



Useful Web Links

February 8, 2008



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Hello everyone:

I have been monitoring the news on the ice jam daily. The good news is that the water levels seem quite stable at the moment and there continues to be some open water. Water levels are down at most measuring stations and the jam itself has been reduced slightly although both the Nechako and the Fraser are in full winter freeze-up. Temperatures will apparently drop again this weekend and crews continue to monitor and stay prepared for any unexpected surges. At the same time the provincial team is still hard at work with the City and is in discussion about long-term solutions.

I attended the Heart and Stroke Breakfast this morning and just wanted to thank everyone who was there to support this very worthy cause. As you may remember I mentioned last week that February is Heart Month and is all about keeping your heart healthy. I got the chance to take the online heart test at www.loveyourheart.ca and was pleased to find that my heart age is 13 years younger than my actual age! Visit the Heart and Stroke website at www.heartandstroke.com for tips on how to keep your heart healthy too.

Last Saturday I attended PACHA's Better Air Symposium with Minister Pat Bell and Mayor Colin Kinsley and several hundred other Prince George residents. What a great turn out on a cold winter

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

morning. I would like to congratulate the winners of the Clean Air Awards and the winners of the Children's Art Contest as well as all those who were nominated. Air quality is an important issue to our community and I am happy to be working with the City of Prince George and groups such as PACHA to develop ideas and solutions for a better air quality for all of us. I encourage you to review some of the presentations from the Symposium when they are posted on the PACHA website.

More exciting news – we have announced that we are now accepting applications from students who wish to attend our second annual Student Congress at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver on April 4, 2008. Our theme this year will be "Your Education = Your Future". Check out our website at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/asc if you or someone you know is interested in attending. I hope that there will be a lot of Northern students who apply to attend the Congress and share their perspectives.

Have you always wanted to be a part of the Olympic Games? During his recent visit to Prince George, accompanied by Olympic mascots Quatchi, Miga and Sumi, VANOC CEO John Furlong said that they would be working to ensure that there was broad representation from around the province when volunteers were selected. It could be you!! On February 12, 2008 you can sign up for the opportunity of a lifetime – VANOC will officially open its search for 25,000 volunteers for the 2010 Olympic Games. Be sure to sign up at www.vancouver2010.com or www.workopolis.com and then keep your fingers crossed.

My world will change significantly when the Legislature resumes sitting on Tuesday Feb. 12th. Our session will begin with the Throne Speech when government will lay out its vision and work plan for the coming year. This will mean more time in Victoria instead of in my constituency, but I will continue to do the most important work I do and that is as a constituency MLA. So, keep in touch, and in next week's AYMLA – we will lay out some of the

items contained in the speech from the Throne.

Gung Hay Fat Choy – Happy Lunar New Year!!

Until next week,
Shirley

Question of the week:

**HOW WILL NEW PROGRAM HELP
TOURISM/HOSPITALITY, AND TRUCKING
INDUSTRIES?**

British Columbia is launching a two-year pilot project aimed at foreign workers to help offset serious labour shortages in the tourism/hospitality and trucking industries. The entry-level and semi-skilled pilot project under the B.C. Provincial Nominee Program will help these industries retain workers that they recruit internationally through expedited access for permanent residency. Spouses and dependents of nominees are also eligible for permanent residence under the program.

The trucking and tourism/hospitality industries play a critical role in our export-oriented economy, and are experiencing persistent labour shortages. B.C.'s labour shortages are no longer limited to skilled occupations.

Based on industry growth patterns, B.C.'s tourism/hospitality industry will need 84,000 more workers in the next decade – an average of one new job every hour for the next 10 years. About 37,000 new professional drivers across Canada are needed each year; at least 4,500 new drivers are required annually in B.C. alone. B.C. is relying more and more on temporary foreign workers to meet its labour needs, but temporary workers do not provide a permanent solution to long-term shortages. The industry associations asked us to use the Provincial Nominee Program to help them retain valued foreign workers and reduce the loss of productivity and the ongoing costs of continuously having to replace temporary foreign workers.

The pilot is open to eligible employers in the tourism/hospitality and long haul trucking industries,

and to temporary foreign workers in entry level and semi-skilled occupations who have been employed by their B.C. employer for at least nine months. Criteria for the pilot project will ensure that workers have the ability to establish themselves successfully in B.C., and that employers will offer good employment prospects and working conditions. Occupations eligible for the pilot include long-haul truck drivers, and high-demand service occupations such as food and beverage servers, tour guides, hotel front desk clerks, food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and housekeepers.

The B.C. Provincial Nominee Program will closely monitor compliance and employee retention, and will undertake a comprehensive review of the pilot project prior to its initial expiry.

Visit the PNP website for more information:

www.pnp.gov.bc.ca

News Around the Province

LORNA GOODISON WINS CANADA'S LARGEST NON-FICTION AWARD

One of Canada's largest literary prizes – the BC Award for Canadian Non-Fiction – was awarded to Lorna Goodison for her lyrical family memoir, *From Harvey River: A Memory of My Mother and Her People* (McClelland & Stewart).

B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell presented Goodison with the \$40,000 prize in Vancouver at a ceremony that also celebrated the two other finalists for the award, Donald Harman Akenson for *Some Family: The Mormons and How Humanity Keeps Track of Itself* (McGill-Queen's University Press) and Jacques Poitras for *Beaverbrook: A Shattered Legacy* (Goose Lane Editions).

The BC National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction, now in its fourth year, is the only national literary award to originate in British Columbia and is the largest award for Canadian non-fiction. Presented annually, the award was established by the British Columbia Achievement Foundation, an independent foundation endowed by the Province.

This award honours the important role literary non-fiction plays in Canada – the best work in this genre

prompts us both to think about the issues and influences shaping our country and to delight in the power of good storytelling.

The 2008 jury for the BC Award consisted of David Mitchell (chair), political commentator and historian, Patrick Lane, one of Canada's most highly regarded poets, and Sandra Martin, award-winning senior features writer for the Globe and Mail. They cited Goodison's *From Harvey River* for how it "evokes family history through lyrical storytelling and imagery that is both vivid and lush. [*From Harvey River*] is a memoir of a family, their roots and the memorable characters who formed them ... a book that combines love and tragedy, poverty and loss in rich and authentic prose."

"The standard for excellence in literary non-fiction is manifested in the works of the finalists," said Keith Mitchell, chair of the British Columbia Achievement Foundation. "The BC Award is an important opportunity to highlight writing of such quality."

For more information on the BC National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction and this year's finalists, please call 604 261-9777 or visit www.bcachievement.com.

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

Lesley White, local artist selected by Ducks Unlimited Canada for its 2008 Nation Art Portfolio.

***Congratulations Lesley
We are proud of you!***

Community Announcements

Donate now to help Flood Affected Residents to the Canadian Red Cross

Prince George Flood Response

Items to donate:

- food
- Household goods
- Occupational needs

- Transportation

Financial donations can be mailed to:
Chamber Office
890 Vancouver Street
Prince George, BC V2L 2P5
Or call 562-25-454 for more info.

Mark your calendar...

- ❖ Feb 8 – 23 – Prince George Mardi Gras presents 32nd Annual Snow Daze
- ❖ Feb 9 – Exploration Place – Chinese New Year celebration. Fireworks, Chinese Cuisine, silent auction, games, and activities. For more info call 562-1612
- ❖ Feb 9 – Valentine Jamboree at ECRA, 1pm -4pm; Ivan Paquette and the Country Cuzzins. Sing-a-long, dance, light refreshments, admin: \$5.
- ❖ Feb 10 – 21st Annual Prince George Citizens ICEMAN – for more info and to register go to www.mag-net.com/iceman
- ❖ Feb 24 – the Seniors Fun Fair at the Hart Pioneer “Centre from 10AM to 5PM Free admission with food at minimal cost.
- ❖ Feb 27 - United Way launches forestry support seminars at the Civic Centre 7-9pm for more info call Jocelyn Snih at 561-1040
- ❖ Mar 1 – Can West Can Spell National Spelling Bee 2008 at Vanier Hall. More info to come....
- ❖ Mar 7-9 – The Rainbow singers and musical friends present Musical Eastcoast Kitchen Party at ECRA, Admin: \$10

If you are a non profit organization and would like to advertise an upcoming event or share a story please email [Shirley](mailto:shirley@mag-net.com)

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@mag-net.com). 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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