

# Lamont Mayor honoured by AUMA

*Bill Skinner given special recognition for contributions to municipal government*

JOHN MATHER

For Bill Skinner serving on Lamont council, as a councillor and then mayor, is simply a way to better the community where he lives.

Skinner received a Community Services award from the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association last week for his 20 years in public office.

"There was never any issue that made me jump up and run for council," he said. "It was more about just wanting to move our community ahead. I hope to have the best possible community to live in."

Skinner was nominated for the award by Lamont council, which passed a motion putting his name forward.

"I've been very fortunate," he said. "A few years ago the council put my name forward for an excellence in leadership award which I received at an earlier AUMA convention. I've been lucky to have a very supportive council over the years."

He added, "It's nice to be recognized for the efforts you put in."

Skinner first joined council in 1998 as a councillor and later ran for mayor.

"I've been telling people that this will likely be my last term," he said. He added he had told his employers, Dow Chemical, that he would soon be retiring to spend more time travelling with his wife.

With his 20 years on council, Skinner points to the second water reservoir and increases in the size of the town's sewage lagoon as highlights. He is also quite proud of the opening of the new seniors lodge

last year, since he has served on the senior's housing committee for a number of years.

"I think the town has moved into what I would call growth readiness. We've put a large water line under Highway 15 to service the south industrial area. We put the effort into being ready for growth, whether it's residential, commercial or industrial."

He said at some point Lamont will experience a lot of growth and the town is now positioned to handle it.

"If that large plant comes to Lamont County, we can handle any growth here in town," he said. "When that happens we're ready for it."

He said developments had been planned several years ago, but the economy faltered and the failure of those developments has been one of the disappoint-

ments of his tenure on council.

"It's taken this long to get back into a full recovery mode," he said. "But we're now better positioned."

While on council he oversaw the building of the new town administration building.

In addition, he worked with a great administrative staff over the years. "Sandi Maschmeyer has been on staff since I've come on board and she been a great asset to the community."

Maschmeyer has announced her retirement at the end of the year and Skinner says her knowledge of the community will be missed. Council is currently working on hiring her replacement.

The mayor reports a firm has been working with the town on selecting candidates and he expects to see a shortlist some time in October.



Lamont Mayor Bill Skinner, left, accepts a distinguished Alberta Urban Municipalities president Barry Morishita at a convention in Red Deer, Sept. 27. Skinner was nominated by council peers. He was first elected to council in 1998.