



Useful Web Links

October 17, 2008



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Hello Everyone,

I hope all of you enjoyed Thanksgiving and are preparing for the arrival of winter. Some of you have even started doing the countdown to Christmas...hard to imagine!!! It was also another successful week for Prince George dancer Izaak Smith who survived to dance again. Keep those votes pouring in!

October 12th-19th is Homelessness Action Week. Our government has worked diligently to expand housing program across the province, including projects here in Prince George. The provincial budget for affordable housing and shelter now exceeds \$400 million and funding has tripled since 2001. In Prince George, the provincial government is spending over \$6.7 million on 1,605 low income renters, as well as 292 units for elderly renters and 166 families. There are more than 50 new units slated for construction, including AWAC Women's Shelter and the village Youth shelter.

It is great to see our community come together to tackle homelessness issues. Part of this is the province's new Homelessness Outreach Program, which operates in 47 communities, including Prince George. Outreach workers provide assistance to those on the street with food, clothing and shelter. This is an important program and we are proud of the work our province's and Prince George's outreach workers do. Working together we can make Prince George

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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

a better place for everyone.

Another new provincial initiative that could benefit the Robson Valley is the expansion of the Towns for Tomorrow program. I have mentioned the expansion of this great provincial initiative in previous columns, but I wanted to draw attention to a new policy that allows regional districts to apply on behalf of unincorporated areas. This means it is possible for communities throughout the Robson Valley can now access Towns for Tomorrow funding through the Fraser-Fort George Regional District.

The Northern Tourism AGM & Conference was also held this week from Wednesday, October 15th to Friday, October 17th. On Thursday there were presentations from people involved in a variety of areas of the tourism industry, such as marketing, community development and media relations. There was also a gala and awards ceremony on Thursday. My colleague the Hon. Bill Bennett, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts was in Prince George attending the AGM & Conference, as well as meeting with constituents from Prince George and the Robson Valley involved in the tourism sector to listen to their concerns. This is an important sector as we move towards greater diversification of our northern economy.

There are a couple deadlines I would like to remind you about. The first is the October 24th deadline for nominations for 'A Healthier You' awards. These awards are part of the "A Healthier You" Expo and Forum, to be held at the Prince George Civic Centre from Nov. 6-8. There are nine award categories and further information can be found at our website at

<http://www.eventscreeators.com/ahealthieryouexpo/ahyaward.html>. Lastly, organizations that would like to support or oppose the upcoming referendum on single transferable ballot (STV) have until December 1st to apply for funds. Only British Columbia non-profit organizations can apply for funding. The referendum campaign period begins Feb. 1, with funding provided on or after that date. Please see the website of the Ministry of the Attorney General at <http://www.gov.bc.ca/ag/>.

There are so many great events in the community this weekend I can't fit them all into my schedule, but I am going to as many as I can. Today I attended the Youth

Rodeo with the West of the Rockies Rodeo team and you can attend this weekend. A new Citizen of the Year will be selected tonight and the BC Northern Housing Awards will be presented tomorrow night. You can start your Christmas shopping and support the Child Development Centre by bidding on an item during their annual Dutch Auction on Shaw Cable and you can celebrate the grand opening of the new Pineview on Sunday. Wow – my feet hurt already but I will definitely see you out and about.

Until next week,

Shirley

Question of the week:

HOW IS THE PROVINCE RECOGNIZING VOLUNTEERS IN OUR COMMUNITY?

A new program will make charitable donations on behalf of British Columbia's volunteers to honour their contribution and mark the province's 150th anniversary year. The BC150 Volunteer Incentive Program (BC150 VIP) will honour up to 30,000 eligible volunteers who donate their time to charitable events with a \$50 donation in their name.

"Volunteers are the heart of our community. At the numerous events I attend, there are always countless volunteers whose dedication and hard work amaze me," says Prince George-Mount Robson MLA Shirley Bond. "I want to ensure that many of those volunteers are recognized in this special way."

According to a 2004 Statistics Canada survey, Prince George had the highest percentage of volunteers per capita anywhere in B.C. at 62 per cent. Both the national and provincial number of volunteers per capita according to the same survey is 45 per cent.

"The Stats Canada Survey proves what we already know; we lead the province with our volunteer spirit. Whether it's the CIBC Run for the Cure, the BC Seniors Games or the upcoming Skate for Literacy, these events are successful because of volunteers. Let's make sure they are honoured through the BC150 Volunteers Incentive Program.

Funding for the recognition effort is provided through the Community Gaming Grants program. Across British Columbia, almost 7,000 organizations receive grants totaling approximately \$150 million through the program.

In order to qualify for BC150 VIP, a community organization must plan a special fundraiser or awareness event that is not in support of regular programs. A limit of 100 contributions will be made by the provincial government on behalf of volunteers to any one organization. In addition, the organization must be eligible for a community gaming grant.

Applications for BC150 VIP are available online at <http://www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/gaming/grants/bc150-volunteer.htm> or by calling the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch at 250 387-5311. All BC150 VIP events must conclude by Dec. 31, 2009.

News Around the Province

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST SUPPORTS FOREST FAMILIES

A program designed to help older forest workers transition to retirement is opening new opportunities for forest-dependent families, said Blair Lekstrom, Minister of Community Development. More than 1,000 letters are already in the mail to forest workers, confirming a payment up to \$60,000, to help them transition to retirement. The funds are being made available through the Community Development Trust's \$85.5-million Transition Assistance program, announced as part of a larger suite of supports in May of this year.

"We are pleased to be able to help so many people in the forest sector through the Community Development Trust programs," said Lekstrom. "Our team engaged more than 30 representatives from unions, industry, non-profit organizations and government when designing the Transition Assistance program criteria. Clearly, these consultations have helped open this program to as many forest workers as possible."

The Transition Assistance program is designed to help those age 55 or older move towards retirement, while opening new opportunities for junior forest workers. "This

program has helped our members and other forest workers in the north make the early transition to retirement possible, and in the process created job opportunities for others that faced layoffs over the last year in those operations,” said Frank Everitt, president of the United Steelworkers Local 1-424.

More than 2,250 applications were received for the first round of funding. Due to the volume of applicants, the review of applications is still ongoing.

Those applicants who have not yet received notification of the status of their application will be getting a letter within the next two weeks. At this point in time, it is anticipated that approximately 10 per cent of applicants will not meet the criteria. Those who did not will be eligible for a reconsideration of their application. In addition, it is anticipated there will be a future opportunity to apply for transition assistance in 2009. The \$129-million Community Development Trust was established with federal funding earlier this year to help forest families, communities and companies with the downturn in the industry. The Community Development Trust also includes a \$17.25-million Tuition Assistance program and \$26.25-million Job Opportunities program. More than 5,000 forest workers in communities across the province will benefit from programs and services made available by the trust over three years. For more information on the Community Development Trust, visit www.cd.gov.bc.ca/cdt/.

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

Murry Krause and Positive Living North for raising awareness about AIDS in the aboriginal communities in northern BC.

Thanks for all you do in our community !

Community Announcements

West of the Rockies Pro Rodeo

finals at CN Centre.

Rodeo dance, Sat Oct 18 at the Roll-a-dome,
tickets at ticketmaster.ca

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The Child Development Centre’s 20<sup>th</sup> Annual

## Dutch Auction

**Sunday, October 19<sup>th</sup>**

Live on "Air" at Shaw TV from 10:00am – 7:00pm

Ronald McDonald will be on site from noon – 4pm

Kid's, bring in your donation and meet Ronald

Shaw TV, Queensway

To view the Dutch Auction list, see the Prince George Free Press on Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup>

## Mark your calendar...

- ❖ October 3-to 25 – Theatre North West presents "The Number" – Sunday 2pm and 8pm show. For tickets call 250-614-0039.
- ❖ October 17 – **Citizen of the Year Celebration** – tickets available at the Coast Inn of the North front desk. Tickets will not be sold at the Door. Cocktails at 6pm, dinner at 7pm- \$50 per person.
- ❖ October 17-19 – **West of the Rockies Pro Rodeo** finals at CN Centre. Rodeo dance, Sat Oct 18 at the Roll-a-dome, tickets at ticketmaster.ca
- ❖ October 17- **Shattering**- Forum Theatre created and performed by people who have struggled with addiction at the Prince George Civic Centre, pay by donation, 7pm for info 250-565-6332
- ❖ October 19 - Child Development Centre's 20<sup>th</sup> **Annual Dutch Auction**, for info call 563-7168. Check the Free Press, Oct 17/edition for list of items.
- ❖ October 23 – AiMHi Fall Fashion Show . tickets available at the Honey Tree and AiMHi reception. \$5 for more info call 250-564-6408
- ❖ October 27 –**Plain and Clear Language/writing** workshop funded by Adult Learning Knowledge Centre. To Register call Helen at 250-564-3568 ext 293
- ❖ October 21 – UNBC Economics Student Society is putting on a **symposium about the Carbon Tax**. Mark Jaccard to speak. 2-4:30 in the conference centre room 6-205/211 at UNBC
- ❖ November 8 – **Wine Festival** – Come out and support theatre North West while enjoying a fun evening of delicious wine tasting, appetizers, silent auction and new for 2008- mini wine tasting lessons. 7:30 pm to 10:30 pm Tickets \$35

available at Books and Co. and TNW office.

***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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