



## Useful Web Links

June 20, 2008



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[Ministry of Education](#)

[City of Prince George](#)

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[2010 Commerce Centre](#)

[Spirit of 2010](#)

[Prince George Community Foundation](#)

[Northern Development Initiative Trust](#)

[The Exploration Place](#)

[Railway and Forestry Museum](#)

Hello Everyone,

As we draw to the end of another school year, I wanted to say a special thank you to all of the teachers, support staff and administrators who work hard all year to ensure that our children get the best education possible. I know that it takes a lot of hard work to ensure that our children get the best start in life, and we are fortunate to have such a high caliber of staff educating our students.

One Prince George teacher in particular exemplifies the dedication and commitment that all teachers share with their students. Don Homan of DP Todd Secondary was recently recognized with the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence for his work in developing the famous DP Todd Leadership program. This is a well deserved honour, and we have been truly fortunate to have benefited from his educational leadership right here in Prince George.

The start of summer means that the Summer Reading and Teen Summer Reading Clubs will be starting shortly. The Summer Reading Clubs are a great way to encourage your children to read this summer. Run by the Prince George Public Library, these clubs make reading fun, which will help your children improve their literacy skills, and will help students become better prepared for success when they return to school in September. And best of all – it can be fun for the whole family! Whether its reading a great work

Capital Report: [Sign up](#) to find out what is happening in 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

of fiction or learning something new about dinosaurs, space, history; reading opens new doors to excitement.

This week I was proud to announce that we'll be doubling the number of StrongStart BC early learning centres across the province. These centres provide a free drop in program for pre-school aged children and their parents or caregivers. A qualified early childhood educator will lead activities that include singing, art, stories and much more. StrongStart BC centres help children grow linguistically, emotional and socially and ensure that children enter kindergarten ready for success.

Prince George will get new StrongStart BC centres at Harwin, Peden Hill and Ron Brent Elementary schools, and I encourage all families with young children to take advantage of these programs.

With summer coming, I know that many of us are looking forward to day-trips and vacations. At the same time, the province will be upgrading and improving roads throughout the Fraser Fort George Regional District, so I would encourage everyone to drive with a little extra care and be prepared for the occasional delay as we work to make our roads safer and better for travel.

As usual I am planning to support and attend numerous community events this weekend including the Diabetes Expo and the Air Cadets parade. Why not plan to join me out and about.

Until next week,

Shirley

## **Question of the week:**

**WHAT INITIATIVES PROVIDE BC BUSINESS WITH MATERIALS ON HOW AND WHERE THEY CAN FIND, ATTRACT AND RETAIN WORKERS?**

The WorkBC Employer's Tool Kit and two online tools will

engage B.C. employers, providing them with a suite of materials on how and where they can find, attract and retain the workers they need.

The labour and skills shortage in this province is possibly the greatest current threat to B.C.'s booming economy. By giving employers the tools and the information they need to bolster, strengthen and improve their workforce, the Province is working to address these challenges and ensure continued economic growth in the province.

Partially funded by the Ministry of Small Business and Revenue and developed in consultation with both Venture Kamloops and the Small Business Roundtable, the Employer's Tool Kit is divided into four booklets:

- How to Attract, Retain and Engage Employees;
- Under the Labour Radar – Aboriginal People, Women, Youth and People with Disabilities;
- It's About Ability – The Mature Worker; and
- Diversity at Work – Recruiting and Retaining Immigrants.

The Province continues to work in partnership with the small business community to find solutions to the challenges around labour shortages. Remember, a few years ago people were chasing jobs, now jobs are chasing for employees.

This tool kit is just one more tool for businesses to have at their disposal. The Building Small Business Resource Guide and HR Quiz are also available to help employers build and improve their employee recruitment, retention and leadership practices. The resource guide provides a searchable database of courses, training opportunities and other resources. The HR quiz is a diagnostic tool that helps identify where small business owners might need assistance and, by referencing specific pages and sections of the tool kit, gives employers immediate access to resources, solutions and tips. The Province continues to support initiatives to help business in B.C. overcome the challenges of success.

For more information on WorkBC, to view or download the Employer's Tool Kit, and to use the HR Quiz or Resource Guide, visit [www.WorkBC.ca](http://www.WorkBC.ca).

## **News Around the Province**

### **PROVINCE DOUBLES STRONGSTART BC**

## **EARLY LEARNING CENTRES**

An additional 99 StrongStart BC early learning centres will open during the 2008/09 school year, doubling the number of centres around the province. One in four children enters kindergarten without the skills they need to be successful, and StrongStart BC centres are a key resource for our youngest children and their families. Already the province have seen that StrongStart BC is making a difference, and this year's expansion to 200 StrongStart BC centres will give even more of our youngest learners increased opportunities to prepare for school and for life.

StrongStart BC is a free drop-in early learning program for preschool-aged children accompanied by a parent or caregiver. A qualified early childhood educator leads activities that include stories, music, and arts, to help children grow linguistically, physically, emotionally and socially, and become comfortable in a school-like setting. All of B.C.'s 60 school districts have been offered the opportunity to participate in the StrongStart BC program. The Province has committed \$38 million to fulfill a 2008 throne speech commitment to expand the StrongStart BC program to 400 centres by 2010. StrongStart BC centres also help fulfill government's election platform and throne speech commitments to use underutilized school district space as centres to deliver early-learning services.

StrongStart BC Centres offer an important program to help prepare children for kindergarten. More than 80 centres have already opened and they are providing children and their caregivers with a wonderful opportunity to learn together.

The school districts will receive \$50,000 for each new StrongStart BC centre. This includes \$20,000 to prepare the in-school space and purchase of new equipment and learning materials, and up to \$30,000 to fund this year's operating costs, including staff, professional development, supplies and healthy snacks. Continuing StrongStart BC centres will receive \$30,000 each year in operating funds. Additional StrongStart BC centres are a worthwhile investment in our children's future which will pay nothing but dividends. BCSTA is pleased to see the Ministry of Education working with boards of education to create this support for families.

StrongStart BC centres are helping the Province reach its goal of making B.C. the besteducated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent. In addition, the Province has created the Early Childhood Learning Agency, which is currently conducting a feasibility study on offering all-day kindergarten for five-year-olds and optional all-day preschool for children three and four years old.

Since 2001, government has invested more than \$137 million in new literacy initiatives, including pre-literacy and early learning programs such as \$9.5 million to operate the kindergarten readiness program Ready, Set, Learn and \$2.7 million for the ActNow Literacy Education Activity and Play (LEAP BC) program that encourages literacy, physical activity and healthy eating in preschoolaged children. For a complete list of the new StrongStart centres, please visit:

[www.bced.gov.bc.ca/news/docs/new\\_strongstart\\_centres.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/news/docs/new_strongstart_centres.pdf)

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

Claude Bussieres for his 100<sup>th</sup> Blood Donation  
Thank you for giving so generously.  
You make a difference

## **Community Announcements**

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY  
AT FORT GEORGE PARK  
11 AM- HONOURING OUR HEALTH RUN/WALK  
ENTERTAINMENT 12:30 – 6PM  
RICK STAVELY PLUS OPEN MIC

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### **Two Job fairs held in Prince George**

June 25 – Noon to 8PM  
at the Civic Centre

One focused on opportunities outside the region  
and the other focusing on work closer to home.

## Mark your calendar...

- ❖ 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
- ❖ June 21 – **National Aboriginal Day** events in the Canfr Atrium & Fort George Park.
- ❖ June 21 – **Railway Blues Festival** – all day event at the Railway Museum. Check out the website at [www.bluesnorth.com](http://www.bluesnorth.com)
- ❖ June 21 – **Type 1 Diabetes Expo** at PG Civic Centre 9AM for more info 561-9284
- ❖ June 22 – **Walk for ALS** Prince George at Masich Place stadium, registration 11:30 am – Walk 1-3pm, Build your own team or pre-register. Go to :[www.walkforals.ca](http://www.walkforals.ca)
- ❖ June 22 – Bob Harkins Fishing Derby – fundraiser for Project Friendship Society at West Lake Provincial Park – 11am -3pm –contact 612-7871
- ❖ June 22 – **Family Heritage Day** at the PG Rod and Gun Club at 9444 Hartman Rd - concession on site and a noon canon shoot. For more info 564-7046
- ❖ June 23 – Freedom Singers –“A Choir in the Black Gospel Style” at Art space –7pm - tickets \$10 at Books and Co.
- ❖ June 24 – Tuesday’s Technology Tips Breakfast topic “**Retirement**” – at the Innovation Resource Centre 1584 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. 7:30am, to register or for more info call 564-2755
- ❖ June 29 – **Exploration Place** - Sunday 2-4pm – T-Shirt painting – Bring you own plain t-shirt
- ❖ July 1 - **Run for Canada** – Fundraise for Canada’s Athletes. For more info on this event visit [www.hbc.com](http://www.hbc.com) or call 1-866-July1<sup>st</sup>(585-9178).
- July 1, **Canada Day at Fort George Park-- [The 2010 Legacies Now Connecting Communities Tour](#)**, presented by Bell and the Province of British Columbia, visits Prince George on Canada Day—the tour joins community events and festivals to share the Olympic and Paralympic spirit and encourage British Columbians to create their own legacies leading up to 2010 and beyond. The tour consists of a 200 square-foot display of information

panels and a miniature curling rink, along with other interactive activities, to inspire British Columbians to become more involved in their communities through arts, literacy, sport and recreation, physical activity and volunteerism

***If you are a non profit organization and would like to advertise an upcoming event or share a story please email [Shirley](mailto:shirley@shirleybondmla.bc.ca)***

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](mailto:shirley@shirleybondmla.bc.ca). 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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