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February 13, 2009



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Hello everyone:

It has been another busy week in Victoria. The legislature is back in session this week and I have many responsibilities in Victoria, especially as it pertains to my role as Minister of Education. On Thursday at 10 a.m., I participated in the singing of 'O Canada' with 90 school children in Victoria to celebrate the one-year countdown to the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. 'O Canada' was sung around the province at 10:00 am and in many schools across Canada. This was a fantastic event and it was exciting to see so many children participate. The Olympics provide a teachable moment and we have created an outstanding education program in partnership with Vancouver. We certainly hope that many schools in BC and across Canada will take advantage of it.

As part of the one-year countdown on Friday, the Premier also recognized 102 athletes representing 56 sport disciplines at the 2009 Premier's Athletic Awards. These awards recognize top female and male athletes in each of the sports participating in the 2007/08 BC Athlete Assistance Program. Two Prince George residents were among the 102 athletes honoured. These were biathlete Megan Tandy and short-track speed skater Cory Rasmussen. Prince George has many great athletes, and I am very happy that Megan and Cory were honoured as part of these awards. We would love to see both of them in

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Useful Phone numbers

BC Nurse line: 24 hour,
Toll free 1-866-215-4700

Pharma Net Hotline:
Mon-Fri (8:30-4:30pm) 1-800-387-4700

Health Info Line: Mon-Fri
(8:30-4:30pm) 1-800-465-4911

Victim Link: 7 days a week,
24 hours, 1-800-563-0808

Vancouver and Whistler in 2010!

Crime is an issue that has been in the news lately, and our government is committed to ensuring our communities are safe. Today the Premier announced a comprehensive, seven-point plan to support ongoing efforts to tackle gang crime that includes more police officers, more prosecutors, more jails and a new gang hotline and rewards program. The announcement includes 20 new cells at the Prince George Regional Correctional Centre and new officers in Prince George as well. Although much of the media attention has focused on the Lower Mainland, gangs are not just a Lower Mainland issue. Gangs are an issue in Prince George as well and it is important that policy initiatives such as these include the North.

The forest sector is an important component of the economy of Prince George, the Robson Valley and Northern BC. I have noted in previous columns that our government is taking action to promote wood and wood products, keep forest workers employed and make investments in the forest sector for the future economic rebound. Part of this strategy is promoting wood products in Asia. On Monday it was announced that the Shanghai government has formally approved a BC-designed roofing system as part of a plan to renovate 10,000 city apartment buildings in the lead-up to the World Expo 2010 in Shanghai. The approval applies to a wood truss roofing system designed by Chinese officials in collaboration with BC Forestry Innovation Investment, the Province's international marketing agency for B.C. forest products. China presents an enormous opportunity for B.C. wood and wood products and it is initiatives such as these that show us one of the futures of the forest sector.

Are you planning a trip this spring? The provincial government launched www.picturebc.ca to showcase the diverse communities across our province this week. Through an interactive photo gallery, potential tourists can learn more about 155 communities that are profiled, including Prince George, Valemount and McBride. Visitors can also view videos profiling the wondrous beauty of our province. PictureBC will help us attract more tourists to our province, and will help improve our local economies.

It is a very busy and activity filled weekend. I will be hosting a group of Robson Valley visitors who won a contest to see

the Disney on Ice Production, attending Spirit Week events and spending a bit of time with Bill on Valentine's Day! I look forward to seeing you out and about.

Until next week,

Shirley

Question of the week:

WHAT GOVERNMENT FORMALLY APPROVED BC DESIGNED ROOFING!

B.C. WOOD TRUSS ROOFING GETS GO-AHEAD IN CHINA

The Shanghai government has formally approved a B.C.-designed roofing system as part of a plan to renovate 10,000 city apartment buildings in the lead-up to the World Expo 2010 in Shanghai.

Shanghai officials have recognized that building with wood is cost-effective, energy-efficient, and good for the environment. With this approval, B.C. wood producers now have access to a market for as many as 10,000 new roofs over the next two years.

The approval applies to a wood truss roofing system designed by Chinese officials in collaboration with B.C. Forestry Innovation Investment, the Province's international marketing agency for B.C. forest products, who provided engineering assistance, access to B.C. lumber, and demonstration sites donated by B.C.

China represents the greatest growth opportunity for B.C. forest products of any market around the world. And with government and industry working together, we're quickly establishing B.C. as the leading supplier of high-quality lumber and wood products.

In the first nine months of 2008, exports of B.C. wood products to China were more than for all of 2007 and were valued at more than \$166 million.

The Shanghai Light Wood Roof System Cost Quota is a guideline for government-funded construction projects aimed at leveling the playing field in the tendering process. It establishes the price for labour, some materials and also

sets timelines for construction with different construction materials. The system is designed to work in lock step with the Wood Truss Standard Drawing Manual, due to be issued later this month.

For the past five years, the Province and forest sector, along with the federal Canada Wood Export Program, have targeted China as a major growth market for forest products. The renovation market, in particular, has been identified as having high growth potential due to a deteriorating infrastructure of apartment buildings and medium-rise housing.

Several wood-frame public buildings are being built as part of the Wenchuan earthquake reconstruction program funded with \$8 million contributed by Canada and British Columbia. Through the earthquake project, Chinese officials in the central part of the country are learning more about the benefits of wood-frame construction and Canadian advanced wood technology.

News Around the Province

KIDNEY PATIENTS BENEFIT FROM NOCTURNAL DIALYSIS PROGRAM

Kidney disease patients who cannot dialyze at home can now do so overnight at Vancouver General Hospital thanks to a new and innovative nocturnal dialysis pilot project, which is Canada's first independent in-centre nocturnal dialysis program.

The nocturnal dialysis pilot project allows patients to independently manage their own dialysis runs three times per week, from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., while they sleep at the hospital. Participants in the pilot manage every aspect of their dialysis treatment, from ordering their supplies and setting up the machine to inserting needles and drawing their own bloodwork.

"Not only is the new nocturnal dialysis more convenient for patients but it utilizes resources to provide them with the most advanced renal care available," said Health Services Minister George Abbott. "Through innovative approaches to delivering health care such as the nocturnal dialysis program, we are delivering better health outcomes for British Columbians."

Nocturnal dialysis has proven health and lifestyle benefits in comparison to conventional hemodialysis. Overnight dialysis will enable patients with end-stage kidney disease to reclaim parts of their former lives, including the ability to work during the day.

Although similar hospital-based programs exist in Toronto and Edmonton, patients in these programs have their dialysis administered by staff. In the VGH pilot project, however, each patient has gone through an intensive six weeks of training so they can safely administer their own treatments, as do the 145 home hemodialysis patients spread across B.C. and the Yukon.

For patients like Jared Provost, the new program could not have come at a better time. Provost had been dialyzing at home, but was considering a return to daytime dialysis. For Provost, the new in hospital program will allow him to build his confidence at managing his own dialysis.

“I was considering a return to daytime dialysis, when this new pilot project was suggested as an option,” said Provost. “I now have the best of both worlds – dialyzing at night doesn’t affect my ability to work and I can do my own independent dialysis in a place where there’s medical support if I need it.”

The nocturnal dialysis pilot project began Jan. 5 and ends March 31. Funding for the pilot project, \$46,000, was provided by the BC Renal Agency, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority. If deemed successful, the facility-based nocturnal dialysis program will be expanded to allow more patient participation, both at the VGH location and province wide.

“There is clear evidence that increased patient self care and longer dialysis runs improve outcomes, which is why the BC Renal Agency and renal programs across the province have placed such an emphasis on helping patients to be independent,” said Dr. Adeera Levin, executive director of the BC Provincial Renal Agency. “Approximately 145 patients manage their hemodialysis at home, and we are expanding options for those who want to maintain their independence, but can’t dialyze at home.”

Although overnight home dialysis is available, not all patients are suitable candidates. Some patients can’t dialyze at home due to the home renovations required to accommodate the specialized equipment, or their living situations prevent it. For patients who need to build confidence in managing their own dialysis, the nocturnal

outpatient program is an excellent option to advance their independence.

“Giving patients overnight access to in-hospital hemodialysis opens the self-dialysis program to a patient population that couldn’t before access it,” said Dr. Michael Copland, provincial medical director, independent hemodialysis program, BC Renal Agency and medical lead independent hemodialysis at Vancouver Coastal Health. “By allowing these patients to dialyze overnight in the hospital, we’re giving them back their lives that were taken away by their failing kidneys.”

Hemodialysis patients typically undergo hospital or clinic-based dialysis, three times per week, four hours per visit. Overnight dialysis takes as long as eight hours. This longer process removes more impurities from the patient’s blood, resulting in patients with higher energy levels who require fewer medications to keep their disease in check.

The BC Renal Agency has improved early diagnosis and intervention, providing improved treatment options, and ensuring that the system of provincial renal care is financially sustainable, so that patients have access to the care they need, when and where they need it. Since 2001, British

Columbia has expanded kidney care services to meet the needs of 42 per cent more dialysis patients and 444 per cent more patients in the early stages of kidney disease.

This week’s bouquet of recognition goes to...

Robson Valley Paramedics, and all emergency responders

Thank you for the work that you do!

Community Announcements

Aboriginal Elders gathering

Feb. 18 & 19

Elders and the public are being invited to the gathering at the Civic Centre, one objective is to create an urban aboriginal council

**Feb 18 - 9am to 4pm;
Feb 19 -9am to 3pm
For more info call Laura
250-562-6325**

Mark your calendar...

- ❖ February 13-15 – **Film Festival** at the PG Playhouse, check at Books and Co, CNC bookstore, UNBC bookstore for list of films and tickets.
- ❖ February 14 – **Wine Lovers** evening at the Coast Inn of the North, Reception at 6pm, Dinner at 7pm tickets available at the Coast-\$220 per couple.
- ❖ February 14 – **Spirit Swim at the Four Seasons** Leisure Pool and the Prince George Aquatic Centre- 1:30pm to 3:30pm. Celebrate Spirit week with sports, games and fun activities during the public swim time.
- ❖ February 14 – **Free Skate** from 1:30pm to 4pm at the Prince George Outdoor Oval at Exhibition Park.
- ❖ February 14 – **Pineview Snowfrolics**, - Heart of Rock and Roll Adult dance at Pineview Hall 8pm– 1am \$15 per person, tickets available at Pineview Store or Marty's Pizza – no tickets sold at the door.
- ❖ February 16 – **Huble Homestead** is hosting a membership meeting at 7pm at Art Space. Guest speakers and displays. Membership is required, \$10 for individual and \$15 for families. Membership details on their website www.hublehomestead.ca
- ❖ February 18 – **Chamber of Commerce Recognition Luncheon** at the Ramada Hotel 12- 1:30pm call the Chamber for more info 250-562-2454
- ❖ February 19 – District Parent Advisory Council #57 presents "**Cracked**" at **Vanier Hall**, 7pm; grades 7-12 are invited to see this award winning production and follow up discussions facilitated by NH and Community Policing. Mature content. \$10 by donation benefits Street Spirits.
- ❖ February 21 – **Everybody's Bobbin'** concert at the Prince George Playhouse. Performances at 2:30 and 7:30pm, more info to come.
- ❖ February 21 – **Going for the Gold with your**

Diabetes Management features Chris Jarvis, Olympic Rower with type 1 diabetes. PG Civic Centre from 9am to 12Noon. No charge for event, for more info call 250-561-9284

- ❖ **February 21 – Seedy Saturday** – from 10am to 3 pm at Exploration Place – first gardening even of the year. For more information or to book a table, please contact Jovanka at 564-3859 or at jovanka@netbistro.com
- ❖ **February 25 – Jacson Katz**, renowned speaker and author to talk against violence against women. Coast Inn of the North at 7pm, to register call Paz Milburn at 250-5617343
- ❖ **February 28 – Wild Game Banquet & Fundraiser** at the PG Civic Centre, Live and silent Auction. Music by Rhythm 7 Sound, full course turkey dinner, tickets \$40 per person, for more info 250-962-6455
- ❖ **February 28 – Two Rivers annual fundraiser** Auction, auction begins at 7:30pm. Tickets are \$20 ea or two for \$30 call the Gallery at 250-614-7800

If you are a non profit organization and would like to advertise an upcoming event or share a story please email Shirley

Thank you for taking the time to read my newsletter. If you would like to see something specific in the next edition of Ask Your MLA, please [email me](#). If you know someone who would like to receive our newsletter, email their name so we can add them to our list.



My second e-newsletter, People, Places & Projects showcases great people and projects in our area. To subscribe to People, Places & Projects, [click here](#). To read past editions to go: [People, Places & Projects online](#).

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