

Ask Your MLA



Shirley Bond MLA, Prince George-Mt. Robson

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April 25, 2008



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Hello Everyone,

This week all was quiet in the capital but the province was buzzing with MLAs happy to be able to spend so much time in their constituencies - I know I was! This week we were on break from the Legislature and working hard in our constituencies all across the province.

On Monday Kevin Falcon, Minister of Transportation, came to Prince George. He held many important meetings with Prince George residents, business owners and city officials who know how valuable transportation initiatives have been to our area and who have some great ideas for future and ongoing projects! Minister Falcon held a roundtable that generated some great discussion about the Prince George transit system. He also made an exciting \$1.1 million announcement for transit in Prince George. We will now have 2 more brand new buses and 3,600 more hours of service! A much needed addition for our community.

On Monday we were also able to deliver the final instalment of funding for the new score clock in CN Centre. Now Cougars games will be even more exciting! Can't wait!

The 3 Prince George MLAs, John, Pat and I, also

government.

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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

delivered the final cheque of the province's \$22.7 million contribution towards the Northern Sports Centre. What a great investment that was. I can't wait to attend the very first UNBC convocation ceremony held in the new Northern Sports Centre next month! And we already have our first championship banner.

On Tuesday I had the opportunity to take part in an event that brought good news to Prince George and the region. Telus announced the expansion of the call centre from 75 to 150 employees! I think it says a lot about the success and potential of Prince George that we were chosen for the expansion.

On Wednesday I was in Vancouver meeting with the First Nations Steering Committee and the superintendents and trustees from across the province. What a great collaborative meeting and I look forward to more discussions with our partners in education.

Today was an incredibly busy day in Prince George! First thing this morning I was at UNBC speaking with academic advisors from post secondary institutions across the province to kick off the BCADA's annual conference. This year their theme was "Going the Distance" and being an MLA from Prince George representing a partly rural riding and working much of the week in Victoria, I know a lot about distances! I just want to say again what a great job our education professionals and academic advisors do in helping guide our children and helping them achieve their dreams. Thanks for the work you do, it was wonderful to get the chance to speak with you today.

Speaking of our young dreamers, I also had the opportunity to interview some high school graduates from Prince George Secondary School about their hopes and dreams for the future as part of their grad transition process. I certainly met some enthusiastic, confident and talented young people today.

At lunch today I had the honour of speaking at the Chamber of Commerce luncheon about the future of education in the North. It was a sold out crowd and

I'm pleased to see so many people passionate about education in our community! After the luncheon I participated in a roundtable with the Advanced Technical Education Committee. They have some great ideas and I can't wait to see them take shape over the coming months.

Tomorrow will be an early morning for me as I leave Prince George for McBride to attend the second annual Robson Valley Women's Fair. I was thrilled that Minister Ida Chong agreed to provide funding again this year. I had such a great time last year and learned a lot. I can't wait to try out some new workshops this year and to see everyone again!

This week was Arts and Culture week in B.C. I hope many of you were able to take advantage of the many art and cultural activities available in our communities. Theatre Northwest is presenting "Kitchen Witches" from April 17 to May 7. Also the Two Rivers Gallery is free of charge this week in honour of Arts and Culture Week in B.C. So if you haven't been to the gallery yet, make a point of going tonight or tomorrow as the last day for free admission is April 26.

I hope you have a great weekend and enjoy the sunshine. At the risk of jinxing it, I'm thrilled to finally see our temperature in the double digits!

Until next week,
Shirley

Question of the week:

What Report Will Assist Health Authorities, Water Suppliers And Local government To Better Manage Drinking Water Systems?

Management of drinking water systems, including the effectiveness of water quality advisories, could be improved with more consistent risk assessment and more understandable public communication, an

internationally recognized committee of water experts reported. British Columbians overall have a safe, clean supply of drinking water; however, from time to time, drinking water advisories are put into place to notify the public about potential risk of that supply.

The recommendations and advice of this expert panel will assist us in moving forward with health authorities, water suppliers and local government to ensure a more consistent provincial approach to managing our drinking water systems, including assessing the need for and in communicating water quality advisories in the future.

The report addresses the different approaches taken across B.C. on how, why and when water quality advisories and boil water notices are issued. It also examines how turbidity is used to measure water quality, how it is monitored and the human health risk. Turbidity is the cloudiness that can occur in water, caused by small particles. The committee specifically looked at the relationship between turbidity and gastrointestinal illness and reported that turbidity by itself does not indicate or explain occurrences of infectious diseases.

Finding that advisories are often misunderstood by the public and that long-standing advisories are often ignored, the technical advisory committee suggested ways to improve the effectiveness of advisories, including setting criteria for the lifting of advisories at the time the advisory is issued, enhancing the advisory information with more user-friendly explanations, and providing more consistent information – between health authorities, water suppliers and local government – to ensure all affected parties have an equal and fulsome understanding of the issues.

In consultation with health authorities, the water supply community, and local governments, the Ministry of Health will now begin to develop future policy ideas and recommendations based on the committee's findings.

Consistency and appropriateness of risk communications will be examined, as well as the use of alternate means of notifying customers, in particular, vulnerable populations. Appropriate treatment alternatives to filtration may also be considered, such as combining UV treatment with

chlorination.

Appointed by the minister in December 2007 in response to concerns expressed by local governments as well as water suppliers, the five-person committee consulted with health authorities and water suppliers, and reviewed relevant national and international documentation, including case studies of water-borne outbreaks of infectious illnesses.

The committee found that drinking water advisories alone cannot completely safeguard drinking water systems. A multi-factor approach examining all components of a drinking water system including source water protection, drinking water treatment and distribution systems is needed.

Safeguards can include management, monitoring, research, science and technology development, guidelines, standards and objectives, legislative and policy frameworks as well as public involvement and awareness. Committee members welcomed the opportunity to provide up-to-date scientific advice on how to best address drinking water quality and notification issues in B.C. It is hopeful this information will be useful for further securing the safety of drinking water supplies for all British Columbians.

Many improvements have been made to the province's drinking water supply under the Drinking Water Protection Act – from investments in new equipment and guidance in the application of the legislation to more certified operators. Through the tripartite Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund and Canada-B.C. Infrastructure Program, and the provincial B.C. Community. Water Improvement and Towns for Tomorrow programs, around 200 water projects in communities around the province have benefited from over \$360 million in federal and/or provincial funding since 2001. The report is available online at www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/dwcommittee.html.

News Around the Province

BC 150 and World Partnership Walk

Join Forces

BC150 and the World Partnership Walk have announced the launch of a partnership to honour the spirit of global citizenship among the people of British Columbia. The government of British Columbia is delighted to acknowledge the Vancouver and Victoria editions of the World Partnership Walk as part of the province's 150th anniversary celebrations. This community event has a long history of invigorating the people of British Columbia with a vital call to action: a call to become active global citizens and help communities beyond our borders. This drive to make a difference captures the spirit and essence of the people of this province and of the BC150 celebrations.

Lalji noted that the partnership between BC150 and Aga Khan Foundation Canada was founded on shared values and long-standing support for the work of AKFC through its flagship fundraising event, the World Partnership Walk, which was founded in Vancouver 24 years ago.

Through this national fundraising event, the World Partnership Walk is also tied to B.C.'s identity and roots. The Walk was started almost a quarter century ago by citizens of British Columbia. It is because of the innovation, participation and heart of volunteers from British Columbia that the seeds of the Walk were planted and have had a chance to grow at a national scale.

This event helps promote awareness of the plight of the people in developing countries, a more equitable sharing of the world's resources, and the projection of Canada's pluralistic values. The government is supporting the ideals and practices of the Aga Khan Foundation Canada, which continues to seek unity in diversity.

Vancouver and Victoria will join with cities across Canada at 11 a.m. on Sunday, May 25 in the World Partnership Walk to increase awareness and raise funds to help fight global poverty. The Vancouver Walk will begin at Lumberman's Arch at Stanley Park; in Victoria, thousands are expected to gather in Beacon Hill Park for a day of family activities and festivities.

Since its inception, the Walk has raised more than

\$40 million; last year, \$5 million was collected to enhance the quality of education, improve health care, increase rural incomes and build the capacity of community organizations in Asia and Africa. World Partnership Walk participants can sign up as individuals or as a team. To register, visit www.worldpartnershipwalk.com or call 1-800-267-2532.

Aga Khan Foundation Canada is a non denominational, international development agency with more than 25 years experience linking Canadians to communities in need. AKFC works in four core areas: health, education, rural development, as well as support for civil society organizations. Gender equity and the environment cut across all programs. AKFC is currently supporting 40 initiatives in a dozen countries, delivering programs to isolated and marginalized communities in some of the poorest parts of the world, without regard to faith, origin or gender.

BC150 is a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Crown Colony of British Columbia in 1858. Every community is invited to participate in this year-long celebration of B.C.'s cultural diversity, community strength and achievement. For more information, please visit www.bc150.ca.

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

Prince George Hospital Auxiliary

Thank you for the wonderful work you do in our community!

The Auxiliary purchased 13 whirlpool tubs for the PGRH maternity department.

Community Announcements

Prince George Real Home & Garden Show

Celebrating 31 Years

Friday, Apr 25 – 4pm – 9pm

Sat, Apr 26 – 10am – 8pm

Sun, Apr 27 10am - 4pm

Mark your calendar...

- ❖ Apr 26 – Diabetes Expo at the Coast Inn of the North. 8:45-3:30 PM To register call 561-9284
- ❖ April 26- ECRA - Garage Sale and bake Sale at 1692 – 10 Ave 9am to 2 pm
- ❖ April 26- Chamber of Commerce President's Gala and Auction 6:30 pm to midnight at the Ramada – for info call 562-2454
- ❖ April 26 – Evening of Yuk Yuk's Comedy with PG Kinsmen Club. Tickets are \$35 for dinner and entertainment, Doors open at 6 pm for more info call 562-8767
- ❖ April 26 - College Heights Community Association – spring "good as new Sale" at the Columbus Community Centre
- ❖ **Apr 27 – May 3 – National Volunteer Week**
- ❖ May 10-11 – 24 Hr Relay for Life & Team Autism, Registration forms & info can be obtained form Dave at 981-8384,
- ❖ May 10 – Prince George Ducks Unlimited 21st Annual spring Banquet & Auction Coast Inn of the North for tickets call 960-2664
- ❖ May 10 - Mothers Day Tea at ECRA, 1692 10th Ave. 2pm to 4pm Cost \$5.00 per person.
- ❖ May 16-18 2008 Family Focus Conference – Bringing Families into Focus and AiMHiare co-hosting event. For more info visit their website at www.familyfocusconference.com to view workshop schedules, speakers' bios and to register on line.
- ❖ May 26 – AimHi and Value Village, a community barbeque starting at 11:00AM at the Value Village parking lot on Spruce Street.
- ❖ May 29th – CNIB 7th Annual Drive Thru Breakfast at Costco Wholesale. 7 am to 9 am
- ❖ June 13th - Visions Luncheon at the Treasure Cove Casino show lounge with blind comedian Gord Paynter. Gord has been featured on Yuk Yuks circuit and at the Just

for Laughs Festival. Tickets are \$50 each or \$400 for table of eight. Silent auction for more info call Brad or Jeff at 563-1702

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](#).

Toll Free: 1-866-612-7333
Phone: 250-612-4181
Fax: 250-612-4188

www.shirleybondmla.bc.ca
shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca

1350 5th Ave,
Prince George, BC
V2L 3L4