



Useful Web Links

October 24, 2008



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Hello Everyone,

As I write this today, I am in Vancouver having just completed one of five speaking engagements today alone. It is great that in each event, there are representatives from Prince George and Northern BC. I am looking forward to getting home on Saturday.

Over the last months, all of us have watched the economic uncertainty increase in unprecedented ways. And British Columbia is certainly not immune. That is why on Wednesday the Premier outlined a ten point plan to maintain British Columbia's economic competitiveness and to reduce costs during this economic slowdown. Measures include a new private sector pension opportunity for British Columbians who currently have no access to a pension plan, a five percent income tax cut retroactive to January 1st, 2008 and a 2.5 percent tax reduction for small businesses. B.C.'s economy is on a solid foundation when compared to many economies across the country and around the world. These measures should continue to maintain B.C.'s strong economic position and sustained economic growth.

While we know we need to be prudent and use excellent fiscal management, we also know that BC is currently positioned as well as it can be to face the future. BC is still projected to experience growth – just at a reduced rate. We have put a plan in place that will provide additional

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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

dollars through tax reductions to individuals, small businesses and industry. This will help to strengthen consumer confidence and attract investment. An expedited infrastructure program will help keep BC working. Strong leadership and decisive action are required and are what we intend to provide.

This week my colleague Minister Pat Bell released a new teacher resource kit designed to help educate secondary school students about the importance of the forest sector in British Columbia. Over 400 schools will receive the kits across the province. As northerners we know how important the forest sector is and as Minister of Education, I believe this initiative is a terrific way for children to learn about forestry. Topics covered in the kits include the importance of marketing wood around the world, identifying international markets and demonstrating the importance of the forest industry to the provincial economy.

Another important and emerging economic sector is the tourism industry. As I noted in my column last week, the Northern Tourism AGM & Conference was also held from Wednesday, October 15th to Friday, October 17th. This week a new regional innovation chair was appointed to support tourism in rural B.C. Northern British Columbia has so much to offer visitors, as the spectacular scenery and outdoor opportunities attract tourists from around the world. This new regional innovation chair will further promote tourism and economic opportunities in rural and northern B.C.

If you would enjoy a free skate with the Prince George Spruce Kings, why not join me at the annual Skate for Literacy hosted by the Prince George Public Library and the Spruce Kings on Sunday at Noon to 2 PM at the Coliseum. It is also time to start thinking about Operation Christmas Child. Simply fill a shoebox with small gifts and you can make a real difference to a child!

Finally, I would like to take a moment to send my condolences to the family of Calvin Kruk, Mayor of Dawson Creek. Mayor Kruk passed away this week at the age of 43. I met with Mayor Kruk on numerous occasions to discuss northern issues and found him to be a tireless and dedicated advocate for Dawson Creek. I am truly saddened by his passing. More difficult news came as we learned

that NDP MLA John Horgan has been diagnosed with cancer. Our thoughts and prayers will be with him and his family as he undergoes treatment.

Until next week,

Shirley

Question of the week:

WHAT TOOL HAS THE PROVINCE PROVIDED FOR DOING BUSINESS WITH THE GOVERNMENT?

Businesses in British Columbia have a new resource to help them become successful vendors to the public sector. “How to do Business with the British Columbia Government” is a new publication that explains how businesses – large and small – can explore opportunities to supply goods and services to the public sector.

The public sector is a huge marketplace, and this new booklet is a great tool for all British Columbia entrepreneurs interested in doing business with the Province. It explains in simple terms how the Province’s purchasing process works, and how to use services like BC Bid to become a successful vendor to government.

Each year the public sector in British Columbia, including provincial and municipal governments, Crown corporations, schools, hospitals, colleges and universities, spends about \$8 billion on goods and services. This market represents significant business opportunities for British Columbia companies. “How to do Business with the British Columbia Government” describes the purchasing process, how to make a proposal, how bids are evaluated and other information to guide business operators through public sector procurement.

This booklet is a direct result of input from small business owners and operators who attended our Small Business Roundtable consultations throughout the province. The Province is confident it will open up new opportunities for many British Columbia entrepreneurs.

The booklet is available online at

<http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/resource-centre/stg/index.htm>.

October is small business month in British Columbia.

Ninety-eight per cent of all businesses in British Columbia are small businesses, which provide employment for over

one million people and provide 57 per cent of British Columbia's private sector jobs. In total there are close to 380,000 small businesses in the province.

News Around the Province

HALL OF FAME SHARES IN BC150 CELEBRATION GRANTS

Cycling British Columbia will receive a \$10,000 BC150 Celebration Grant for a British Columbia Cycling Hall of Fame celebration and Future Heroes Award, Tourism, Culture and the Arts.

Our province is full of fascinating stories – from the rich history and culture of British Columbia's First Nations, to our gold rush explorers and homesteaders and on to our 21st-century achievers. These local BC150 celebrations help share our stories with each other and the world.

BC150 Celebration Grants support the BC150 pillars of heritage, communities, multiculturalism, Aboriginal people, and arts and culture, and reflect the unique nature of each British Columbia community.

On Nov. 7, Cycling British Columbia will host an awards ceremony and celebration to honour inductees to the Hall of Fame and to recognize potential future Olympians from B.C. with the Future Heroes Award. Nominees will represent all areas of the province in several categories, including athlete, official and coach. Pictures of the inductees will be hung on a permanent Cycling Wall of Fame located in the public area outside the Cycling British Columbia Head Office at 210 West Broadway.

To qualify for a BC150 Celebration Grant, organizations were to be non-profit, operate primarily for community benefit and have a voluntary, broad-based membership. The deadline for applications was

Aug. 31, 2008. Grants of up to \$10,000 were available through the Ministry of Housing and Social Development.

For more information on BC150 Grants, please visit http://www.bc150.gov.bc.ca/bc150.aspx?page=bc150_grant_programs.

BC150 is a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Crown Colony of British Columbia in 1858.

Every community in B.C. is invited to participate in this year-long celebration of the province's cultural diversity, community strength and widespread achievement. For more information on BC150 programs and events, visit

www.BC150.ca.

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

Michael Kerr
Citizen of the Year.
Congratulations Michael!!

Community Announcements
Skate for Literacy

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Katimavik group is coming to Prince George and are in need of Billeting from November 21-30. If you would like more info about Katimavik or would like to open your home to a billet please call Allison Parker at 250-564-5804

**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 25- **ECRA Annual Craft & Bake Sale** – Lunch \$5, 1692 10<sup>th</sup> ave, for info 250-561-9381
- ❖ October 25 – **Strutt Your Mutt** – come out and enjoy this fundraiser event. 1-4pm at the Horse Barn at the Exhibition grounds. For info call 562-5511
- ❖ October 25&26 – **UNBC Artisan of the North Craft Fair**. UNBC campus 10-5pm and Sunday 10-4pm
- ❖ 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 28-Prince George Symphony presents the National Arts Centre Orchestra at Vanier Hall 8pm tickets available at OGSO- 562-0800
- ❖ October 31-Nov 2 – **32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Studio Fair** at the Civic Centre
- ❖ November 7-9<sup>th</sup> – **ECRA Drama show** – Friday at 7pm, Saturday at 2pm and Sunday at 2pm- come

- out to ECRA on 10<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- ❖ 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.
  - ❖ November 11 – Family Day -\$39 **Free Skate with the Cougars** following the game.
  - ❖ November 15 & 16 – **AIMHi Christmas Craft Fair**, 10Am -4pm each day, AiMHi Gym – 950 Kerry St for info call 250-564-6408
  - ❖ November 16 - “**The Group of Six**” Open show and sale at Direct Art on George Street. 10am to 5pm. Percentage of sales will be donated to The Spirit of the North Foundation.
  - ❖ November 17 – Festival of Trees at the Civic Centre

***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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