



**McDonald, left, and Bennett, SDCF's new board members, flank Executive Director Bev Clegg and Vice Chair Deborah Vitt.**

### **Bennett, McDonald join Foundation Board**

The Selkirk & District Community Foundation is welcoming Neil Bennett and Kelly McDonald as its two newest board members.

Bennett and McDonald replace outgoing members Pam Seekings and Shauna Curtin.

Deborah Vitt, the Foundation's Vice Chair, said both are outstanding additions to the team.

"Neil and Kelly each bring skill sets to the board that will serve them and the board well over their terms," Vitt said.

"We are very much a team at the Foundation, and in the short time I've known both of them, it's apparent they will fit in and they share the love of community the board has, and

perhaps more importantly, our donors have. I'm pleased on behalf of the board, to welcome them to the team."

Vitt added it's always sad to see members go, and Seekings and Curtin will be missed.

"Pam and Shauna made incredible contributions to the Foundation during their time, and I can't say enough about them. They will be missed, but I know they will continue to contribute positively to their future endeavours."

Bennett grew up in St. Andrews, went to school at St. Andrews School and graduated from the Comp before moving to Winnipeg to attend Red River College. He became an electrician/4<sup>th</sup> class power engineer and in 1995 returned to his roots, this time settling in St. Clements with his wife.

The couple purchased an acreage and became grain farmers while Neil worked at Health Sciences Center where he was the Maintenance Supervisor in charge of the electronics shop before retiring in 2022.

Though still farming, he has more free time and was looking to help out in the community more.

"I've been busy working and farming for 30 years and retired from my job just three years ago and I've always wanted to do something to involve myself with the community and give back, probably like a lot of people do," Bennett said.

He's seen the Foundation's annual reports and read about its work in the paper, and he was intrigued. The Bennetts have three children, including twin daughters who just graduated from the Comp, and he was aware of the scholarships awarded through the Foundation. He's coached hockey and soccer in East Selkirk and he's looking forward to joining the Foundation team.

"I've wanted to get more involved with my community and I think the Foundation is a great place," Bennett said.

McDonald comes to the Foundation via Ontario, where she graduated with Honours from McMaster University in 2008, earning her Bachelor of Commerce Accounting and Business/Management. A Chartered Professional Accountant, she was the Senior Manager with BDO in Dryden until 2019, when she moved to Selkirk to work for the Lord Selkirk School Division as the Assistant Secretary Treasurer. In 2022 she became Secretary Treasurer.

“I’m looking forward to learning more about Selkirk and the community in general, since I’ve only lived here for about six years. I moved here and then Covid hit, so I’m still considering myself new to the area, and I’ve got lots to learn,” McDonald said.

As a member of LSSD’s senior administration, she’s very aware of the good work the Foundation does, and she’s excited to be a part of that.

“The Foundation helps our school board immensely, so I look forward to being able to better understand things that they’re doing in the community.”

In her position with the school division, McDonald works with budgets, oversees payroll, purchasing and revenue processes, audited financial statements and participates in board meetings.

Her nomination letter states:

“Kelly is a person of integrity with a strong work ethic. She has an impeccable eye for detail, is thorough and learns quickly. She is a dedicated team player and life-long learner. She has proven to be invaluable, calm and unshakable when seemingly impossible deadlines are imposed...Kelly would be a tremendous asset to the Selkirk & District Community Foundation.”

Vitt said Bennett and McDonald join the board at a critical time when Vital Signs 2.0 is about to be released.

“Our Vital Signs team, along with the community, has been working hard over the last year plus to create this document and it will inform the granting decisions we make going forward, so it’s a perfect time for new members to come on board,” Vitt said.