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May 30, 2008



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Hello Everyone,

Another difficult week for Prince George!! In the aftermath of our ice jams and floods our community was hit with a devastating fire. A number of businesses were destroyed affecting more than 300 employees. This is absolutely shocking for those families whose loved ones were employed until early Tuesday morning.

As soon as I became aware of the fire and the challenges it created I made contact with our Mayor to offer whatever provincial support we could provide. From that first call the most common comment was about the incredible job our firefighters and emergency response teams did. As we saw during our winter and spring emergencies everyone involved went above and beyond the call of duty. I am thankful there were no serious injuries and want to express our on going gratitude to the people who protect us and the place where we live. We are proud of you!!

There is much work to be done as we wait for Canfor to make it's decision and we look for ways to support families. I have been in contact with numerous ministers and will continue to do that as need are identified. Our reputation is well known and we are considered resilient and collaborative. Those traits

government.

Ask Your MLA Archive: [Click here](#) to read past editions of Ask Your MLA.

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

will be necessary more than ever as we face our latest challenge.

I was please to be able to recognize one of our special Prince George residents yesterday at the Legislature with the first annual Child Care Awards of Excellence. Cynthia Gosnell was honoured among 15 of her colleagues and chosen out of over 100 nominations. She was recognized for her excellent work as an Early Childhood Educator at the Aboriginal Supported Child Care Program in Prince George. She has been helping establish an Aboriginal drumming and singing group for children of all cultures to attend. I was great to see Cynthia recognized and I would like to thank all Early Childhood Educators for the important work that you do. Quality care for BC's children is essential.

Today was an exciting day for me. Aside from being able to participate in two convocation ceremonies at UNBC, I had the pleasure of joining School District 57 in breaking ground on the site where a new, greener Duchess Park Secondary School will be built. This \$40 million project will be constructed by Western Industrial Contractors and will be built to exceptional environmental standards. This new school will reduce energy costs up to 60 per cent over the old school. The new Duchess Park Secondary will also incorporate a 250-student French Immersion program and 50 francophone school district students. As Education Minister, MLA for Prince George-Mount Robson and as a former Duchess Park student I am particularly proud of this project and eagerly await its completion. Thanks to the School District for a significant and important partnership.

There are a lot of activities and events this weekend and good opportunities for people to get out and enjoy the sunshine. Tomorrow there is the Farmer's Market, the Charity Yard Sale at the PG Railway and Forestry Museum, the Downtown Sidewalk Sale and the Run/Walk for Liver at Fort George Park. I hope to see you at one or all of these events!

A wonderful new event is happening all day Sunday – it's Healthy Kids Day. The YMCA is putting on a fun-

filled day for families to learn about healthy habits and activities. The day will be filled with entertainment, free healthy snacks, fun games and activities too! I hope to see you there at Masich Place Stadium between 10:00am and 4:00pm and I would encourage everyone to come out at 10:00am to cheer on the kids participating in the Healthy Kids Marathon!

Have a great weekend everyone! I look forward to seeing you out and about.

Until next week,

Shirley

Question of the week:

WHAT TRAINING PROGRAM RECEIVED PROVINCIAL FUNDING TO DOUBLE GRADUATES?

The number of physiotherapists educated in British Columbia will double as a result of new provincial funding for the University of British Columbia's physical therapy training program.

With our province's population both growing and aging, this government is focusing on expanding post-secondary programs to educate the health-care experts our province needs to lead the way in healthy living, physical fitness and supporting people with special needs. The province has already doubled the number of new medical students and almost doubled the number of education spaces for student nurses. Now the province is doubling the number of physical therapy seats at UBC to meet the growing need for physiotherapists around B.C.

UBC offers the province's only physical therapy program, which graduates 40 physiotherapists a year. The two-year master's degree program will accept 16 extra first-year students this fall, another 16 in fall 2009, and eight more in fall 2010. By spring 2011, the

program will be able to graduate 80 physiotherapists a year.

The province is also providing \$7.1 million to help UBC create a state-of-the-art home for the program as part of the \$120-million UBC Renew partnership. The program will move to the renovated Friedman Building this fall. The Province has also provided UBC with a one-time grant of \$125,000 for new equipment for the physical therapy program.

The support from the government of B.C. to double the enrolment of the physical therapy program at UBC, and to enhance the research capacity in exercise interventions and exercise fitness programs for people living in the community, is an important step forward in ensuring we continue to address the health needs of British Columbians.

Physiotherapists serve a wide variety of patients.

Among their areas of practice are helping people regain mobility after injury or surgery, teaching the elderly to use equipment that makes them more independent, working with children who have birth defects like cerebral palsy, treating people with asthma and other respiratory conditions, and teaching sports to people with disabilities.

Physiotherapists are a critical component of the health-care team in preventing, treating and managing movement disorders that can result from various conditions and disorders. The province is working across the range of health-care professions to recruit, retain and educate sufficient health professionals – including physiotherapists, doctors and nurses – so it can continue to deliver sustainable and high-quality health care for years to come.

Last week, 195 doctors graduated from UBC's expanded school of medicine, up from 128 the previous year. Since 2001, when government began adding new nursing programs and more student spaces, nurses have graduated with almost 13,000 degrees, diplomas and certificates. The number of post-secondary spaces for student nurses is up by 3,786 – an increase of 93 per cent since 2001.

News Around the Province

NEW HOUSING FOR HOMELESS AND FAMILIES OPENS IN VANCOUVER

Provincial and community partners are celebrating the official opening of the Tikva Housing Society's Dany Guincher House, which includes 11 apartments for those at risk of homelessness, families fleeing abusive relationships, and independent disabled people.

Dany Guincher House will provide safe and stable housing for individuals and families facing a range of difficulties and challenges in Vancouver. The Province's partnership with the society will result in added stability and security in the lives of the residents and will assist them in achieving their greater goal of long-term independence. The development is part of the Provincial Homelessness Initiative, which integrates support services with housing to help people move beyond temporary shelter to more secure housing, greater self reliance and appropriate employment. The development is being managed by the Tikva Housing Society and support services are being provided by the Jewish Family Service Agency.

The Jewish Family Service Agency and its contributors recognized a need in this community and chose to address it by fostering partnerships that made it possible for this project to get underway. With the generosity of the Guincher family and many other donors, have all played an important part in breaking the cycle of homelessness and giving hope to the community's most vulnerable.

This building is named after Dany Guincher who went out of his way to help those in distress. It is that type of caring spirit that is working with our provincial and community partners, to provide housing services to those in need.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver is committed to helping people and families that are living in poverty in the Lower Mainland and are participating in this project. The Dany Guincher House will allow those people facing hardship to find secure and affordable housing and will offer them a new beginning.

The Province has committed to creating more than

4,000 new housing units under the Provincial Homelessness Initiative. The Province's budget for shelters and affordable housing is \$380 million – more than three times what it was in 2001.

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

Prince George Fire Fighters and Emergency response teams!

For going above and beyond as we witnessed one of our city's largest fires!

Thank you for the Work you do!

Community Announcements

Charity Yard Sale & Fun Day

May 31 and June 1

10am to 3pm ~ 850 River Road

\$2 admission In support of Volunteer Prince George and Railway & forestry Museum

For info call 564-0224 or 563-7351

Mark your calendar...

- ❖ May 30- 8th annual **Kiwanis /Friends of Children Golf Classic** –PG Golf & Curling Club for more info call 564-2217
- ❖ May 31 – **2008 Stroll for Liver Walk/Run** in Ft George Park, For more info call 963-9756
- ❖ May 31 – Charity Yard Sale & Fun Days in Support of **Volunteer Prince George and Railway Museum**. \$2 entry fee. Come out for a day of fun at the Railway Museum on River Rd
- ❖ May 31 – the Prince George New Hope Society raises funds at Artspace above Books & Co. Performers, raffle tickets and art auction. Doors open at 6pm, For more

info call 552-0890

- ❖ June 5-7-**Forest and Resources Expo** – at CN Centre. Plan to attend, for more info visit info@forestandresources.org
- ❖ June 8 – **Artist's in the Park** – Come out to Fort George Park and enjoy music, art lessons, games, and an all-out day of family fun. See you there.
- ❖ 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
- ❖ June 15 - 34th Annual Father's Day Show & Shine 10AM -3PM, Downtown Prince George and Cruisin' Classics
- ❖ June 15 – **Communities in Bloom**, Walk in the Garden at Centennial Park from 10am to 2 pm
- ❖ June 21- **Sandman Community Garage Sale** with all proceeds to the Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation for the Paediatric outdoor play area at PGRH for more info call Debbie at 565-2522
- ❖ July 1- **Run for Canada** – Fundraise for Canada's Athletes. For more info on this event visit www.hbc.com or call 1-866-July1st(585-9178)

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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