

## From the Big Chair

Elvis Presley sang, "And now, the end is near, and so I face the final curtain". By now you will know that I have chosen to conclude my career as the CEO of Unity Credit Union in 2026. It was a very difficult decision because for the last 40 years going to work in a credit union has been my life. I would like to thank all those who provided congratulatory comments both in person and on the credit union's social media sites. Your kind words were appreciated.

My career has involved eight moves. When I was concerned about one of the moves, one of my mentors asked me whether I had any bad experiences. When I answered no, he reminded me that there are good people everywhere and you just have to get involved and get to know the people. He was right. Throughout my career, my family and I have enjoyed every community we have lived in and the experiences we have shared. I have worked with some great people in each credit union and have gotten to know many wonderful people in the credit union system. Credit unions are in business to serve members, and I have enjoyed working with many members across our fantastic province. I have learned far more from conversations and visits with members than any wisdom I may have imparted to them.

My career in the credit union system started simply as a different job, offering a raise, some different benefits and a couple of small perks. I did not foresee that it would take me on such a rewarding journey across the province and through so many career advancements. At the time, I really thought I was going to spend my life in Beechy, Saskatchewan where I started. In hindsight, I owe a lot to Bryan Hunter for taking a chance on me and offering me that first position. It has been quite a ride!

I thought I should share some highlights, but the work highlights do not seem as interesting or as fun as the community involvement highlights. I shared some of the work highlights in an earlier newsletter, so will not bore you again. All I will say is that each career change brought advancement and new challenges that helped me grow and prepare for my current position. Early in my career, I moved often because once I learned more about the system, I began to see the opportunity. Another person I should

give credit to is Dennis Biblow for seeing more in me than I saw in myself. He is the one who hired me to serve as a General Manager of credit unions. Again, I am grateful he took a chance on me even though I did not think I was ready!

When we accepted the offer to come to Unity, I hoped that this would be my last move, for my sake and for my growing family. As my children entered school, they were not interested in moving again. I am so pleased that things worked out so well and the community welcomed us, allowing me to stay and conclude my career here. Now for the more interesting stuff - a few fun highlights! My wife played on a ladies' volleyball team that played in a tournament in the U.S. That group of players and their significant others were so fun to spend time with. I remember going to a function with these people, without Diane, who was the reason we knew them and having a blast! As the group who were "Home Alone", we wondered who was having more fun that weekend, the players or us! I was once asked (to this day not sure why) to be a backup dancer for the entertainment at the ladies' bonspiel. I learned to do the Macarena and still can rock it (at least in my opinion)! I sat on a "bale horse" for a whole afternoon encouraging members to do the same and "catch" the roping dummy stuck in the other bale! When members asked why I was having so much fun, I said, "Who am I kidding, I like to play more than work!" Serving as the mascot for the local football team and inspiring the creation of a costume for the part allowed me freedom to do what I wanted, again because I was playing. Leading the cheering for the Warrior teams my kids played on only embarrassed them because once again I was having fun! Singing on stage with the acapella group HOJA was another memorable experience. It is clear that each community allowed me to not only serve them but to also have fun.

As I wind this down, a few thank yous are in order. Thank you to my wife Diane for moving with me, allowing me to advance my career, doing everything for our children while I worked long hours (I did work earlier in my career) and supporting me in my involvement in the communities in various ways. Thank you to my children for putting up with me even

if I embarrassed them on occasion, like when I went into the rink impersonating Hannah Montana before heading upstairs to the Christmas Party. Thank you to each credit union for giving me the chance to advance my career. Thank you to the board of Unity Credit Union for offering me the opportunity to come to this wonderful community. Thank you to the staff for their work, dedication and commitment as we strive to serve members to the best of our abilities. Thank you to the members and community for allowing us to be part of the community in so many ways. Thank you for supporting Unity Credit Union by doing business with us.

It has truly been my honour and pleasure to serve as the Chief Executive Officer for the last 18 years. I wish my successor all the best and hope to see Unity Credit Union continue to grow and excel. Please support the new person as you have supported me and continue to support your local credit union. Thank you! And now, as George Strait sang, "This is where the cowboy rides away!" (even though I may not really be a cowboy)

As my mother taught me, "Thank you again and God bless!"

Gerald Hauta  
Chief Executive Officer



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