Strathcona County Living

Keeping you informed

April 2014

Message from your Mayor and County Council

Update on 9 initiatives in 90 days

Mayor Roxanne Carr

Late January marked the end of the first 90 days in the term of your new Council. It also marks the beginning of the next four years, which, I believe, will be time of opportunity, challenge and change for our municipality and region.

To take advantage of the opportunities and meet the challenges ahead, we must, as a municipality, have our house in order. We need to listen and respond to our residents. We must exercise the highest level of fiscal accountability, maximizing our tax dollar to increase our effectiveness and efficiency. Our Council needs to work hard and be innovative to meet the pressures of growth and responsibilities of being a specialized municipality – serving the current and future needs of our rural and urban residents.

The 9 in 90 Day report card is an ongoing report to you about:

- Progress toward the "9 Initiatives in 90 Days"
- How the 27 goals were reached or initiated in the first part of the new Council's term

Connecting with residents

I am dedicated to ensuring effective two-way communication, and to improving communication and engagement with all citizens. We need to develop improved processes to enable citizens to influence change in the County, and to ensure that rural citizens receive equitable engagement.

We have made progress in all of these areas: The Mayor's Report Card will continue as a regular communication, dedicated to reporting progress and gathering feedback from you. Ward 4 Councillor Carla Howatt has been instrumental in developing an E-News update format and process which all elected officials can use to inform and engage you, our residents. Residents who sign up will now receive my twice monthly bulletins. I and several Councillors have sign-up links on our web pages and are hoping residents will connect with us.

I am scheduled to be available publicly throughout April at Heartland Hall and South Cooking Lake contact offices, as well as on the Strathcona County Library Bookmobile, to provide more opportunities to talk with rural residents. The rural Councillors have been invited to join me in this new way of interacting with residents. In April, I will also host monthly public coffee sessions throughout the urban area.

Connecting with residents – Birkebeiner

Empowering resident leadership

True leadership is proactive and responsive and empowers you, the residents to utilize your powerhouse of skills, abilities and energy to make our community a safer, healthier and happier place to live.

In March, residents would have seen a marked change in the format of Council meetings. In an effort to be open and inclusive, this new style of Priorities Committee Meeting will supplement the current quasi-judicial Council Meeting by being more public friendly. It will include discussions formerly held in private workshops between administration and elected officials. This format will encourage more quality deliberation; recommendations arising from these discussions will then come to the Council meetings for decision making. It is our hope that citizens will find these meetings more informational with lively discussion. All meetings are webcast. www.strathcona.ca/webcast

My 9 in 90 Day Plan promised to encourage change in Priority Funding. Council has agreed that change is needed. There is a new format and revised policy. It is my hope the results will include a more effective community development program, focusing on resident participation in the decision process. I will continue to strive for this in the future.

It is important to increase our interface with you, the citizens, so I persist in urging elected officials to hold open houses at every Council meeting. Currently only monthly Priority Committee Meetings have this opportunity.

The former Council's decision to merge some committees was rescinded for one year while the Governance Committee reviews the mandates of committees with the public members' input. I am looking to the public members of advisory committees to take advantage of this opportunity to change the paradigm by:

i) strengthening the public influence in the committees insisting the chairs and vice chairs be public members, and

ii) changing the reporting system to emphasize the power of the committee to review and recommend changes in policies to Council and make significant recommendations that reflect the strategic direction of the County.

Ward 6 Councillor Linton Delainey is foremost in encouraging residents to participate in open houses to effect change.

Elevating customer service - Transit's new mobility bus service

Implementing fiscal accountability

Our municipality needs to be ready for the pressures of regional growth, provincial economics and aging demographics. Only by being more measured and fiscally responsible in our use of taxpayer dollars will we be able to maintain our high quality of infrastructure, services and programming.

In an effort to highlight a focus on our role as watchdogs of spending, while maximizing efficiency, I felt that as the Chief Elected Official, I needed to send a signal. So, in the first 90 days I successfully implemented the following changes:

- Remove political lobby consultants on a $10,000 per month retainer
- Decrease my own salary by five per cent for four years
- Reorganize staff functions in the Mayor's Office to decrease the budgeted full-time positions

Council engaged in a productive budget process that saw a review and analysis of spending to identify potential reductions in our operational and capital budgets. Council supports the ongoing transition to priority-based and multi-year business plans. More time and energy is being delegated to looking at areas that give the County the best return on investment. Ward 1 Councillor Vic Bidzinski continues to champion the Financial Advisory Committee as a great place to have public input into the fiscal sustainability of our community.

I am encouraging Council and administration to find the efficiencies and introduce new and innovative ideas - ideas such as one put forward by Ward 3 Councillor Brian Botterill, asking Council to consider community-owned fiber optic connections that could enhance state-of-the-art Internet access to our residents and act as an excellent partner to the rural Internet enhancement project already under way.

We hope you enjoy this edition

There's more news inside, from Open Data, to an update on the Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy (OSRFS), to the history of the Smith family.

LIVING. REFINED.

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Revisiting the strategic plan with a new Council

Council revisited our strategic plan to incorporate the fresh perspective of new Councillors and solidify the ideas of the incumbents.

The priority areas were clarified and 12 goals fleshed out. Goals were given more detail and an order of implementation. The plan is now in the hands of administration to create a multi-year corporate business plan that will inform department business plans and form the basis of the 2015 budget.

This is the last large piece of the puzzle needed to initiate priority-based business planning, where the focus is on ensuring required services are delivered, constantly searching for efficiencies and reductions, saving and investing for our future needs. New Ward 2 Councillor Dave Anderson and Ward 5 Councillor Paul Smith can attest to the value they got, and gave to the organization though this exercise.

Openness and transparency

As leaders, who are striving to motivate and inspire a workforce of over 1,500 professionals, Council needs to model the behaviour we demand of others. We need to be open, honest and act with integrity at all times.

To that end, Council has wholeheartedly supported recommendations that I have made – and taken initiatives themselves. Councillors' records are now prepared and are accessible online, including committee attendance and expenses. Administration's Open Data Portal initiative will allow us to publicize voting records in a more cost-effective manner.

Our new more comprehensive Councillor reports are a part of official Priorities Committee Meetings and appear on the website. The reports are written to give residents insight and knowledge into what their elected officials do to promote the economic, governance, social, cultural, and environmental well-being of Strathcona County residents. Reports detail activities, and include professional development, and committee and board meetings information. Ward 8 Councillor Fiona Beland-Quest has led efforts to ensure residents are fully aware of her activities undertaken on their behalf.

Elevating customer service

A municipality is not a builder of widgets. It is a provider of services. We must motivate our staff to offer the very best services of any municipality. We need to build on our successes.

In these first 90 days I have initiated a builders and developers industry task force to work with myself, some elected officials and a representative of administration to make recommendations to improve our working relationship, enhance information flow and streamline processes. This task force will provide recommendations to Council in the next 12 months.

Administration is being encouraged to initiate a recognition program, based on superior service and finding efficiencies. To that same end, Council has approved budget dollars to implement a new software program that will track customer inquiries.

Elevating customer service — Assessment and Tax

This will lead to better follow up, and the ability to identify and track trends, resulting in better service to you.

Cultivating business innovation

Strathcona County is a founder and key player in Alberta's Industrial Heartland. We have Canada's largest concentration of petroleum refining, petrochemical, and chemical processors. More than that, we are a powerhouse for business growth. Council must now support and focus on small to mid-size businesses to create diversity and long-term success as a municipal leader.

As Mayor, I am putting a great deal of energy into working with our Sherwood Park and District Chamber of Commerce. It is important for Council to support its programs: Career Test Drive, Student Skills Portfolio, and Business Mentorship program.

The Municipal Development Plan is being reviewed to assess the needs and opportunities for both urban and rural business. I am urging business owners to take advantage of this opportunity to create a more positive climate for agri-business. Identifying and incenting rural agri-business was a significant part of discussions at our Council retreat, and became one of the 12 strategic goals. The Agriculture Master Plan is an opportunity to key into the opportunities for agri-business in our County.

Smart Growth

Council needs to take a close look at the patchwork approach that is currently being applied to development. We need to lead a second look at the County's growth strategy, with community engagement, ensuring facts guide our decisions.

Thanks to members of Council and administration, this critical piece is well under way. Administration has begun to assess and put together current factual information and planning direction for 10 growth areas that will include:

- Future growth in entire north and east as a holistic area
- Urban growth areas
- Bremner and Colchester feasibility studies
- Hamlet growth and revitalization

A community-wide engagement is planned in the next three months to coincide with the major study of Bremner, directed by Council.

Urban residents have been concerned by the direction in which they perceived the Mature Neighbourhood Strategy was headed over the past two years. I am committed to the direction that continued revitalization and change must benefit and be accepted by our community.

The goal of establishing a Council priority to support development of affordable housing across the County, and to ensure this priority is considered in growth and development plans, will become a year two initiative.

Smart growth — Bethel Transit Terminal under construction

Balancing rural and urban needs

I believe the uniqueness of Strathcona County as a specialized municipality is its core power and strength. To continue enjoying the benefits of its urban and rural resources, we must ensure a harmony and balance of resident life and business in both these areas.

One of the strategies I wanted to initiate in the first 90 days was to ask community leagues, halls and agricultural societies to work together, as an alliance, to recommend a new funding formula to keep them open and active. This has not yet been addressed; however, the initiative of evaluating rural infrastructure to build community capacity and size in our hamlets; I believe, can be captured in our growth study.

Administration is undertaking another 9 in 90 strategic goal by investigating cost-effective delivery of high-speed Internet to rural communities, businesses and homes. In addition, Ward 7 Councillor Bonnie Riddell has spearheaded a major initiative, the Agriculture Master Plan that will provide guidance for years to come.

Creating a collaborative economy

You've heard me say so many times, that a municipality does not operate in isolation. We are regulated by and receive funding from the province. We must act in concert with the province to create seamless and strong education, health services and infrastructure for our citizens. Increased communication and collaboration is paramount. As active partners in the Capital Region, we will create win-win solutions – solutions that are good for the County and for the region; solutions that enable all communities to thrive.

On behalf of Council and you as citizens, I have had many meetings with our MLAs and Ministers to advocate for our community's priorities, such as the hospital and issues stemming from growth pressures. Regular meetings are held with school boards to review issues and opportunities.

Above and beyond that, I have met with adjacent municipal mayors to discuss future growth and collaborative opportunities.

Creating collaborative economies — Economic Development and Tourism

Meetings with regional leaders occur on a frequent basis, as we continue to grapple with the realities of growth, with inter-municipal concerns and joint venture alliances, as well as challenges and the opportunities resulting from our key position in Alberta's Industrial Heartland.

Every municipality must honour its neighbouring municipality's right to sustainability and autonomy. Alberta is the economic engine of Canada. There is ample opportunity for every municipality to contribute to and share in the building of a strong and competitive global entity.

Improving municipal relations does take a lot of your elected officials' time as many of them are involved in representing you on regional water commissions, and other external boards.

These increased communication initiatives have put us on a solid base to move forward as the Capital Region Board (CRB) is launching its update of the growth plan, requested by the province for November 2015. The CRB is also doing an assessment on regional economic development, which could further benefit municipalities as we work together to bring more employment opportunities to our region.

Residents are encouraged to share their thoughts with me on this or any subject via email at Roxanne.Carr@strathcona.ca or by phone 780-464-8000.

Kind regards,

Roxanne Carr

Mayor Roxanne Carr

Over the past five years, governments around the world have begun to make their data available through Open Data. Benefits have included helping to spur innovation and new start-up businesses, increased internal efficiencies, as well as the overarching goal to provide more transparency and access to information toward increased citizen engagement.

In February, Strathcona County launched an Open Data portal to share some of its municipal data in an easily accessible and freely available way.

Open Data makes certain data available through an online platform with no restrictions or fees to access, use or reuse the data. The data is provided in machine-readable formats that can be transformed into useful products and services such as web and mobile applications, customized for research and analysis, or repurposed for new solutions and improvements. Apps for transit services, interactive maps of walking or art tours, market research or operational analysis are some examples. Citizens, software developers, researchers, anyone is free to use and reuse the data.

Over 35 datasets, mainly rich geo-spatial information, are currently available in the County's Open Data catalogue, including data such as amenities, ward boundaries, pathways and census data. No personal or private information would be released in Open Data.

For more information and to access the Open Data portal visit www.strathcona.ca/opendata.

County initiatives

Imagine Bremner – project update

Strathcona County launched the Imagine Bremner initiative in June 2013 to engage County residents in planning a potential new urban community northeast of Sherwood Park.

The vision and principles, developed with public input, provided the basis for three distinct development concepts. These concepts describe how the new community might be structured in terms of environmental features, major roads and land use.

The vision is to create a community that is green, connected and diverse. The principles supporting this vision are:

1. Maintain and enhance the natural environment
2. Preserve and celebrate agriculture
3. Reinforce and diversify the economy
4. Accommodate a diversity of housing
5. Provide transportation options for everyday travel
6. Create strong, distinctive and safe neighbourhoods
7. Establish a hierarchy of mixed-use places
8. Provide a full range of recreational and cultural amenities

Development concepts were presented to residents, landowners and community members on March 18 at a public open house and presentation. The project team is now using feedback received on the concepts, along with the results of the technical evaluation, to prepare a preferred land use concept and a draft growth management strategy.

The draft strategy will be presented to Council and the public in a final series of public and stakeholder meetings. The final strategy will then be presented to Council for consideration in early fall.

For more information on the project please visit www.strathcona.ca/imaginebremner.

Community initiatives

Upcoming events

Following are some dates for upcoming events that may be of interest:

April 16

State of the County address

Mayor Carr will be sharing Council's vision for the community and key accomplishments from 2013 at the Sherwood Park and District Chamber of Commerce April luncheon, being held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Community Centre Agora. Tickets will be available through the chamber. www.sherwoodparkchamber.com/

April 23

Nomination deadline for High Five Awards

The Youth Council is now accepting nominations for the 2014 awards event, being held May 25 at Festival Place. Youth from across the County are invited to give a "High Five" to an adult who has made a difference in their lives. Nomination forms are available at www.strathcona.ca/highfive.

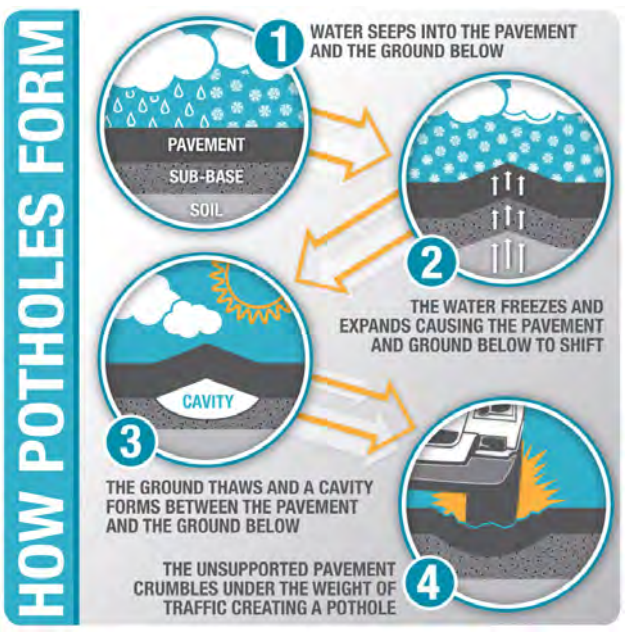
Pothole season ahead

Along with spring comes a new batch of potholes on our roads. This winter we experienced very warm temperatures in January followed by extreme cold. These conditions are a perfect recipe for new potholes.

Why do we have more potholes some years? If we experience a winter with several freeze and thaw cycles, potholes will be worse. During a thaw, water seeps into and under the pavement. When it freezes, the water expands under the road causing the pavement to shift. When this area thaws again, the gap left behind leaves the pavement vulnerable. A vehicle drives over this area and a pothole forms.

The County will be repairing these areas but it will take some time to get to them all. Crews regularly inspect roads but would appreciate your help in locating them.

If you notice a pothole, please call Transportation and Agriculture Services at 780-417-7100.



We've got some **BIG** *things planned for Strathcona County families!*

Planning and construction are in full-swing for some really exciting family-focused facilities in Strathcona County.

A new spray park and playground, a regional athletic park, a new swimming pool and revitalization of the Glen Allan Recreation Complex are all part of the Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy (OSRFS). This strategy is Strathcona County's guiding document for future open space and indoor facility redevelopment.

Read on to find out what this means for you and your family.

Broadmoor Lake Spray Park and Playground

Want a sneak peek of the playground and spray park?
Visit www.strathcona.ca/revitalize

Broadmoor Lake Spray Park and Playground

Broadmoor Lake will be home to a new combined spray park and playground in 2015! The overall layout of this new kid-friendly space is based on feedback from community consultations.

Residents asked for the following features:

- lots of extra space between equipment for kids to run and play games
- options for all ages
- rubberized play surfaces
- swings, slides and creative climbing equipment
- small water slides, dumping buckets and water guns
- separation for younger and older kids in the spray area
- plenty of seating
- access to washrooms (available in the Shell/ Arena buildings)
- recirculated treated water in the spray park area

The construction of this $1.5 million large spray park and playground begins this spring. To make way for the construction equipment, note that Broadmoor Lake playground, picnic shelter, sand volleyball and handball courts will be CLOSED from May to October 2014. Plans are to open the new park space in the summer of 2015.

Emerald Hills Regional Park

The Emerald Hills Regional Park is a 27 acre, $10 million park site in Sherwood Park that is the future home to new exciting recreational amenities including a grass sports field, two baseball fields, and an artificial turf facility. The site is situated between Emerald Drive and Amberly Way, and is also the home of Archbishop Jordan Catholic High School.

The artificial turf facility will be available to multiple users including soccer groups, high school and football organizations, rugby, field hockey and any other sport user interested in booking the site. A new parking lot will provide additional parking for the facility.

Extensive site grading has been completed, as well as the installation of the grass sports field, parking lot, and the artificial turf field. Fencing for the two baseball diamonds was also installed.

The following construction and installations will continue at the site in 2014:

- Artificial turf field
  - Installation of the bleachers
  - Lighting, scoreboard and players benches
  - Asphalt apron and walkways
  - Site cleanup and maintenance
- Baseball diamonds
  - Sod installation, establishment and maintenance
  - Shale infields
- Asphalt access road and trail construction
- Seeding and sodding of the rest of the site
- Emerald Hills Sports Pavilion

Artist rendering of completed Emerald Hills Sports Pavilion

The Emerald Hills Sports Pavilion is another community-focused feature of this park. The sports pavilion building, adjacent to the artificial turf field, will include four full-sized change rooms, washrooms, office space, a garage/workshop for County staff, a multi-purpose room and rentable concession. Building construction will commence in early summer 2014 with construction taking approximately 12 to 18 months to complete. The sports pavilion and associated fields will open in 2015 for the community and sports groups to book and use the facility.

Installation progress of the artificial turf field

A new indoor swimming pool is on its way: Emerald Hills Aquatic Centre

Strathcona County is progressing on plans for the Emerald Hills Aquatic Centre.

The new aquatic centre will feature all of the great programming that residents have come to love at the Kinsmen Leisure Centre and will better meet the needs of those who sign up for swimming lessons and aquatic and therapeutic fitness.

The design is a result of the extensive public engagement that occurred as part of developing the aquatic strategy.

The aquatic centre will be situated in Emerald Hills Regional Park. The concept planning is now complete and the construction phase begins this spring. The pool is expected to open in 2016.

The new aquatic centre will feature:

- 6-lane, 25 meter lap swim pool
- 4-lane, 25 meter adjustable depth swimming pool
- children's teach pool
- whirlpool and steamroom
- family change facilities

Artist rendering of completed Emerald Hills Aquatic Centre

Glen Allan Recreation Complex revitalization

Artist rendering of revitalized Glen Allan Recreation Complex

Strathcona County is continuing its plans to revitalize the Glen Allan Recreation Complex.

Community feedback formed the basis of the plans to support fitness and wellness activities, while improving accessibility. Phase 1 of the construction project begins in mid-April with a focus on interior work, while the bulk of work will be done in Phase 2, which starts September 1.

In order for the $4 million revitalization to take place, all facility spaces, with the exception of the curling ice and arena, are CLOSED beginning September 1 for at least one year.

You are encouraged to continue your fitness and wellness activities at other County facilities, such as Millennium Place and the Ardrossan Recreation Complex.

Want to know more?

Visit www.strathcona.ca/revitalize

Call 780-410-8524.

Community Heritage

Century Family: Ralph Smith

Like many of the farms in Strathcona County today, the Smith farm, north of the community of Partridge Hill, is now strictly a grain farm. But it wasn't always so. In fact, over the past 100 years and more, the Smith farm has seen a number of changes in its *modus operandi*.

The Smith's foray into farming in what is now Strathcona County began in the 1890s, in the rugged Canadian Shield country of Ontario. English and Scottish settlers had been trying, unsuccessfully, to carve out farms in the unforgiving land near Parry Sound. Hearing of the fertile land in Alberta, one of them, Thomas Pearce, came here in August 1891 to scout out suitable land. He deemed the land northeast of Edmonton and that due east of Fort Saskatchewan to be the best. The next spring, a large contingent of Parry Sound farming families left, among them Ralph (Rafe) and his family.

After arriving in Strathcona, the end of Canadian Pacific Railway's Calgary-Edmonton rail line, the colonists walked to Fort Saskatchewan. Here, they were forced to wait for two weeks, since the spring thaw prevented them from crossing the North Saskatchewan River. Once across the river and wishing to check out the land for themselves, some of the colonists walked as far east as Chipman before returning to settle in a loose bloc in what is now the Partridge Hill district. Ralph Smith homesteaded one mile south of the Partridge Hill Community Hall.

Within a year or two, one of his sons, Joseph, homesteaded in the Bruderheim district, but abandoned his homestead to return to Partridge Hill where, in 1897 for $3 an acre, he bought SE25-54-22-W4 from the CPR. His older brother, Ralph Jr., helped him break land, alternating with Joseph the chore of chopping the many small saplings that covered the land after a recent fire, and guiding Joseph's four horses that were hitched to a walking plough.

Joseph's first house was a crude affair, a 10' x 16' log shack with a sod roof. It was his impending marriage to Victoria Grace Kennedy, also of Parry Sound stock, in 1900 that impelled Joseph to harvest tamarack logs from Elk Island so he could build a sturdy 1½-storey log house that sported dovetailed corners. He later camouflaged the logs with drop siding. Even though there was only the one room on the main floor, Joseph finished the interior walls with V-joint lumber. Likewise, the upstairs had no real divisions, bed sheets being used to separate the space into three sleeping areas. There was no insulation, only 1" x 8" boards and cedar shingles between the interior and the outside.

Joseph and Vicky raised their family of three children on the proceeds gleaned from their mixed farm. Joseph earned a reputation for being a "horse trader." More than once, he returned home after a trip to Fort Saskatchewan or Edmonton with a different horse or team, always turning a profit on the exchange.

Joseph was also a "horse trader" in land, buying and selling quarter sections in the area. At one time, he held title to 22 quarter sections, a large enterprise for the day. He once sold a quarter section to a loyal hired hand who wanted to start his own farm. Other times, Joseph sold land to families new to the district.

"It touches me when complete strangers come up to me and tell me their father or grandfather got their start in farming because of my grandfather," says Ralph J. Smith, current owner of the Century Farm.

Ralph was just 18 years old in 1960, when he began farming his grandfather's home quarter. He spent his Easter holidays that year combining the previous year's crop and then seeding the land. He was up to the task. His father, Henry, or Harry as he was called, had contracted polio in 1948, so Ralph had taken on progressively more difficult farming tasks since boyhood. He had been accepted in the University of Alberta's agricultural program, but as the university school year began during harvest, Ralph decided to take a two-year course in Agricultural Mechanics at the Calgary Institute of Technology (now SAIT) instead because those courses did not begin until late October. The next year, he seeded the quarter section south of the home quarter as well, and when Joseph died in 1965, Ralph took over the farming operation. He ran a mixed farm, like his grandfather, raising chickens, a herd of cattle, and Yorkshire X Lacombe or Landrace hogs.

It was when his first son, Scott, who had been in broadcasting, decided to try his hand at farming that more changes came to the Smith operation. Gone were the cattle. Scott convinced his father to raise male bison instead, and to sell the meat to fine restaurants and at local farmers' markets.

As Ralph and Scott learned, bison cannot be herded like cattle. Rather, to move the animals from the fields into the paddock, they had to lay a trail of green feed and trap them by closing gates with ropes from a hidden position. One winter their entire herd of 18 or 20 bison was missing after a storm, having walked over a fence that had been buried in snow. It took hours to find the animals and to lay down enough green feed to entice them the two miles back home.

In 2007, Ralph and his wife, Diane, gave control and management of the farm to their second son, Arlen. In the spirit of the ever evolving change, he has converted the entire operation into a grain farm.

"Now, we work for him," grins Ralph.

Ralph and Diane are very much a part of the local community. They are busy members of the Josephburg Agricultural Society, and both are involved with "Josephburg Presents," a dinner concert series of eclectic music that started up in 1976. Both the 2011 and 2012 series wound up with granddaughters Billie-Jo and Micki-Lee performing at the Strathcona Heartland Fiddles and Opry night.

Log house built in 1900 with 12-inch tamarack logs from what is now Elk Island National Park — courtesy of Ralph Smith

Bison feeder bulls, 1995 — courtesy of Ralph Smith

Ralph has taken on more serious challenges, such as founding Secretary-Treasurer of the board, Josephburg Seed Co-op Ltd. In addition to holding various positions in local and regional Unifarm organizations, including Region 6 Director, Ralph was one of five provincial agricultural members appointed by the Wild Rose Agricultural Producers to the Clean Air Strategic Alliance's Flaring and Venting Committee. The committee was successful in reducing the incidence of flaring and venting in Alberta by some 70 per cent in three years. Ralph also contributed to a County ad-hoc committee to formulate policy regulating energy exploration and pipelines. The result is the Strathcona County Energy Protocol.

This is the story of the Century Farm started by Joseph Smith on SE-25-54-22-W4. As well, Ralph J. has two brothers farming nearby in Partridge Hill. Jim Smith developed his own farm on another two quarters of Grandpa Joe's land, starting in 1966. After several years as a Cargill Grain Elevator Manager in Marwayne and Olds, Paul Smith returned to their father Harry's farm in 1980. So three grandsons continue the legacy Joseph started in 1897.

Ralph and Diane Smith received the Alberta Century Farm and Ranch Award in 2003, Ralph received the Pride of Strathcona Award for "Agricultural Leadership" in 2013. Diane and granddaughters, Billie and Micki, have also received Pride of Strathcona Awards for "Culture." Strathcona County is happy to tell the Smith's story through its Century Families project that profiles pioneer families and promotes the County's history.

This excerpt is taken from a longer article, now available on the County website at www.strathcona.ca/history.

Harry Smith, age 14, examines the damage done by June 28, 1929 tornado — courtesy of Ralph Smith

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STRATHCONA COUNTY

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