, one returning and one moving up the ladder to the top job. Read on to get to know them all a bit better.

Doug Dobrowolski is new to the job of AMM President, but one might say he has been in training for a decade. After serving one year on the Union of Manitoba Municipalities board, seven years as AMM Central Rural Director, and two years as Rural Vice-President, the RM of Macdonald councillor describes his current position as “my reward. I’ve worked a long time on the board, in municipal politics and in community affairs and this is what I have been working toward.”

His recent acclamation to the President’s chair during the AMM 10th Annual Convention was a strong vote of confidence by the membership in Dobrowolski’s abilities. It is a huge responsibility because, as Dobrowolski notes, “We represent a large body of people throughout the entire province, good people, and we want to do what is right for them.” However, he is confident in his leadership abilities due to a diverse background. “Whether in the workplace, through my community involvement, or serving on many AMM committees, I’ve built my leadership skills over time. I’m to the point now where I am very confident in my abilities to lead this organization.”

Given the challenges facing municipalities and their associations across Canada, that confidence will be needed in the coming year. “Infrastructure is the big one – getting monies out to communities that need to replace their water or sewer systems, their roads, that’s the #1 priority,” notes Dobrowolski, who recently met with Federal Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities **John Baird** to discuss the Building Canada

Fund. But that is not all that is on Dobrowolski’s plate. “I’d like to build stronger relations with our First Nations – that’s very important. I would also like to build a stronger relationship with our Federal Government and expand our federal lobbying efforts.”

Dobrowolski stresses his family’s strong support has enabled him to get this far. Dobrowolski admits “it’s a concern when you’re away from your family – things happen at home and you’re someplace else and trying to do things over the phone. But I sat down with my family (wife Kelly and daughters Liza, 25, Jamie, 23 and Alyssa, 18) and we talked about it and they said, ‘Dad, if that’s what you want to do we are OK with it.’”

I am very confident in my abilities to lead this organization.
– President Doug Dobrowolski

Shirley Kalyniuk is a stickler for detail, and started this interview by pointing out she was being asked the wrong question, which was, “How does it feel to be acclaimed for the second year in a row?” This was incorrect, since she actually faced an election for Urban Vice-President last year, a situation much more familiar to her than being unchallenged. In fact, Kalyniuk takes nothing for granted and came to the recent AMM Annual Convention well-prepared to do some campaigning, which she did right up until nominations closed. She says, “It’s great to be acclaimed, but you can never start thinking you’re the best thing in the world and that nobody else

can do the job like you can.” The long-time Mayor for the Town of Rosburn explains that she has faced opposition all but three times since her first election in 1983 while the rest of the time, “I had to knock on every door in the community!”

While Kalyniuk’s strengths include a strong work ethic and a very positive nature, her real calling card is a genuine love of what she does. “I enjoy politics very much so working with the executive and the board on behalf of all municipalities is very rewarding,” she explains. “It’s a good feeling because I’m doing something for the entire province, not just for myself or my community. And, having the ability to be on the road and meeting all these different people, seeing beautiful scenery across Manitoba that I would probably otherwise not see, is something else I really enjoy.”

Kalyniuk acknowledges there are huge challenges facing the AMM in the coming year. “Infrastructure is probably #1, along with the economy. It doesn’t matter if you’re young or old, a big or small businessperson, it’s affecting everyone in all walks of life.” And while the current economic crisis is weighing on everyone’s minds, Kalyniuk has no time to waste worrying. At the time of this interview she was heading home to prepare for her family of five children, their spouses, and nine grandchildren – eight girls and one boy ranging from 3 months to 24 years – to come for Christmas. Overwhelmed? Not Kalyniuk, who describes their impending arrival with her usual positive, sunny outlook: “I feel very blessed.”

Roger Wilson is nothing if not optimistic. “You see so many people who don’t like their work,” he says. “They go through the motions and stop learning. The older I get and the smarter I get – the more I realize I don’t know very much!” His love of learning is one of the reasons he decided to run for the newly-vacated position of Rural Vice-President. Another reason is, “I just enjoy this kind of work,” he explains. “I’ve been on the board for seven years

A NEW FACE ON THE AMM BOARD



New board member Randy Lints, Reeve, RM of Hamiota

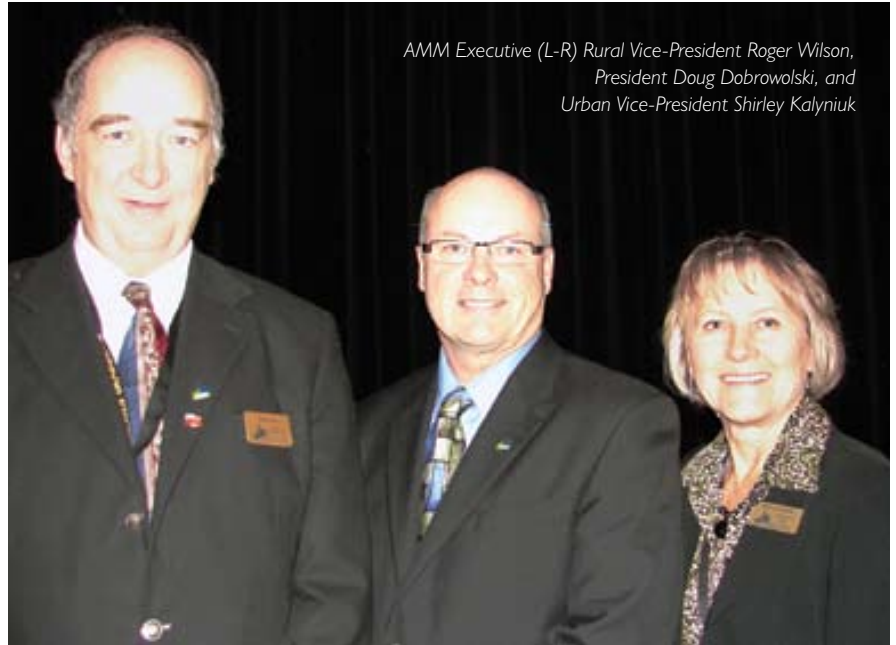
The newest member of the AMM board is **Randy Lints**, Reeve of the RM of Hamiota. Lints has been on the RM of Hamiota Council since 2000, after a previous councillor stepped down.

He explains, "I was kind of appointed. Nobody else came forward, and I always had an interest in it, but thought I would start when Dad was finished." His Dad was on council for 22 years and was Reeve at the time Lints started. Lints went on to do just that, being re-elected to Council in 2002 and then moving up to the Reeve's chair in 2006.

When asked what prompted him to run for the AMM board, Lints explains, "Ever since being on Council I've had an interest in it. We've always been fairly well-represented on the AMM board in our area, and as I learned more on council I started thinking that maybe it was something for which I was ready."

Lints did his homework by talking to former and current directors (who advised him to take the opportunity if it presented itself). He is well aware that in June he may face yet another election. "If I have the support of the people I'll stay as long as I can. I haven't lost any of my interest in local issues, but through sitting on some regional committees I've developed a taste for some larger issues. In the short term, June will roll around fairly quickly and I am just hoping I'm on top of everything."

A grain farmer (with wife Paula and children Alexander, 11 and Emily, 8) and former competitive curler who now teaches curling to elementary school students as one of his volunteer activities, Lints feels one of his strengths is that he has "a good rapport with the public. I feel that I am very approachable, and we're here to represent the people – we need to be willing to do what our members want us to do."



AMM Executive (L-R) Rural Vice-President Roger Wilson, President Doug Dobrowski, and Urban Vice-President Shirley Kalyniuk

and I felt the need to be involved to a greater degree."

When asked what he enjoyed during his seven years as Midwestern Rural Director, Wilson likens it to his experience on council (as Reeve of the RM of Birtle). "You're making decisions based on facts, and the proper information, and like a municipality, if you have a good working relationship with the staff and members, you can make intelligent decisions that make a difference."

Wilson was first elected to council in 1992 and is currently serving his third term as Reeve, a position he takes very seriously. "As a member of council back home, and as a member of the AMM board, what we do affects people's lives – and that is a huge responsibility." He is also well aware of the challenges facing the AMM in the coming year. "I think the challenges will always be the working relationship we have with our member

municipalities and our effectiveness with lobbying the province. I also think we need to have a bit more of a profile federally. We need to remember that lobbying is our main purpose and the challenges around getting results."

Wilson describes serving as Rural Vice-President as a "bit of a juggling act", given the work waiting for him at home. "I've spent 25 years trying to create a good cow farm, and I think we're pretty much there." While Wilson enjoys the help of his Dad on the farm, "That's where the juggling act comes in," he explains. "Dad will be 88 this year, and while he loves doing it, you do have to plan ahead, which isn't always possible. Something breaks when you're away, and you can't deal with it." Despite the time commitment, however, Wilson looks forward to the year ahead. "It's what I enjoy doing, and I hope that I can have a positive impact." ■

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