



This past week Bow Island's oldest resident, **Mrs. Mary Ell** passed away at the age 107 years. A long-time resident of the Manor and the Lodge, Mary was active and sharp right to the end. Born just a few years after Alberta became a province and before Bow Island became a town, she obviously saw a lot of changes in the world and of course in this area. While I offer my condolences to her family and close friends who I know will miss Mary and never forget her, we should all celebrate the long life she led.

I wrote a few months ago about our **Fire Department** and how busy they had been this past year. The final numbers are in and our dedicated volunteers answered 402 calls in 2017, compared to 299 the year before. These calls resulted in over **700 hours** of work by these people. 700 compared to the average of the previous 14 years of 287. This was by far, their busiest year, ever and these are just the response hours. This figure doesn't include the hours of training and practice put in to be able to serve and protect our community.

Every year at this time it is my pleasure to congratulate the **Elks** club on having another successful fundraiser and this year is no exception. I haven't heard the final numbers yet, but I have been told it may be one of the best ever! A big thank you to these great volunteers who invest this money back into the community, supporting various groups and projects. For example, this winter the Elks helped sponsor the new skate aids at the arena. Of course, their auction wouldn't be a success without the generosity of the donors and bidders, so thank you to all of them as well.

**Public Works** has noticed evidence (in the form of piles of ice) beneath the outside taps of some houses in town. This may simply be a dripping tap, which of course adds to your water bill, but it could mean a frozen and broken tap that will start to run when temperatures warm up enough. This could result in damage to your property and home so please take a look at your taps. (Notice, I said **when** it warms up). I should also comment here on one of the challenges our staff have in keeping sand on the streets when it is icy. The freezing, thawing and windy conditions have conspired to leave many areas, especially intersections quite slippery. When sand is applied on such smooth surfaces and the wind blows, it is hard to keep the sand on the road where it needs to be. There are a few places that are chronically bad in these conditions but staff are doing their best to keep up the sanding. In the meantime, please take it slow and easy for now.

The **Waste Commission** is finalizing details of a settlement with the insurance company for the fire that damaged the shop at the landfill. That building will be replaced in the spring and an office/scale house will be installed next to the new scale in the next while too. Many people have been assuming that once the new scale is operational everyone using the landfill will be subject to a fee. That is incorrect. For the foreseeable future, County and Town residents will **not** be charged for delivering household garbage and recyclables to the landfill. Contractors and people or companies from outside the area will continue to be charged a tipping fee. The scale is being installed to accurately weigh in the paying loads as well as **all** materials coming in. Under current legislation and regulations, the landfill must keep track of how much waste is being brought in and how much recyclable material is going out. All customers will be required to weigh in and weigh out and should be prepared to advise the staff of what it is they are hauling and dump the waste in the areas they are directed to. The next step is to find the money to start digging the new cells. Wood continues to be a challenge for the landfill to deal with as it is becoming more difficult and risky to burn.

The Library is holding a fundraiser on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. "*Are You Smarter Than a Librarian*" sounds like it will be a lot of fun. Tickets are available at the Library and could go quite quickly so get yours soon.

There are no groundhogs around here and I don't think there's any gophers out today to see their shadows so hopefully spring isn't too far away!.....*Mayor Gordon Reynolds*