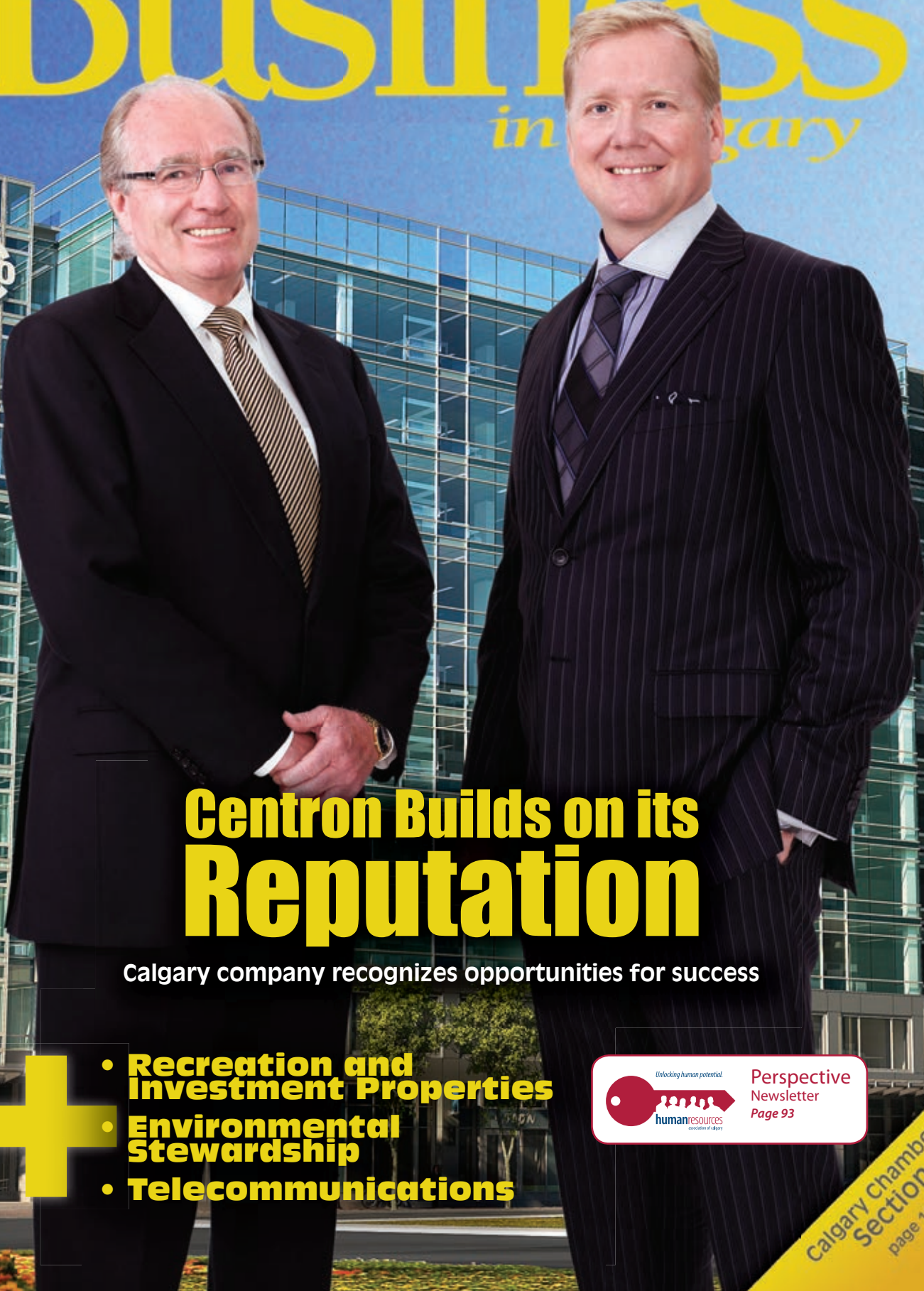


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10

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**On our cover...**

Bob Harris, CEO, and Cole Harris, President, Centron Group of Companies,  
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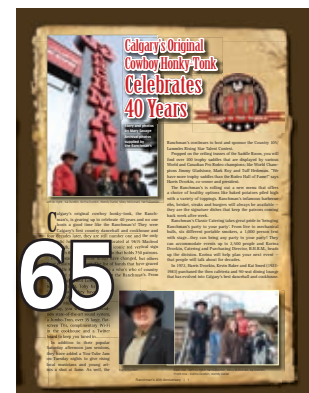
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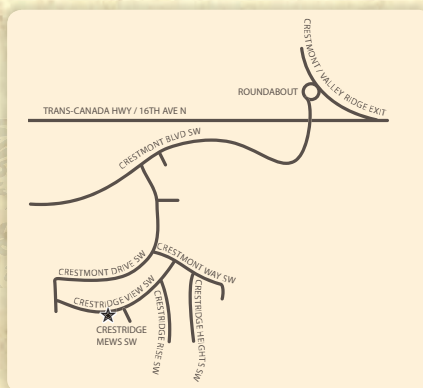
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BY RICHARD BRONSTEIN

# J'accuse Environmentalists

**T**his month we turn our attention to ethics: Is it permissible to lie in order to achieve a good objective?

Obviously there is no single answer. I think most people would gladly lie in order to save someone's life.

But if you want to affect public policy, such as reducing the potential for global warming, should you tell lies?

I raise this because it seems like the global anti-warming crowd – that includes you Robert Redford – have been caught in a big lie about the oilsands. One of the more frequently heard arguments against the oilsands is that it is a giant carbon bomb. That if it's exploited, it will unleash enough harmful emissions to doom the entire planet. Within days, if not hours. So stop Keystone, stop Gateway, and stop the oilsands. Keep it all locked away where it is now. World saved.

Except, according to a recent study by researchers at the University of Victoria, this is a lie. This study determined that if you burned all the accessible oilsands, some 170 billion barrels, it would only raise global temperatures by about one-third of a degree. But that if you burned all coal reserves in the world, temperatures might increase by five degrees or more.

This kind of policy pranking by Greenpeace and other extreme anti-oilsands groups raises some other contradictory questions about the integrity of activist lobby groups. In particular it raises the question of trying to affect public policy by attacking the supply side of the equation.

For example, the U.S. President Richard Nixon declared a War on Drugs in 1971. Is there any person in the world who believes that this policy of attacking the supply of drugs has had an ounce of success?

In 2001 President George Bush declared a War on Terror to attack the supply of terrorists. After trillions of dollars spent fighting this war, have we eliminated global terrorism?

Even Prime Minister Stephen Harper is in the picture with his war on crime, a policy to increase the supply of prison inmates as a way of making our streets safer.

All the critiques of these supply-side policies say that to truly mitigate the effects of drugs, terrorism or criminality, you have to deal with underlying causes. Broken homes and

families, social and economic issues, mental and physical health, lack of neighbourhood infrastructure and more.

So why are the bright, intelligent, committed people in the environmental movement declaring War on the Oilsands when it is demonstrated time and again that attacking supply is a simpleton's answer to a complex problem?

I've certainly voiced my share of oilsands criticism. I think we are rushing too fast. I think Albertans are not being paid enough for this resource. From what we are being paid our provincial government is spending too much and not saving enough. We are not demanding enough about the effects of oilsands exploitation on water and air quality, on the health of the local environment and on the welfare of residents in the area.

Slowly these issues are being taken seriously. People like Dr. David Schindler of the University of Alberta finally got the attention of governments and corporations to do real scientific monitoring. Organizations like the Pembina Institute have always been at the table by voicing sensible concerns based on real data and evidence.

And now we have COSIA, the Canadian Oil Sands Innovation Alliance, a consortium of developers who plan to work collaboratively to improve the environmental regime involving exploitation of the sands.

All this is good. But as a society we have to go another step. We have to deal with underlying causes – i.e. are there ways to reduce consumption of carbon-based energy sources to mitigate the potential harmful effects of global warming?

So far as I know there are two models we could try to follow. Joseph Stalin changed consumer behaviour in Russia at the point of a gun. But that won't work here. So we have to take a slower path through education and pricing signals, with appropriate supports for the disadvantaged in society.

That means we have to take a serious look at some form of carbon tax in the near future. It will not be easy, it's a minefield, but ultimately it is a hill we must learn to climb.

This is not stuff you sketch out on a napkin. It requires a national, ongoing dialogue and wouldn't it be handsome if the Alberta government showed leadership on getting this conversation started. **BIC**





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BY FRANK ATKINS

# Are Socialist Politicians Conning Us?

I grew up in an NDP household; my father was president of United Steel Workers of America, Local 4487. In the very first election in which I was old enough to vote, I dutifully voted NDP. As I got older and more educated, I gradually drifted to the right and eventually became an ardent conservative. Once this process was complete, I was left wondering if the socialists actually believe all of the rhetoric that they preach, or are they just saying what they believe they need to say in order to get hold of power. This idea surfaced in the press recently, not because of some political ideological discussion, but rather surprisingly due to “robocall” accusations.

In a recent opinion piece in the Calgary Herald, Mayor Nenshi quoted Andrew Coyne as saying, in reference to the robocall accusations, “Always remember: everyone in politics is trying to con you in one way or another. Some go to greater lengths at different times than others.” Nenshi went on to disagree with this statement, saying that he has always been honest with the voters. Nenshi states, “I know this may sound self-serving from a politician, but I wasn’t always in this job and I won’t always be in it. I got into this work because, as I said every day during the election, I believe that government matters in people’s lives, that politics matters, and that the people we elect matter.”

I cannot actually remember all of what Nenshi said during the election, but I do not doubt that he actually

said something similar to the above. However, this is where Nenshi is either being disingenuous or completely naive. It is not clear to me whether Nenshi would be comfortable with being labelled as a socialist. However, from my perspective, someone who

I believe that we all should discuss this important question that Nenshi has brought forward.

Are socialist politicians conning us during elections or are they just very naive about economic matters?

believes that government needs to be involved in people’s lives is clearly flirting with the left wing of the spectrum. The problem here, as too many European governments appear to have discovered too late, is that socialism is expensive. The European model is to simply bury your head in the sand concerning the long-run consequences of borrowing to finance ever-increas-

ing government interference. We all know where that has got Greece, Spain and Italy.

Nenshi ran a campaign where I believe he promised fiscal responsibility, as it was one of the major themes of the last municipal election. But at the same time, one of Nenshi’s main themes was that he could make lives better for Calgarians. In the same Calgary Herald piece, Nenshi states, “But the vast majority of people I meet in politics are hard-working folks who really believe that our community can be better, and who want to work to improve the lives of their neighbours.” So, here we have the basic problem. Nenshi believes that it is the responsibility of the government to make people’s lives better, rather than the responsibility of the individual. This is a very expensive political and economic model that requires seemingly endless increases in taxes to accomplish this goal, as the municipal government has limited borrowing powers. So, as the tax increases continue under Nenshi’s administration, I believe that we all should discuss this important question that Nenshi has brought forward. Are socialist politicians conning us during elections or are they just very naive about economic matters? **BIC**

FRANK ATKINS IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY AND A MEMBER OF THE ADVISORY BOARD OF THE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SECTOR ACCOUNTABILITY.



A man with short blonde hair, wearing a dark suit, light blue shirt, and patterned tie, is sitting in a black office chair. He has his hands clasped in his lap and is smiling slightly. The background is a light-colored wall with horizontal lines.

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BY **LONNIE TATE**

# Our Monarchy Works for Me

A few weeks ago, I witnessed a televised documentary of a tragedy of monumental proportion – the death of Whitney Houston. Well ... it was in America.

America desperately wants its own royalty. The country has no one to put on pedestals; groomed from birth to understand duty to country and the need for propriety. When an incredible talent like Whitney Houston arrived on stage early in life, hopelessly ill-equipped to deal with the exposure, she nevertheless became a kind of royalty.

The ensuing mess of the next 25 years of her life was shown over and over on CNN and other channels. Seven straight days of celebrating a life that was remarkably wrong. The unspoken message to young people seeking a guiding light was find some talent, drink excessively, score some drugs, dress outrageously, behave badly, find some sycophants to prop you up ... and you can be royalty. In America, the story is repeated time and again.

Contrast that to our royalty. Now the Royal Family has its own foibles ... the international press is only too obliging to blow up any indiscretion. But consider the duty shown by our queen of nearly 60 years, or the exuberance of the young royals who visited Calgary last summer. There is no comparison!

I'm old enough to remember our queen's coronation. I was in Grade 3, colouring the crowns, the orb, the sceptre that would be the symbols of her rule. Television was black and white but LIFE Magazine brought the pageantry to life with colour photography. Horses; brass breastplates of the household guard; a gold carriage right out of a fairy tale ... those and countless other traditions left a lasting impression on an eight year old.

The medium for spreading the aura of royalty has changed with the times. And our royalty has changed to be much more open and the subject of much greater scrutiny. But the essence is still there. Who can forget a little girl with a handful of posies presenting them to the Duchess of Cambridge? More poignant ... the little girl had no hair as a result of

treatment for cancer. Still more powerful, the duchess was awestruck by the little girl. The warmth and charm of the moment is exactly what our royalty is all about and why we are better off having the Royal Family as our titular heads of state.

Contrast that with the U.S. If there are little girls with posies, they are generally ignored by celebrity royals. The best way of getting attention is to get a big sign and make a fool of yourself. That might get you a cameo moment in television history where a celebrity paused because of the commotion. That brief moment is usually reserved for the little girl's parents. Of course a little girl can also dress like the celebrity, do a few lines of coke and party for three days hoping someone will notice. That may get her into an inner circle that matters to someone.

The cost of the celebrity royalty process is staggering in both dollars and human terms. There are enablers everywhere providing the juice that fuels celebrities and helps get them through their frenetic lives. Most of that juice is illegal but is so commonplace no one seems to care. It is matter-of-fact; to be American royalty you need to live on the edge. That symbolism drives millions of kids in a most unfortunate direction.

In Canada, you and I cannot be royalty ... we are not born to it. And who would want to be? Living in a fishbowl with the world watching your every move is a tremendous burden. Were we to be thrust into the limelight experienced every day by our royalty, we would likely fail ... just as often happens to American royalty. Fortunately our royals have been conditioned to duty and honour and all those things to which we aspire. They are the real deal ... something we can hope to emulate but never reach.

So every time I hear someone griping about the modest cost or burden of the royals on our society I get annoyed. Please leave well enough alone ... let Grade 3 students and old guys have their dreams. **BIC**



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## Ask an Expert

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*Sheri MacMillan  
Senior Trust & Estate Practitioner,  
President of MacMillan Estate Planning Corp.  
and Host of The Strongroom on QR77*

**Q** I am considering succeeding my business to my son, what things should I consider prior to doing this?

**A** Remarkably, seventy percent of family-owned businesses in Canada fail to succeed to the next generation. In order to avoid a company's demise, it is vital to prepare an effective business exit plan. Proactively taking the right steps now will help to ensure a smooth transition, leading to greater financial security for retirement. Business owners often avoid planning due to the number of emotionally charged issues that are associated with passing on the torch; however, retiring from a business does not have to be a difficult experience. By consulting with an expert, a business owner can determine the best approach within the scope of his or her unique circumstances. Lacking the correct knowledge, many owners will unintentionally make choices that are to their companies' detriment. When a business owner gives shares of a company directly to a successor, that owner is putting their financial security in harm's way, especially if he or she is relying on the revenue generated by the company for retirement. However, by giving a successor shares, by way of a Trust, a business can be effectively protected against bankruptcy, divorce or a lawsuit. I

recommend that a Trust be used in conjunction with an estate freeze, when both mechanisms are utilized within a succession plan, not only are assets protected, but unnecessary taxes may also be deferred or avoided completely. Succeeding your business requires very strategic planning, I recommend consulting a professional before making any decisions.

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# It started with a vision...

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## Then and now

### Clive Beddoe, Mark Hill, Tim Morgan, Donald Bell

WestJet Airlines Ltd.

Clive Beddoe has always been a shrewd and savvy businessman, so when one of his business partners, Mark Hill, approached Beddoe with the idea of launching a Canadian airline offering discount prices compared to the competition, he was highly skeptical. “Are you out of your @\$% mind?” was the response Hill received. However, he eventually convinced Beddoe to look at a business plan, so Hill got together with Tim Morgan and Donald Bell to come up with a financial model that showed a 40 per cent decrease in fares with a corresponding 140 per cent increase in demand. The numbers clinched Beddoe’s interest with a model based loosely on the U.S. carrier Southwest Airlines.

Starting with just three airplanes and some initial capital to get the venture off the ground, with the support of David Neeleman (president of Morris Air at the time, later bought out by Southwest) the venture officially took flight on February 29, 1996.

By 2000, the team had built WestJet into a viable low fare, no frills airline that was rapidly becoming a truly homegrown success story. That year, WestJet and its founders, including Beddoe, were honoured as the Ernst & Young 2000 Prairies Region Entrepreneur Of The Year (Business to Consumer category). The team went on to take part in the World Entrepreneur Of The Year Awards held in Monaco the following year. Remarkd Dave Connolly, a partner with Ernst & Young, at the ceremony: “Clive, Don, Mark and Tim bear the hallmarks of an entrepreneurial suc-



Clive Beddoe





# a vision...

cess story. They had the courage of their convictions and the drive that has fuelled the phenomenal success of WestJet. Their acute business savvy and dedication has led to WestJet's success and serves as an example for up-and-coming entrepreneurs."

Indeed the success story continued. The company underwent domestic expansion in the early-2000s as the airline industry in Canada restructured and WestJet moved into Eastern Canada, and added routes to places like Fort McMurray, Sault St. Marie, Sudbury and Brandon, with Toronto and London to come later along with Montreal, Halifax and others. By 2005, WestJet had expanded into international routes throughout the U.S. and to the Bahamas by 2006, the same year that Beddoe stepped down as president during a year in which the company posted its best quarterly profit to date of \$52.8 million.

The company known for its fun and casual atmosphere continued its expansion in the years that followed with Beddoe remaining as chairman of the board of the publicly-traded company on the TSX under the symbol WJA. It has gone from holding seven per cent market share to about 40 per cent last year.

Beddoe, meanwhile, remains chairman of the board of WestJet and is being inducted into the Junior Achievement's Canadian Business Hall of Fame this year – another milestone

in a highly successful career for the man who had the courage and vision to launch from his previous real estate development company into the airline business. It is an industry that he has a true passion for, having flown gliders in England and also having received his pilot's license. He has been recognized with many honours over the years he's been with WestJet in one capacity or another and it doesn't appear his appetite for business is slowing down any time soon.

He has developed a strong reputation for his keen business acumen that reshaped the airline industry in Canada following his success in real estate as well as plastics enterprises. He was inducted into the Marketing Hall of Legends in 2009 and was bestowed an honorary doctorate of laws from the University of Calgary and Wilfrid Laurier University. He is also an avid sailor and participated in the 2006 ARC race across the Atlantic.

Beddoe's personal commitment to his community is evident in the numerous non-profit organizations he has personally and professionally supported through WestJet over the years, most notably the Boys and Girls Club of Canada. He is a true visionary with a passion for business and community. With WestJet now flying 98 aircraft to 14 countries, their successful story continues to unfold and Beddoe looks back on what his entrepreneurial vision has created.



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Taking place May 6-16, 2012 at the Chestermere Recreation Centre, 40 guys will lace up their skates in an attempt to raise money and set a new Guinness World Record for the longest hockey game ever played.

The funds generated from the 'Hockey Marathon for the Kids' will support the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation (95%) and the Chestermere Minor Hockey Association (5%).

### Fast facts about the game:

- Current record is 243 hours held by 40 women in Burnaby, B.C. who raised funds for cystic fibrosis in 2011.
- Goal for this World Record Game is 250 hours – 10 ½ days.
- Members of each team (Team Hope and Team Cure) will play in four-

hour shifts with a rest in between of four to six hours.

- Players will eat and sleep at the rink. They cannot leave the rink!
- Youngest player: 17
- Oldest player: 52

So far, there are hundreds of volunteers signed up. And there are still more needed...

### Funds raised:

The proceeds from this event will support the most critically-ill patients at the Alberta Children's Hospital including children who are battling cancer and those who are admitted to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU).

Funding from the 'Hockey Marathon for the Kids' will specifically help the cancer unit by:

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#### About Diamond Marshall:

When Diamond Marshall was diagnosed with a rare form of advanced cancer, the carefree five-year-old suddenly faced a fight for her life in the cancer unit and PICU at the Alberta Children's Hospital. Through her battle, her wish to meet a "real princess" gave her strength and courage. Last July, her wish was granted when the Duchess of Cambridge, Kate

Middleton, came to Calgary. The image of Diamond hugging the duchess brought smiles and tears to many around the world. This touching moment is a constant reminder of hope for Diamond that fairy-tale dreams do come true. Today, Diamond continues her treatments and remains in remission. **BIC**

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## Making a WEE difference

Calgary entrepreneur Brian McCloskey aims to make a difference through his clothing line for kids, WEE are the PPL



Brian McCloskey owner of kids clothing line, WEE are the PPL

Brian McCloskey's early life was spent surrounded by medical staff. Born premature after only 25 weeks of gestation, his introduction to the world was spent in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of the Toronto Hospital for Sick Children. The full-time Calgary art director still has marks left on his body from all the needles and tubes that were attached to him as a baby preemie.

After moving to Calgary seven years ago from Ottawa, where he took post-secondary education in advertising, he had an idea based on a branding experiment he did for his portfolio in school. "I had an idea that I wanted to be able to fully flush out a fictitious company and show how it started from the roots of naming and logo development into a full website, with the idea being a kids' clothing line," says McCloskey.

He was never one to like the mainstream brands found in the malls, targeted mainly to kids and the tween market, such as Quicksilver and other "board culture" brands. Although he doesn't actually have kids – yet – he wanted to create a clothing line dedicated only to kids, as opposed to keeping the kids hooked on the brand as they grew up. "After doing some research, I realized there wasn't really anything like it in the market," McCloskey says.

He created his company, WEE are

the PPL, with the idea that it would be exclusively for kids who would outgrow the brand by around age eight. Since launching the company, he has done everything himself, sourcing local companies to get the product to market. "It's a one-man show – it's all me," he says. He buys T-shirts in bulk and does his silk screening through a company called Primal Screen. Everything else, from creating do-it-yourself labels to the administration and marketing, is all done by him.


He officially launched the company in late November in time for the Christmas rush and he was pleasantly surprised at the reaction. He held a sale at the Drum & Monkey Tiki Room with other independent vendors in various booths, along with his website (where the majority of his sales are generated).

"I've been doing everything through social media," he says. With little resources for advertising or marketing, he considers the business a part-time gig for now. He got the initial financing through a loan from his father with the plan to reimburse him when the business takes off – which appears to be happening now. "It's something that I'd like to grow over time and eventually have it flourish into full-time employment," he says.

While the only thing he knows



about those early days in the hospital comes from pictures and stories (like how he fit into the palm of his grandfather's hand), that early introduction to life is something that has stayed with him. He beat a lot of odds to get where he is today. "I'm grateful and proud of that," he says. "The same must be said for my parents, family and the wonderful staff who were all on my side fighting right along with me," says McCloskey.

In respect to the teams of medical experts who strive every day to help kids like him, he has decided to donate fully 10 per cent of his profits to children's hospitals across Canada. Wherever the sales come from across Canada, he donates 10 per cent of those profits back to the region's certified local children's hospital – one of 15 scattered throughout the country. He still attributes his success to the strength and support of his parents. "This is for you guys and this is for kids like me," says McCloskey. 

## HRAC 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

*"Of all the attitudes we can acquire, surely the attitude of gratitude is the most important and by far the most life-changing."*

~ Zig Ziglar

What do you get when you have a milestone event, 220 guests plus volunteers extraordinaire? You have a successful and memorable 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary honouring the HRAC, major events directors and a wonderful group of volunteers, made up of enthusiastic individuals, who spearheaded the organization, planning and delivery on a most successful memorable event for HRAC members and guests.

The evening celebration was held at Heritage Park, Gasoline Alley, on January 26, 2012. In alignment with the HRAC, the foundational theme for the 65<sup>th</sup> year of 'Inspire, Innovate and Evolve' aimed to capture the history, present and future.

This reflective theme is an energizing beginning to a year that embodies the concept of relationship building, engagement and growth.

The energy in the room was contagious with sponsorship support threaded throughout the evening that set an inviting tone of welcome and festivity to guests starting on the red carpet. Plenty of activity throughout the evening aimed to capture moments, rekindle and/or make new connections through the spirit of networking, topped with great food and music that encouraged a celebratory atmosphere and as well a scene of generosity. This generosity was evident from the gracious support of sponsors and silent auction contributors. A special thank you was extended to the charity sponsor of the evening – Southern Alberta Junior Achievement. With wonderful silent auction items to bid on, the process raised over \$4,000 to support Junior Achievement with their mandate to deliver relevant, high-impact programs that will prepare future young members for their roles as business and HR professionals in the community.

The evening celebrated the vibrant HR profession. According to the HRAC, the theme of the year of celebration can be described in the words of Marianne Williamson.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be?...Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine.... And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

Happy 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary HRAC ... you have never looked better! 

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# Prolific Problem or Technology Teammate?

Smartphones and social media are firmly entrenched in employees' work routines, but companies are now questioning how much is too much

BY DEREK SANKEY

Surfing the Internet at your work computer is so passé. While it persists as a concern for business leaders and managers, smartphones, tablets and mobile media have made logging into Facebook and other social media sites ubiquitous. Going online to check someone's status, upload a photo or check the sports scores has become a routine part of the workday in most offices across Calgary.

One study by network security consulting firm Voco found that workers spend an average of 25 per cent of their workday doing personal stuff online. The first place they flock to? Facebook. The study found CEOs and CIOs of companies surveyed were largely unaware of what employees are doing online. Social networking sites, chatting over IM, online dating sites, browsing eBay auctions – these are just a few of the common things employees do using their BlackBerrys, iPhones and other smartphones. The company computer may still be used, but most corporations have put some kind of parameters around their use. Not so with mobile media.



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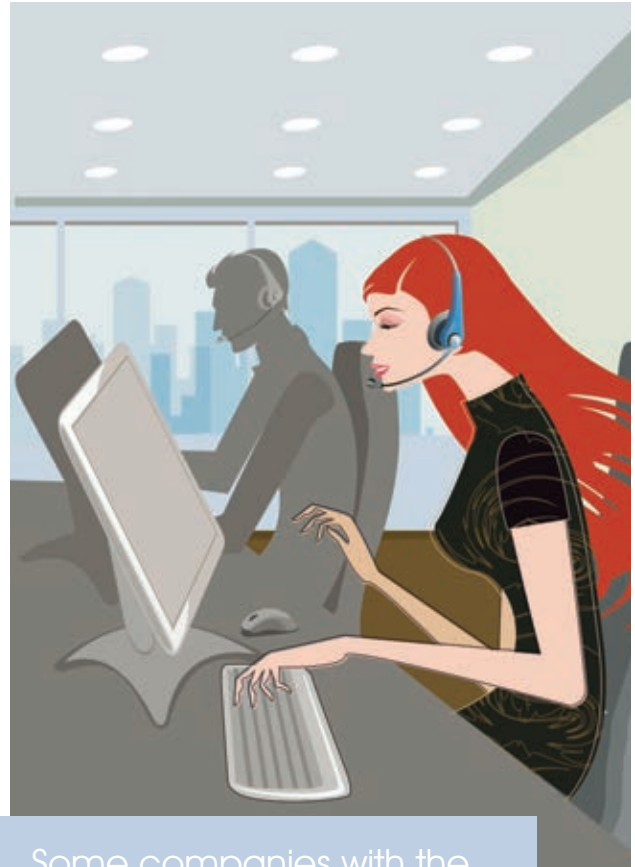
At the end of the day, social media isn't going to disappear. But with people spending so much time in such an obvious way – even if it isn't obvious to some people – using their mobile devices at work to “check a quick message,” corporations are only now starting to get their collective heads around how to deal with it.

Computer and online policies might not cut it anymore. Often developed several years ago, they haven't kept up with the realities of how we use today's technology in the workplace. Some argue that there's no harm in it because it only takes a second to check something quickly, but obviously the time adds up throughout the day. Other say it's a vital link to keep in touch with their clients and for drumming up new business by courting potential clients with company news. Perhaps.

“You can see what's starting to happen in the Canadian workplace,” says Stacy Parker, a spokesperson for staffing and recruitment firm Randstad Canada. “Adoption rates (of social media use) are significant right now.” The company did a survey that found 77 per cent of Canadians have social media accounts; yet only 27 per cent claim to use social media to profile themselves for business purposes.

There's no question adoption of social media is high in the workplace, but the vast majority of it appears to be for personal use – not to develop new business. Parker says the trend has actually been a loosening up of policies when it comes to social media use in the workplace. Some companies with the best intentions encourage their employees to use it as part of the firm's corporate social media strategy.

“In general, there's a loosening up of policies,” says Parker. “If an organization thinks they have prevented their employees from using social media because they have a policy against it, what are they doing to control their employees' cellphones? (The employees) are on LinkedIn, Facebook ... every day.”



Some companies with the best intentions encourage their employees to use it as part of the firm's corporate social media strategy.

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Laurie Robson, a partner with Borden Ladner Gervais in the firm's labour and employment group, says the common practice can also cause problems such as bullying and create tensions between employees, rather than help facilitate camaraderie. "Some of the most interesting cases are where an employee on Facebook makes a disparaging comment about an employer and forgets that her boss or his boss is a friend," says Robson. "You have an altercation with somebody at work and feel it's wrong ... and start chatting about it online with some other friends ... then it turns into an attack and bullying."

It can also impact the reputation of a business if a client sees an employee on some website acting inappropriately. "Because our personal lives are so connected with our business lives, that's getting to businesses," she says. "Now you're



The point is to make it clear what your strategy is, develop a policy that's as unambiguous as possible and convey it openly and accessibly to your workforce.

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affecting the reputation of the business and the business is going to lose sales as a result of this thoughtless conduct.”

Social media, of course, is becoming highly valuable as a sales and customer relationship development tool. Companies are embracing new strategies to boost sales. What they also might be doing is creating a much more unproductive workforce. The point is to make it clear what your strategy is, develop a policy that's as unambiguous as possible and convey it openly and accessibly to your workforce, say the experts. **BIC**

## What should a social media policy contain?

- 1. Limitations on time** – By setting limitations on how much time in a day an employee can spend on social media, they cannot use the excuse “well there was a lot to do on Facebook today.” Make it clear that they are using corporate time and they are not to be using a social network to chat with their friends.
- 2. Language Guidelines** – Define what's acceptable on corporate accounts and work time. If there is specific language employees are not supposed to use, make it clear to them.
- 3. Reaction Guidelines** – It might seem hard to believe, but some people are short tempered. There have been several stories where employees have reacted in a negative way to an online comment or on Twitter to a potential customer base or individual customer. Tell employees to maintain composure and professionalism in their interactions with potential and existing customers when interacting on social media or online blogs.
- 4. Profile Guidelines** – If they are going to be using a personal account as a representative of the company, their profile needs to match the company image. For example: if a company maintains a clean-cut corporate business model, photos of their employees wearing torn up or inappropriate clothing should not be considered acceptable.

### Advice to companies:

Start by coming up with a list of exactly what the company will be using social media for and make sure the employees stick to that list. Some examples:

- To gain new business
- To keep current clients informed
- To attract new employees

Develop a more complete list of exactly what is expected from the employees and let them see the social media plan. By giving the employees access to the plan, there is a better chance they will stick to the plan instead of coming up with their own ideas.

Using this list, come up with some ideas of what is expected of the employees. Giving employees unlimited access to say what they want on social media can be dangerous. Break it down to exactly what is expected, how many posts a day they should be making, what the topics should revolve around, and how it should be posted (corporate account or their personal account?).

SOURCE: SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS



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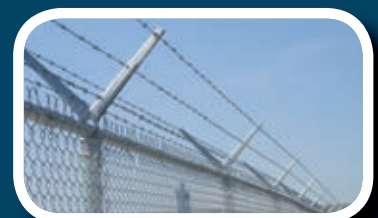
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# Oilsands Monitoring System Marks Progress, Leaves Unanswered Questions

BY DEREK SANKEY



...oilsands producers will now be subject to its new oilsands monitoring system – an integrated environmental monitoring system that will make public the companies' environmental activities as part of their operations.

**W**hen the biggest and most powerful leaders of oilsands producers gathered at a news conference last month to announce the signing of the Canadian Oil Sands Innovation Alliance, it was a huge step forward in what has been a renewed effort to address environmental concerns about the development of the oilsands.

Alliance chairman Dan Wicklum touted it as a “collaborative hub” that is meant to get all the major oilsands companies on the same page with smaller firms, governments, and universities to develop ground-breaking environmental technologies and best practices. The companies will share their knowledge on critical environmental issues, such as the use of tailings ponds and land reclamation. Shell, Suncor, Statoil, BP, Cenovus, Conoco, Imperial Oil, Nexen, Total and Canadian Natural Resources are all on board.

It comes on the heels of an earlier announcement in February by the Alberta government that the oilsands producers will now be subject to its new oilsands monitoring system

– an integrated environmental monitoring system that will make public the companies' environmental activities as part of their operations.

“We are pleased the federal and Alberta governments are working together as partners to provide leadership in developing and implementing a single, government-led oilsands monitoring system that will be based on sound science and provide transparency regarding the environmental performance of the oilsands industry,” says Dave Collyer, president of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP).

Industry officials call it a “robust, transparent monitoring system” that will help industry, governments and other stakeholders achieve the goal of long-term, responsible development of the oilsands industry. “We look forward to working with governments to ensure the oilsands environmental monitoring system is implemented effectively and efficiently, including integration with existing environmental monitoring organizations and process in the oilsands region,” says Collyer.



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She raises concerns that the steady decline of woodland caribou herds in the oilsands region for years is evidence the industry has not taken necessary actions to protect the wildlife, however she also remains optimistic that the recent efforts by the oilsands producers, regulators and the government is a move in the right direction.



But weeks after the announcement, it remains unclear exactly what the next steps will be and what the real impact of such a system will ultimately have on the industry and for the general public – which is increasingly putting the oilsands in its sights along with environmental groups.

“The need to improve monitoring of the environmental impacts of oilsands production has been widely recognized and it’s promising to see that this plan commits to transparency and accessibility and is based on technically sound information,” says Jennifer Grant, director of the Pembina Institute’s oilsands program.

“It’s very positive that more pollutants will be tracked and that the area monitored is being expanded to include downstream and downwind regions,” she says. “But better monitoring is only one piece of the puzzle. The government’s regulatory capacity and commitment to actually manage environmental impacts continues to lag behind the pace and scale of new oilsands development and new projects continue to be approved, even though we don’t have enough information to understand the impacts.”

She raises concerns that the steady decline of woodland caribou herds in the oilsands region for years is evidence the industry has not taken necessary actions to protect the wildlife, however she also remains optimistic that the recent efforts by the oilsands producers, regulators and the government is a move in the right direction.

“A scientifically credible monitoring plan provides a strong foundation for improved environmental management of oilsands development and we look forward to working with government to ensure it’s used as the basis for informed decision-making and action to address environmental impacts,” says Grant.

The proof will be in the execution and implementation when it comes to oilsands monitoring. The plan doesn’t address the specifics of how it will be rolled out nor does it address funding issues or address how each organization’s

responsibilities will be laid out. The expectations were clear during the joint announcement from the federal and provincial governments: industry will have to step up to fund it and to make it work effectively.

Funding is the likely to be the least of the issues. With the price of oil hovering around \$100 – and billions of dollars in oilsands projects on the books – it seems reasonable to assume the money is there to reach what has been set as a \$150-million price tag. What remains less clear is exactly how the monitoring system will be implemented within the three-year time frame set out by the governments.

Another point that remains unclear is how the public will respond when it is implemented. Will it actually make any difference? Will it do anything to allay the fears and concerns of environmentalists, landowners and the entire world? With so many people criticizing the development of the oilsands – for one reason or another – much is at stake.

CAPP has already introduced new operating rules for its members when it comes to hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, of natural gas wells – another point of environmental contention and a move that was also aimed at easing fears surrounding the practice.

When the first report card on the progress of the oilsands monitoring program is released at the end of the year, both industry and governments should have a better picture of how aggressive the industry is in tackling the system. While it is altruistic that the goal is to be good environmental stewards, it appears the real reason behind it has more to do with trying to enhance the industry’s damaged reputation at home and abroad.

The oilsands monitoring system will measure companies’ progress on everything from water to air quality to biodiversity and will include accountability mechanisms. The efforts by some groups to portray the industry as “dirty oil” has taken a toll on the industry’s ability to be seen a credible on environmental issues – despite noticeable program.



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Suncor, for example, has made great strides on the issue of tailings ponds, being the first company to successfully develop a new method of reclaiming the nasty mess in a much quicker time frame than was previously thought possible. It was a huge step forward and evidence the industry appears to be taking the issue seriously.

Suncor, for example, has made great strides on the issue of tailings ponds, being the first company to successfully develop a new method of reclaiming the nasty mess in a much quicker time frame than was previously thought possible. It was a huge step forward and evidence the industry appears to be taking the issue seriously.

There is also the matter of how vital the industry is to all of Canada. The industry pours billions into provincial and federal coffers each year, not to mention the 112,000 jobs that the oilsands industry supports, either directly or indirectly.

It has also faced steep criticism and opposition from places such as the European Union, which recently threatened – but did not follow through – on labeling Alberta’s

“tar sands” as unethical, dirty and therefore penalized when marketed in EU countries. It was a big win for Alberta’s oilsands industry, but it was just a small step in a much longer journey.

“The more robust our facts and science ... with regards to oilsands development, (that) will allow us to counter some of the more outrageous expressions of criticism, myths and financially damaging mischaracterizations of our development of the oilsands,” said Environment Minister Peter Kent at a news conference in February.

The big picture of climate change, and Alberta’s place within the issue, is something that will not go away – even with an oilsands monitoring system, no matter how rigorous. **BIC**

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# WEBBER ACADEMY ANNOUNCES NEW BOARD MEMBER DR. MARY ANNE MOSER



Webber Academy is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Mary Anne Moser to the Board of Directors. Dr. Moser has built a career in public sector leadership where society and science intersect. She has worked as a journalist, an award-winning designer and became the founding editor of the Banff Centre Press in 1995.

She started the Banff Science Communications Program in 2005, Canada's Iron Science Teacher competition in 2007 and was a member of the start-up steering committee for the Science Media Centre of Canada, launched in 2010.

Dr. Moser is the editor of two books on science in society: *Immersed in Technology* (MIT Press 1995) and *Science, She Loves Me* (Banff Centre Press 2011). Her latest initiative, Beakerhead, is a major collaborative arts and engineering festival for the City of Calgary, to start in 2013. Most recently, Dr. Moser was communications director at the Schulich School of Engineering at the University of Calgary and now works as Vice President, Strategic Communications, at Cybera.

She has a passion for the sciences and the arts and will be a valuable addition to the existing board of directors including: Hon. Jack Major, Mrs. Jeanette King, Mr. Milt Paul, Mr. Myron Tetreault, Dr. Mahfooz Kanwar, Mr. Lorne Webber and Dr. Neil Webber.

**Applications are now being accepted for enrollment for the 2012/2013 school year.**

For more information on Webber Academy please attend our upcoming Information Evening:

> Thursday, April 26, 2012 at 7:00 pm



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# Centron Builds on its Reputation

Calgary company recognizes opportunities for success

BY DAVID PARKER



Penn West Plaza - 635,000 sq ft  
All commercial building photos in this feature provided by Centron Group of Companies

**M**any a man has hoped to build a family business in which strong succession planning enables it to continue to be a successful firm known for its integrity, professionalism and ability to provide good value for its clients.

CEO Bob Harris has done just that with his Centron Group of Companies in which his son Cole is president and five family members are part of the team who has built a solid reputation over the 27 years it has been in business in this city.

Bob came to Calgary from his hometown of Rosetown, Saskatchewan, in 1969 to work in the construction industry. His first job was with C. J. Oliver but he soon moved over to work with Ben Steblicki at Charter Construction where he served as vice president and general manager for the next 15 years.

Steblicki is still one of Bob's good friends but by 1984 it was time for him to branch out on his own and he launched Centron with just one staff member. Starting with a small reno project, he quickly established his credibility and by 1987 was able to persuade Wayne Benz to join him – one of

the firm's major contributors who is still an integral part of the team serving as president, Centron Construction Group.

As a general contractor the size of projects grew; one of the early achievements was building the Royal Canadian Legion on Horton Road SW.

By this time his son Cole was eagerly working as a labourer and carpenter on sites in any spare time he had while still at school, but as soon as university was completed he joined Centron full time.

The next big step in the growth of Centron was in making the decision to become a developer. The first break came when Bob Jackson, then owner of the Fanny's Fabric chain and a client who Centron had completed several store renovations, told Bob he wanted to expand into Red Deer.

The Centron team went to work to find an ideal piece of land, bought it, designed a retail centre, obtained the necessary city approvals, built an outlet for Fanny's Fabric and leased the remaining half to other retailers.

It was an early example of the values that Centron has been able to build on that provide mutually beneficial and respectful





Centron Site and Office Staff at the Manhattan Road Office location. Photo by Chad Shire.

client relationships – a reputation that is built on a foundation of the principle values of hard work, integrity, professionalism and quality in all that they do. And all tackled with a sense of confidence and good humour.

The company grew and was able to attract a like-minded staff of professionals who have repeatedly produced high-quality 'Best in Class' developments, most who are still working with Centron.

Meanwhile Cole worked his way through the company gaining experience as an estimator and construction project manager and was rewarded with a vice president title. In 2006, Bob handed over the day-to-day operations and responsibilities of implementing new strategies and direction of Centron to his son as president of Centron Group of Companies.

Besides Bob and Cole, the long-serving executives include Wayne Benz, president of construction; Richard Heine, executive vice president engineering and construction; Don Avant, vice president finance, CFO; Michael Anderson, vice president development; Allison Clark, manager multifamily-residential; and Kevin Sellick, controller.

Many of its loyal group of professionals who chose to work for Centron have been with the company for many years, a good number in the 15 to 25 year range.

They tackled their biggest project up to that time in 1992-93 when Centron Corner was built. The classy development on 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street SE is made up of four buildings totalling 120,000 square feet. One of those was leased to DDRC (Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre of Calgary) as its commissary, and Cole was so impressed with the organization's efforts to integrate people with developmental disabilities into the community in real and meaningful ways, he was soon volunteering as a board member. DDRC is one of several organizations the company has been keen to support. Cole is also active as a board member of Mount Royal



(From L to R) Wayne Benz (President of Construction), Pierre Heringa (Site Supervisor), Kelly Zaharia (Senior Project Manager), Lauri Honkala (Site Supervisor), and Al Honkala (Site Supervisor) discuss project drawings. Photo by Chad Shire.





# WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF STATE TAXATION?

By Tilly Sanchez

Since U.S. corporate tax rates tend to be higher than Canada's, it is little wonder that most Canadian companies that begin to do business prefer to avoid U.S. taxes for as long as they can. The Tax Treaty between the U.S. and Canada ensures that with care, direct sales to U.S. customers from Canada, services for U.S. customers performed in Canada and even some services performed in the U.S. itself can all be accomplished without becoming subject to U.S. federal tax. Unfortunately, the U.S. states are not obligated to follow the Treaty and most of them choose not to. While it is true that the Commerce and the Due Process Clauses of the U.S. Constitution place some limits on the powers of states to tax, those powers are very broad.

Whereas the Treaty protects warehousing or certain services performed without an office or fixed place of business, most states consider owning property within the state such as inventory or real property or performing any personal services as sufficient to create a taxable presence for the company. Mere physical presence within the state can lead to income and sales tax obligations. What is more, states are pushing the envelope by attempting to tax based on use of intangibles like trademarks or trade dress offered by franchisors. These efforts are being tested in the courts, but the trend seems clear. In a world of virtual business, the states wish to be able to tax based on virtual presence rather than physical presence.

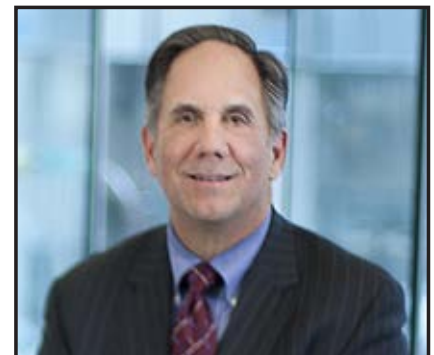
The state income and sales tax system in the U.S. is notable for its diversity and complexity. There are literally thousands of sales tax rates to contend with because individual counties, even some cities, have their own rates in addition to the state rates. Many states have traditional income tax based on net income. Others have franchise taxes that function like a capital tax, which may be in tandem with an income tax or only serve as a minimum tax if it exceeds income tax. A growing number of states including Texas, Oklahoma and Washington are turning to gross income tax or so-called "business activity tax", which offers few, if any, deductions. Under those systems, a company with a large sales volume but a net loss could face considerable state tax.

A growing number of states including Texas, California, Illinois, North Dakota and Montana require a combined tax return for unitary groups. In fact, some require worldwide combination unless a so-called "water's-edge" election is made. These combinations make it difficult to achieve a deduction for one group member in a particular state since intragroup transactions are eliminated. Similarly, some states like Connecticut, Georgia and Illinois disallow deductions for certain payments to related parties like interest or royalties.

If the company is carrying on business and is considered to be taxable in more than one state, income must be apportioned, i.e., allocated among those states. In earlier times, the vast majority of states required income to be apportioned according to a

three-factor formula of sales, property and payroll. However, in recent years, there has been a pronounced trend among states such as California and Arizona to require apportionment based on a formula that weights sales (up to 90%) more heavily than property and payroll. A number of other states such as Michigan, Texas and Colorado now consider only sales. In an economy where manufacturing plays a diminishing role, apportionment based on sales corresponds better to distribution and retail. As states struggle to devise means to capture revenue from internet sales, the once sleepy area of state and local taxation has become volatile and dynamic—fraught with traps for the unwary.

For more information on this topic please contact **James Meadow, CA, CPA (NC, USA), LL.M., International Taxation Services at 403.537.8416 or [james.meadow@mnp.ca](mailto:james.meadow@mnp.ca).**



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Centre 10 - 355,000 sq.ft

Stoneridge Resort, Canmore Alberta - 110 Units

University and as a committee member of Safe Haven Foundation's Street of Dreams Gala.

Bob loves quotes and takes to heart Jonathan Swift's comment that, "Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others."

It has served him well over the years and that vision was what caused Centron to buy the empty, run-down four-storey brick, former Christy's Arcade furniture store, building along 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street SW.

With the help of Gibbs Gage Architects plans were drawn up to renovate the existing structure and add four storeys to provide a fine-looking eight-storey office tower; seamless in its exterior with matching brickwork and all-new windows.

It was leased quickly to Merak – a company sold later to Schlumberger that is still the lead tenant. It was such a successful re-development that Centron built a mirror image with four levels of underground parking on the adjoining parking lot resulting in Vintage Towers, a 225,800-square-foot beltline character office building.

The name Vintage was carried on to the next large project which turned a dilapidated, environmentally-unfriendly Vulcan Machinery building on 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue into a three-building, 150,000-square-foot suburban office complex. Just one of more than 20 similar projects built by Centron and sold when fully leased by in-house staff.

Many of them were purchased by Richard Homburg, a European financier who Centron built strong relationship with; at one time he was responsible for around one-third of Centron's business and 65 business deals.

Centron continued to look for older buildings that could be renovated and brought up to modern standards with a total refit of mechanical and electrical, the latest high-tech communications systems and an upgrade of exteriors to give the appearance of a brand-new design.

Abugov Kaspar was the architect given the challenge of redesigning a four-storey building on the northeast corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW. Adding another three floors and designing a most attractive facade resulted in the 78,000-square-foot Citadel West building that soon became an appreciated home for the heavy oil division of WorleyParsons.

The same architectural firm was brought on board to help realize another vision.

The old post office building on 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, just to the west of the Fairmont Palliser Hotel and across the street from the historic Grain Exchange Building, came onto the market.

Its location was ideal but how to refurbish it into a class A office building needed a lot of imagination. A sow's ear was turned into a silk purse after Centron bought the building, assembled the adjoining land to the west and began by excavating under the building to convert the basement into a level of underground parking.

Then six more storeys were added to the original four and a start was made on a second tower – 20 majestic storeys above five-and-a-half levels of underground parking. Penn West Plaza, sporting a total of 650,000 square feet of office and one street level of retail serviced by 550 parking stalls, is recognized as one of the most attractive additions to Calgary's magnificent downtown skyline.

And Centron has also been busy providing quality residential condominium units throughout the city. Many have been built and sold in Calgary but its major development is in Fort McMurray where upon





completion Eagle Ridge will give that fast-growing community a total of 3,700 units.

The Government of Alberta put out an RFP to developers to help build accommodations that would be affordable in that area. After analyzing 18 submissions, Centron was chosen as the selection committee was impressed with its master plan, designed with the help of Gibbs Gage Architects, that included social housing within the contract as well as a variety of housing options in single-family homes, multi-family town houses and duplexes.

The single-family lots have all been sold to house builders and to date Centron crews have completed over 1,000 condominium residences. The Gibbs Gage-designed condominiums were recognized by both the American Concrete Institute and the Precast Institute of North America with awards for innovative and effective use of concrete to create superior buildings of lasting value.

The Fort McMurray massive project also earned for Centron the prestigious Harry H. Edwards Industry Advancement Award – it's a big winner.

Residents are already enjoying tree-lined boulevards, parks, walking trails, a community centre and retail shops on the Eagle Ridge development along Confederation Way, just a 10-minute drive from downtown Fort McMurray.

Back in Calgary, Cole and his team put their heads together to discuss how best to solve a development problem that city council had been frustrated with for some time.

Two attempts had been made to build two highrise condo towers on the site of the former Gaslight Square retail strip at 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW.

Centron decided after lengthy due diligence to buy it and changed the concept to a single building, mixed-use office retail development. The site had already been excavated and seven levels of underground parking completed so a considerable amount of structural redesign was necessary.

The new design by Bruce McKenzie and NORR Architects presented Centron with the 10-storey, 355,000-square-foot Centre 10 building above the seven levels of parking holding some 744 stalls for the use of office tenants, retail shoppers and some short-term parking.

Once again Centron has tackled a problem using experience, good judgment, a good deal of common sense and a ton of confidence that will no doubt be another showcase and a great addition to the city's beltline district that is so short of quality office space.

Cole says the decision to go ahead was a great opportunity considering the advantages of the location, situated between the major corridors of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets into and out of downtown. But it took a good deal of study – and nerve – to take on a project of this magnitude.

And the team has several more irons in the fire including preparation of plans for a development on the bluffs on the west side of Deerfoot Meadows and a new suburban office park on the Fountain Tire site at Blackfoot and Glenmore.

Centron is a busy family affair that today is a full-service developer and contractor handling site acquisitions, project visioning and concept, design and engineering control, full construction services, project financing, leasing and sales, property management and dispositions.

It sticks closely to its mission statement that calls for client satisfaction, getting the job done, coveting long-term relationships, having candid, reality-based and robust dialogue – and having fun doing it.

And part of that fun is its partnership relationship with Lance Hurtubise and others in the Vintage Restaurant Group. Proud to be involved in an organization that reflects Centron's image of quality, value and service in its Vintage Chophouse, Redwater Rustic Grilles, Rise Bakery & Cafes, Rush Restaurant and Stonehill Restaurant & Tavern properties – that's a lot of fun too. **BIC**



Vintage Towers 250,000 sq ft



McCall Court 104,000 sq ft

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# Smart Growth

As the city's population increases, the push for densification prevents sprawl and promotes livability

BY NIKKI MULLETT

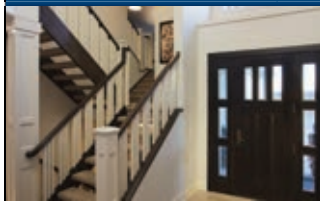
The peaks and valleys of Calgary's net migration can largely be attributed to the state of the economy. Bolstered by the flood of newcomers in pursuit of employment and affordability, Calgary's Civic Census highlighted the population boom through most of the 2000s, as well as the strong peaks of 2002 and 2006 and of course the exodus following the economic slowdown of 2009. As a result of that recession, net migration in 2010 fell sharply, with a net loss of 4,154 people – the largest loss for the city since the recession of the early '80s. But given the data present, there is an obvious uptick in migration to Calgary and the population is expected to flourish over the next 10 years. It seems the city's appeal is on the rise for both inter-provincial and international immigrants.

"According to the City of Calgary, 2011 saw an increase in migration of about 9,500," says Mike Fotheringham, research manager at Calgary Economic Development (CED). That put the population at 1,090,936, an increase of 19,421 residents from 2010. A forecast published by the Corporate Economics in October of last year projected an increase of 164,839 persons between 2011 and 2021 – or 16,484 persons annually. Over the same period, the annual growth rate is estimated at 1.4 per cent, and by 2013 Calgary's population is expected to grow to somewhere in the range of 1,127,000.

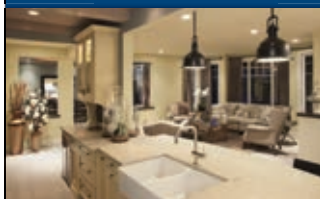
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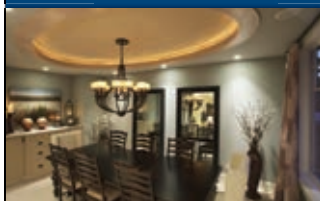
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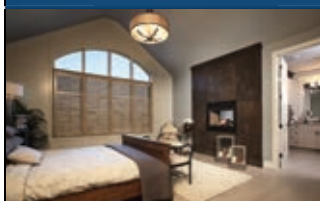
... the kids telling you all about what they learned at school.



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Increasing density can be accomplished through mixing types of developments such as multi-family and single-family in specific areas, which in turn helps to make better use of residential land.

“There are two components to population growth,” says Michele Broadhurst, co-ordinator, geodemographics with the city’s land use planning and policy department. “The natural increase – more births than deaths – and in-migration versus outmigration, which is usually related to opportunities for employment.”

As Calgary is expected to continue its record of strong population gains, land use planning to accommodate that growth and monitor the distribution of the population is key. Increasing density can be accomplished through mixing types of developments such as multi-family and single-family in specific areas, which in turn helps to make better use of residential land.

The city’s report, Calgary Snapshots, explains that “to accommodate lower density suburban communities, more land must be developed at the city’s edge, reducing the city’s existing land supply and requiring future annexations

from surrounding municipalities. This is an expensive way to grow because there are servicing costs (water, sanitation, sewage, police, fire, etc.) attached to every new community built, and these costs are proportionately more for lower density communities. Environmentally, this growth is less sustainable as it can encroach on natural ecosystems and farmlands. It is also more difficult to provide practical alternative forms of transportation.”

In 2008, CED launched one such plan – Calgary Economic Development Strategy. A 10-year strategy, the focus is on stimulating growth in the city’s economy, improving the health and vitality of the city and planning for a sustainable future. One of the 40 key actions to set the city on the right track for the future is to increase density in certain areas specifically inner city and also near major transportation hubs such as Brentwood, Kensington, the university as well as the downtown core.

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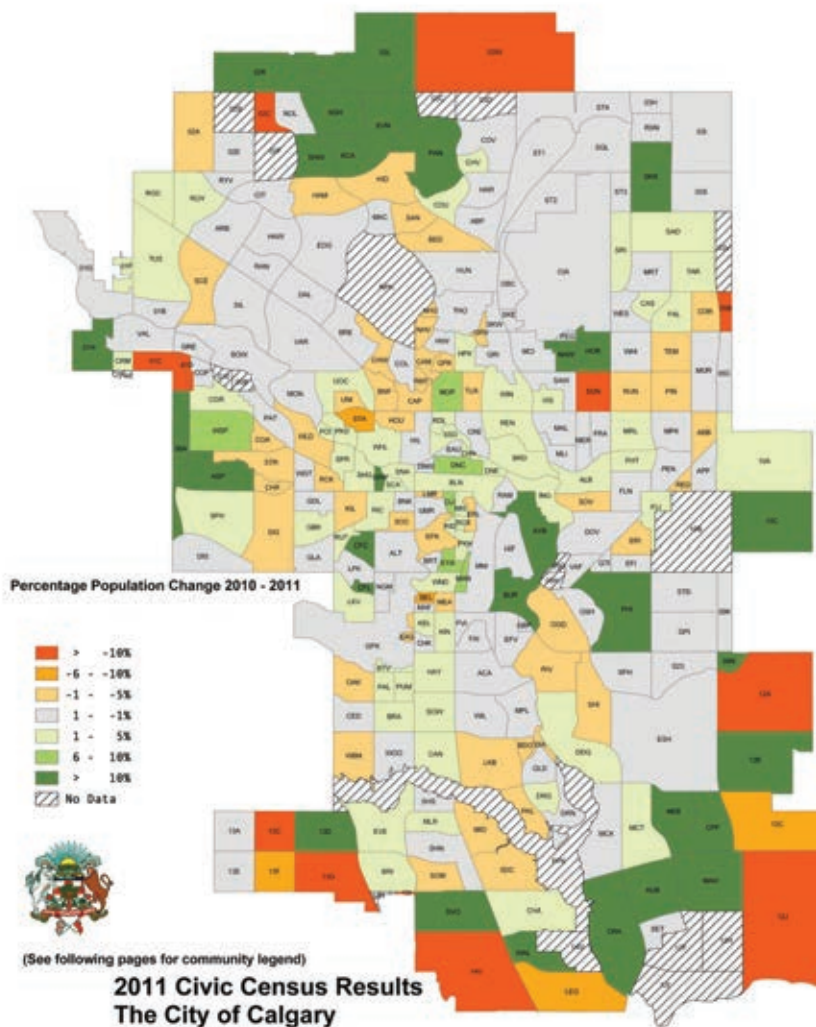
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Courtesy of CED and City of Calgary

“Migration is the key to encouraging further growth in the economy,” says Ann-Marie Lurie, chief economist at CREB (Calgary Real Estate Board).

Fotheringham says developing and pushing the density in these nodes “reduces the need for cars on the road, saves infrastructure and gives a vibe of a more international venue. It really makes Calgary a model for higher-density living.”

The City of Calgary’s Municipal Development Plan and Calgary Transportation Plan has a similar long-range focus to link transportation and land use planning issues. These strategies aim to connect and green the city and move towards a more sustainable city. “Where there is employment and public transit available, there is a push to get more people residing in these areas thereby reducing the time and distance for those commuting,” says Broadhurst.

The consensus is that Calgary is widely viewed as an

attractive and affordable city. The advantages as a location of choice to live and do business are not going unnoticed, with very strong increases in migration expected this year and over the next several years.

“Migration is the key to encouraging further growth in the economy,” says Ann-Marie Lurie, chief economist at CREB (Calgary Real Estate Board). “If there aren’t new people coming to the city, it can limit growth prospects for businesses. So there’s a lot of work being done to encourage migration.”

Bob Jablonski, president of CREB, says, “With this nice balanced market, buildings going up and jobs being replaced, all indicators are that we are recovering just fine. Calgary has a restored consumer confidence.”

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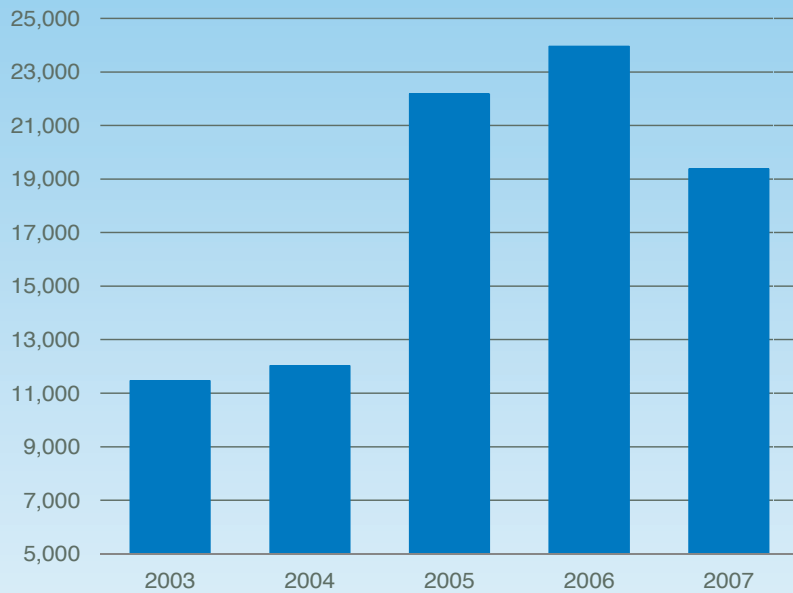
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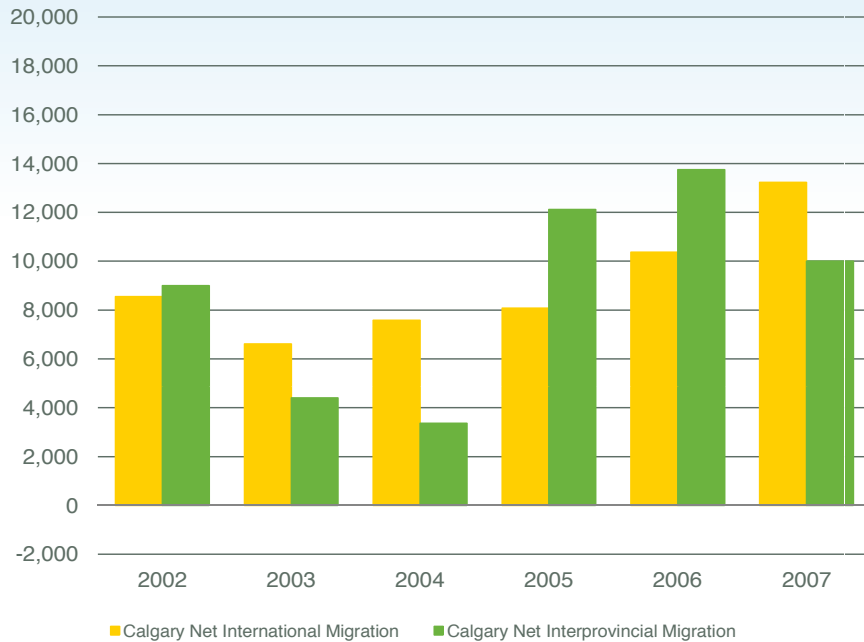
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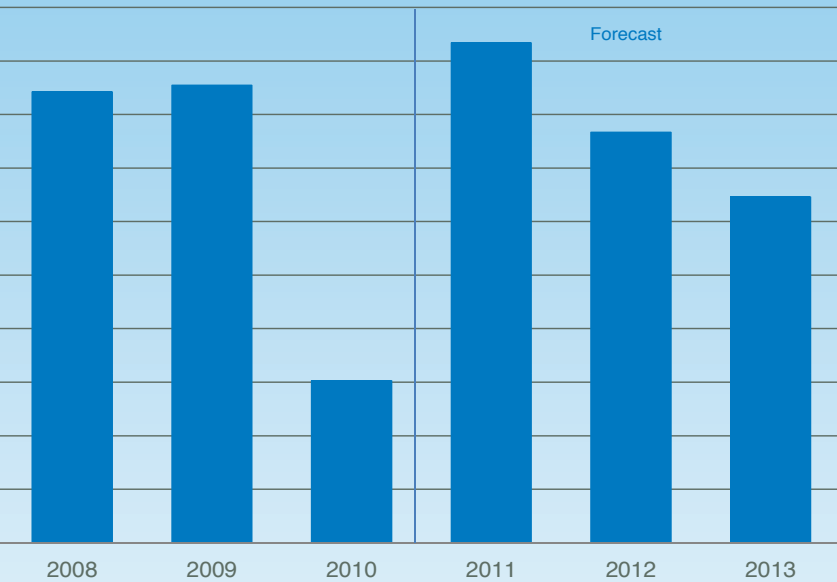


Courtesy of CREB

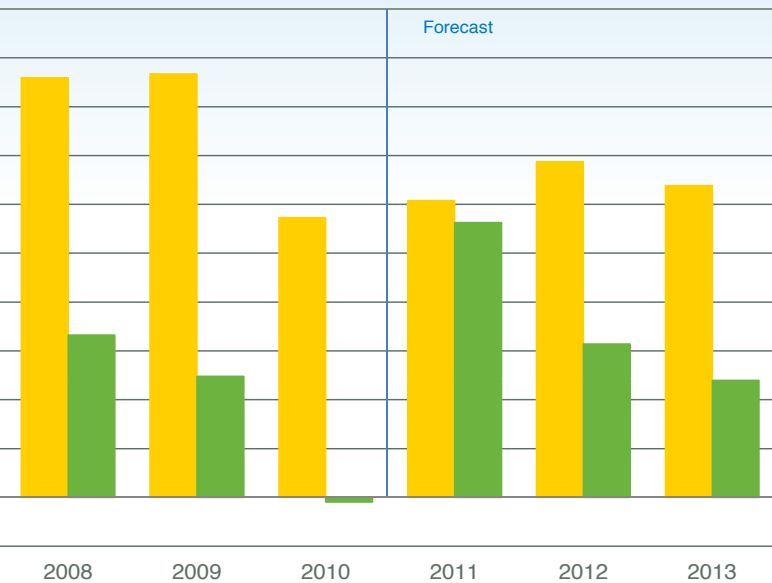
CREB's recent monthly release reported that single-family sales and condominium town house sales rose in February, while condo apartments continue to lag. There were 1284 single-family homes sold which is a 10.9 per cent increase over 2011 figures, and a 5.6 per cent year-to-date increase. Condo town houses gained 11.4 per cent year-over-year in February sales.

"More selection and a wider range of prices have drawn consumers to the condominium town house and single-family markets," Jablonski said in the report. "As is the case with all property types, we saw modest price improvements com-





Source: Statistics Canada, Conference Board of Canada adjustment, Conference Board of Canada Forecast



Source: Statistics Canada, Conference Board of Canada adjustment, Conference Board of Canada Forecast



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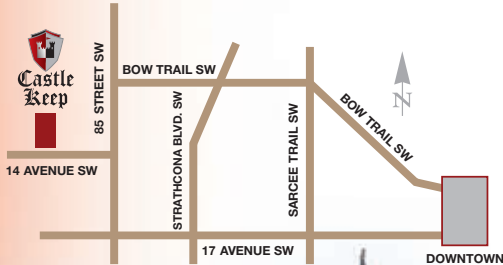
pared to February last year, but overall levels remain below peak pricing.”

The report found that while prices continue to remain below peak levels, stable price growth is still on the horizon as indicated by the improvement from January to February in the single-family sector.

“While the apartment market continues to lag the other sectors in the city, the balanced conditions in the total city market point towards stable pricing,” said Jablonski. “There do appear to be some positive headwinds. Following several months of decline, prices appear to have stabilized lately and recorded some modest gains in February.” <sup>BIC</sup>

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# Recreation Property Market Heats Up

Experts warn of hidden tax bills if purchases aren't structured properly

BY SHANNON CLIVE

**A**fter a long period of slow sales in recreation and investment properties in Alberta and B.C., the market appears to be heating up again. In places like Golden, B.C. and other hot spots for Calgarians looking for a second home, activity is picking up in advance of the summer holiday season.

It has some tax and real estate experts warning that how you structure the deal could have significant implications for



Kim G C Moody CA, TEP

buyers if they're not aware of some critical decisions when making that purchase.

"The general rule is that to avoid significant taxable benefits – and this applies both to a Canadian real property acquisition or a U.S. real property acquisition – is you avoid the use of a corporation," says Kim Moody, a tax expert and chartered accountant with Moodys LLP Tax Advisors. Many people mistakenly believe that if they purchase the property using a

For U.S. property, there are all kinds of traps for Canadian residents if they don't know what they're doing, says Berg. Still, there are some good buys to be had south of the border. "With the depressed U.S. real property market and with the strong loonie, that makes buying opportunities all the more compelling down there," he says.



Roy A Berg JD, LLM (US Tax)

corporation that there will be considerable benefits. Think again.

Taxable benefits can accrue to the shareholders of a company. "There's a lot of mythology in this area ... which tends to be that using a corporation is better or saves you some tax," he says. "I trip across it all the time ... where a buddy has just recently purchased a property because their buddy had told them to do it through a corporation."

Any corporation that owns any type of real property is taxed an amount approximately equal to the benefit that you receive from using or residing in that property. Essentially, it's like paying rent to yourself for the use of that property in the form of tax on that amount from using the property.

"Holding it in corporate form is really bad news," says Roy Berg, a tax lawyer with Moodys. "You don't want to do that because you'll end up paying a bunch of taxes that you wouldn't otherwise have to," he adds.

Legal structuring is the first issue. The preferable way to own it may be in a trust, especially if it's a U.S. property, because in that case there will be no estate tax. If it is held in your own name, you will be subject to the local or state estate taxes in that jurisdiction. In Canada, there is no tax

advantage per se to having it structured in a trust because there is no real estate land transfer tax in Alberta, although there is in B.C. and Ontario. The use of a trust in many cases can avoid probate, which is not really a tax issue but can certainly assist with the administration of the estate and reduce costs.

Moody says the overall awareness level of tax issues when purchasing a second property is "poor" and that people should always consult first with a tax professional to avoid any nasty tax surprises. "The overall message would be to explore it with a confident professional adviser," he says.

For U.S. property, there are all kinds of traps for Canadian residents if they don't know what they're doing, says Berg. Holding it in a cross-border trust avoids the taxable benefit problem and estate tax. When you die, the value of that property is included in your estate if it's held in your own name for estate tax purposes – even for Canadian residents. The marginal tax rates on estate tax in the U.S. are 35 per cent and going up to 55 per cent in 2013, he adds.

"You could be looking at a whopping tax bill for the privilege of dying while owning U.S. real property," says Berg.

Still, there are some good buys to be had south of the border. "With the depressed U.S. real property market and







with the strong loonie, that makes buying opportunities all the more compelling down there,” says Berg.

Direct flights with easy access is another incentive to consider a U.S. property over somewhere in Invermere, Golden or any other vacation home hot spots in Canada, he says. For a \$300 plane ticket, you could be in the sunbelt in the same amount of time it takes to drive from Calgary to the Okanagan Valley or even closer locations.

Beyond the legal structuring of the deal, the second key point is what happens to the property when you die. When that happens, you are deemed to have disposed of that property at fair market value, so if there’s been an appreciation in value, there’s going to be a capital gains tax. The best bet is to look for ways to structure the purchase so that you can get a tax deferral, which you can do if you’re passing it on to a surviving spouse or common-law partner, or if you use it as a principal residence.

It is possible to have two primary residences, but you can

only claim one residence in general for tax purposes – the exception being the “one-plus rule” that allows you to claim both properties for one common year of ownership (but nothing beyond that).

Calgarians have been flocking back to locations throughout Alberta and B.C. as the economy slowly gains more ground and people begin to show more confidence in buying a property, according to realtors.

“In the past few weeks and months, I have noticed a considerable upturn in the market,” says Chris Johnson, a realtor in Golden. “It seems like buyers are calling more and asking more questions about this market, in particular. The activity has surely picked up and it seems like it’s going to be a very active year overall.”

Johnson has recently helped several clients from Calgary find recreation or investment properties in the Golden area

*Continued on page 56...*

# TRUE KEY RESORTS

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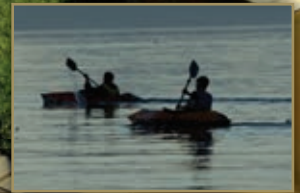
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pretive hiking and biking trails, whitewater rafting, fishing and several lakes in the area. In the winter there are 7 ski hills within a 2 hour drive, plus snowshoeing, snowmobiling and of course, the natural mineral hot springs open year round.

The Vancouver Island property; Sunrise Ridge Waterfront Resort, located on Resort Drive in Parksville, offers stunning views of the strait of Georgia and Rathtrever beach. Visit old growth trees nearby; enjoy the beautiful ocean sunsets and inviting wide sandy beaches. At low tide the ocean recedes almost a kilometer, providing an ideal place for people of all ages to play in the sand and explore the shoreline. When the tide rolls in over the sun-baked sand, the warmed water is unbeatable for swimming and salt-water fun. In the area, you will find Provincial Parks, deep-sea fishing, whale watching, spelunking in caves, as well as several Vancouver Island markets. Mild winter climate is a welcome getaway for Ca-

Sunrise Ridge Waterfront Resort







## Bighorn Meadows Resort

nadians who want to escape the snow. With Golf available almost 365 days a year, it's no wonder the area is referred to as Canada's Island tropics.

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Investing in a True Key Resort property means that you have a true vacation home with options to use, rent or exchange rather than the obligations that come with owning a second home outright. If this sounds practical to you call 1-888-766-9637 or email [info@truekeyresorts.com](mailto:info@truekeyresorts.com) to learn more.



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The twenty large estate lots of this new development are carefully situated on an eight acre parcel along three stunning golf holes. The gated entry to the private enclave of Radium Springs estates begins at the Springs Course Clubhouse and links the community via a paved country lane winding through a mature stand of spruce trees separating the 1st and 9th fairways.

Radium Springs estates is within walking distance to the Village of Radium Hot Springs town centre. Championship golf courses, whitewater rafting, hiking, fishing, lakes, trail riding, Kootenay National Park, natural hot springs, private spas, shopping and a variety of fine restaurants are all accessible from this friendly, vibrant community that is the gateway to the Columbia Valley.

For ski enthusiasts, Radium Hot Springs is only a short drive from Panorama, Fairmont and Kicking Horse Ski Resorts. Several popular cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling trails are easily accessible throughout the picturesque backcountry areas.

Since opening in 1988, the Springs golf course has consistently been selected as one of the top 100 courses in Canada by Score Golf



Magazine. Situated on a treed plateau overlooking the protected Columbia Valley wetlands, the Springs course is framed by unsurpassed panoramic views of the Purcell and Rocky Mountain ranges.

Radium Springs estates homeowners can enjoy the opportunity to obtain a private membership at the Springs golf course. Golf membership privileges include unrestricted play on both the Springs course and the newly renovated Radium Resort course which is just



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minutes away. This exclusive membership also provides the unique opportunity to own a private electric golf cart to access the Springs clubhouse via your private road.

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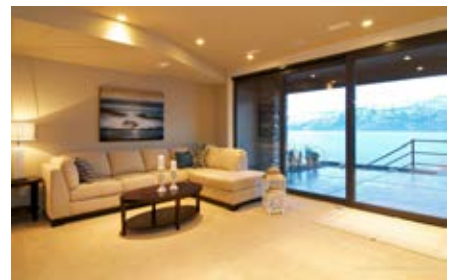
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Calgarians have been flocking back to locations throughout Alberta and B.C. as the economy slowly gains more ground and people begin to show more confidence in buying a property, according to realtors.

*...continued from page 49.*

and his colleagues in places such as Invermere report similar activity, he says.

The most crucial thing is to do your research before you start looking at properties. A little homework done up front can save you time, effort, headaches and a big tax bill. Just because there are some great deals to be had south of the border doesn't mean it's always an easy purchase. Becoming familiar with local laws and tax requirements will go a long

way to avoiding the pain of any surprises when the tax bill is due.

"I find many buyers just aren't aware of what a purchase entails, even if it's done in Canada," says Johnson. "Talk to a professional, explore your options – wherever you're buying – and don't get so caught up with the emotion and excitement of buying a second home before you know what you're doing." <sup>BIC</sup>

  
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Having nearly sold out the first two phases of Raymond Shores, developers Scot Raymond and Bob Dawson are excited to begin sales on the largest and most treed lots available to date – a

section of phase three that's been aptly titled 'The Woodlands'.

"The Woodlands lots are absolutely spectacular," says Bob Dawson. "They are huge lots; all fully serviced and fully treed, and each within minutes of the beach."

The Woodlands lots are indeed spectacular, both in size and in scope: lot sizes range from about 7,000 to 15,000 square feet – plenty of room to fit almost any fifth wheel, park model, or modular home. Additionally, lot owners have full access to all of the amenities available at

Raymond Shores, including a clubhouse, pool, hot tub, beach, and marina.

President Scot Raymond sees Raymond Shores as both a great financial and family investment.

"We have a lot of parents and grandparents out at Raymond Shores that say, 'Not only am I making a smart real estate investment, but my whole family gets to enjoy time out here year-round,'" explains Scot. "It's not just about investing in real estate; it's about investing in your family's future."

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# Alberta Potash Potential: DO WE HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

BY BRIE THORSTEINSON OGLE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PACIFIC POTASH CORPORATION

Alberta's top spot comes as no surprise considering the success of the oil and gas industry, but what does it mean to the exploration and development industry outside of our black bread and butter?

The Fraser Institute's annual survey of mining companies ranked Alberta as the world's most attractive place for mineral exploration and development in 2011. Rankings are based on elements such as infrastructure, tax regime and a combination known in these parts as the Alberta Advantage.

Alberta's top spot comes as no surprise considering the success of the oil and gas industry, but what does it mean to the exploration and development industry outside of our black bread and butter? The answer lies in the same dirt that brought us the oilsands; all we have to do is dig a little deeper.





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Richard Tremblay, current President, CEO and Director of Pacific Potash, points out that “We are proud to meet our initial goal of discovery, but one hole does not make a mine. Plenty of work still needs to be done.”



Core samples taken from the 50:50 Joint Venture with Grizzly Discoveries. Well: PP 10-11-40-01

Recent discoveries suggest prospective potash deposits may exist along the Alberta-Saskatchewan border in an area known to geologists as the Prairie Evaporite Formation. It is this formation that has delivered the bulk of potash resources to the province of Saskatchewan, and prospective explorers believe the historic potash deposits in Unity, only 50 kilometres to the east, are clear indicators of viability on this side of the fence.

Exploring potential is the perspective of the Pacific Potash Corporation, a Vancouver-based junior mining company that recently announced promising results from preliminary drilling on a site near Provost, Alberta on their 100% owned Provost Potash Property.

“Our goal with the 2011 drill program was to confirm the presence of potash within Alberta,” says Steve Khan, former director and CEO of Pacific Potash, credited with being the first company to definitively uncover potash in the province.

Richard Tremblay, current President, CEO and Director of

Pacific Potash, points out that “We are proud to meet our initial goal of discovery, but one hole does not make a mine. Plenty of work still needs to be done.”

“The discovery is very exciting for the fact that up until five months ago, there was a lot of pushback from potential investors. Some went so far as to state that we were not going to find anything,” says Tremblay. “We are very encouraged with the discovery, and now we need to roll up our sleeves with respect to assessment and planning toward the next phase of exploration. We have set the wheels in motion to build Pacific Potash Corporation and I want to see that happen with our potash property in Alberta.”

It isn't going to happen just yet. Market watchers favour discoveries that yield 5-6 metres of 19% KCL (Sylvinite) in a sample. The initial Pacific Potash discovery came in at 3.1 metres of 18.79% KCL.

“Until further drilling yields a thicker mineralized zone and higher concentration of KCL, the way forward means

## “STAKING OUT THE COMPETITION”

- It is estimated that world potash production is currently less than 0.3 per cent of the planet's actual reserves.
- Saskatchewan is the largest potash producer in the world with nearly one-half of the world's potash reserves.
- There is enough potash in Saskatchewan to supply the demand at current rates for several hundred years.
- Sales equalled roughly 4.5 billion in 2010 with only five per cent sold domestically and 45 per cent sold to the U.S.
- The production costs are some of the lowest in the world.

(SOURCE: SASKATCHEWAN MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND RESOURCES PDF)



The threat of competition hovers however, and not just from their neighbours to the west.

more drilling and that will require significant investment dollars to take this discovery phase to the next level.” Tremblay added.

Grizzly Discoveries, an Alberta-based company, is hot on the heels of Pacific Potash. Properties held by Grizzly include a 50:50 partnership with Pacific Potash near the location of Pacific’s positive sample, with additional permits for exploration and development in Vermilion, Lloydminster and Medicine Hat totalling more than 2.4 million acres, all located within the Prairie Evaporite Formation.

The level of investment and exploration required for an industry still in the speculative stage points to a cautious optimism on the part of Brian Testo, director, president and CEO of Grizzly Discoveries.

“Our goal with the 2011 drill program was to confirm the presence of potash with potentially economic grades within Alberta. These results confirm the presence of potash on the property and we look forward to future drilling and development of a potential potash resource in Alberta.”

Testo is taking a wait-and-see attitude until more conclusive drilling is completed but in the meantime, his company will dig one more exploratory well to determine the best possible place to start a viable project in the future.

“Alberta has a definite advantage with the tax regime in place and the fact that we are closer to seaports,” says Testo. “We think we can compete with Saskatchewan and we know that Alberta is a great place to establish an industry.”

The startup capital and the acquisition of current technology required for potash mining is significant and Testo and Tremblay aren’t the only ones guided by caution. John Bothwell, current president of the Calgary Mineral Exploration Group, has a long history in the mining industry beginning when the Saskatchewan potash industry took off. Bothwell has noted the recent conversation surrounding Alberta potash and he cautions those seeking to develop the industry to be prepared.

“The proviso for the viability of potash mining in Alberta can be determined by depth,” says Bothwell. “The costs incurred through the development of the mine and acquisition of technology would be significant, and in my opinion would only be worthwhile if the price of potash experienced another boom.”

The tipping point Bothwell indicates is the same principle that finally allowed for the development of the oilsands in northern Alberta, and also the same principle that has hindered further development and exploration of natural gas. In fact, that principle also brought Bothwell west to Alberta when the potash industry crashed in Saskatchewan due to overproduction in the late 1960s.

The price for potash rose dramatically a few years ago, however, and Bothwell says that it has once again caught the interest of those hoping to “discover” viable deposits here in Alberta. Analysts support the notion of a long-term rise in the price of the commodity, but caution that the expected fluctuations may create an environment with too much volatility for new exploration in Alberta.



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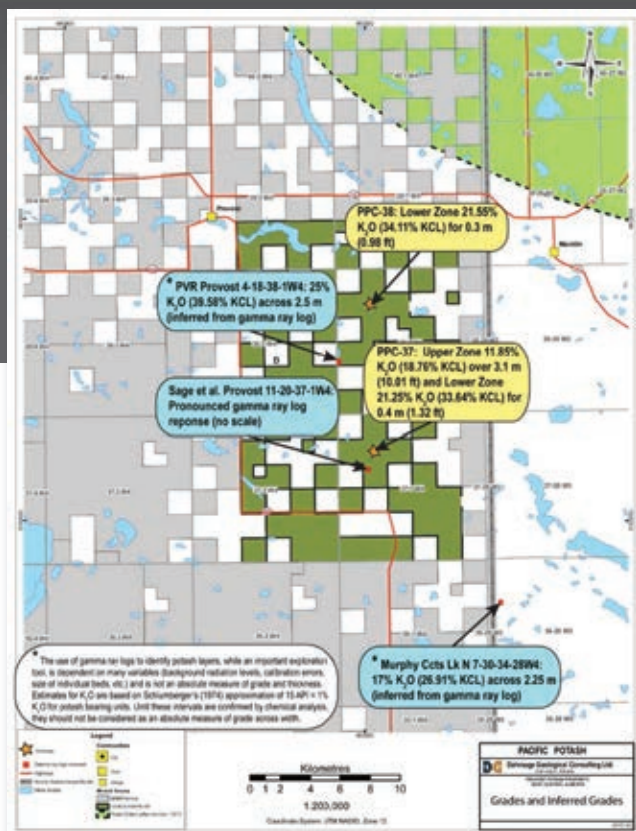
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Price and demand is further bolstered by emerging markets in places like Asia and Latin America as household purchasing power increases and food choices change.



Map of the Drill Sites of the 2011 Work Program on the 100% Owned Provost Potash Property (PPPP). The map also highlights the historic drill holes conducted on the land. Unity, Saskatchewan is approx. 45km east of the PPP (unfortunately not featured on this map).

Christine King, spokesperson for Alberta Energy, echoes the sentiments of those cautiously optimistic about potash exploration in Alberta. King notes that although there exists the potential for an industry, it is not something the government anticipates significant growth in the near future. In fact, from a government perspective, little has been spent in studies since a flurry of activity more than 50 years ago.

Of course, there has to be a demand for a commodity to have such economic heft regardless of the volatility, and the potential for demand has never been greater. Currently, Saskatchewan is the world's largest producer of potash, responsible for roughly 30 per cent of world potash



Core samples taken from Pacific Potash's first drill hole on the 100% Owned Provost Potash Property well: PPC 11-29-37 1W4.

production and the province is capitalizing on their solid infrastructure to meet a growing industry.

Price and demand is further bolstered by emerging markets in places like Asia and Latin America as household purchasing power increases and food choices change. As arable land decreases and pastures are expanded, the need to maximize crop yields through fertilizer and more efficient farming methods, including the use of potash, is a trend that is expected to continue as world populations expand.

With potash prices expected to fluctuate widely in the coming years, Saskatchewan is better situated to ride out the variables. The threat of competition hovers however, and not just from their neighbours to the west. Some estimates hold the world potash production currently sits at less than 0.3 per cent of the planet's actual reserves, and investors and exploration companies like Pacific Potash and Grizzly Discoveries want to be in on the ground floor if the industry becomes viable.

Exploration and innovation are two hallmarks of Alberta's past, present and future. Though these values are often linked to the development of the oilsands and the oil and gas industry, they translate well into the possibilities that exist in the eyes of those new pioneers like Testo and Khan. Though it is far too early to say if those seeking the mother lode of potash will hit pay dirt, they have certainly employed the spirit of the province in their pursuit of a potential future for the province, and yet another Alberta Advantage. **B/C**





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# MacMillan Estate Planning Corp.

**W**e have all heard the expression that there is nothing certain in life except death and taxes. Intuitively we all know this is true, but it poses the obvious question: what can we do to better prepare ourselves for these certainties?

Sheri MacMillan is the founder and President of MacMillan Estate Planning Corp., Canada's elite estate planning firm, and is a highly respected Trust & Estate Practitioner with over 20 years of experience in the estate planning industry. "Today, the estates of wealthy families are protected by implementing strategies to minimize tax and ensure the proper management of assets. Equally important, proper estate planning bequeaths a family's legacy to the next generation, thereby giving purpose to a lifetime of achievements," explains Sheri. She established MacMillan Estate Planning Corp. to fulfill a niche in the Estate Planning industry that was not being serviced by the major banks and institutional trust companies already in existence. "We take the time to meet with each of our clients to build a personalized plan that considers family dynamics, tax position, risk tolerance and long term objectives."

At MacMillan Estate Planning Corp., the philosophy is a commitment to the design of comprehensive estate plans that incorporate creative solutions tailored to each family. At MacMillan, estate planning extends well beyond the preservation of wealth - it is about maintaining quality of life. This principle is central to the exceptionally high professional standards upheld by every member of the firm.

"Modern families need broad strategies to protect their assets. For example, some of our clients are highly accomplished entrepreneurs in the Calgary business community and are looking to succeed their business, minimize tax and protect against creditors. This can be achieved by implementing a more sophisticated estate plan than the traditional Will of generations gone by," says Sheri.

MacMillan stresses that not all documents are created equally, and that certain provisions need to be carefully examined for unintended effects in their implementation or to ensure sufficient latitude and flexibility are provided to handle unforeseen circumstances.



*Sheri MacMillan  
Senior Trust & Estate Practitioner,  
President of MacMillan Estate Planning Corp.*

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is the most valuable  
gift you can provide for  
your family to ensure  
security and peace  
of mind."*

*~ Sheri MacMillan*

"As a result, more complex issues arise with our more affluent families, such as capital gains tax, US/Canada cross border issues and inheritance tax. Often these families are traveling abroad or purchasing assets without realizing the impact

on their estate," explains Sheri. MacMillan Estate Planning Corp. specializes in examining each individual file to ferret out those factors that may lead to challenges unknown to professionals that do not specialize in this field. "In the end, our clients have similar goals. No one wants to pay undue tax or leave a difficult estate to be administered by their loved ones after they are gone, so effective planning now can go a long way in minimizing the challenges to be faced by your estate later," asserts Sheri.

A powerful voice for her clients, her company and her community, Sheri MacMillan hosts "The Strongroom" a radio program on CHQR 77 AM every Sunday at 5:00 pm. In addition, MacMillan Estate Planning Corp. presents a monthly informational seminar to the public offering an overview of estate planning on topics such as Will & Trust Planning, Tax Planning, Asset & Retirement Planning along with Business Succession. You can request a complimentary consultation with one of their estate planners by logging on to [www.macmillanestate.com](http://www.macmillanestate.com).

So, what about that expression: the only thing in life that is certain is death and taxes? "One more thing is certain..." says Sheri, "building an ironclad estate plan is the most valuable gift you can provide for your family to ensure security and peace of mind."



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# Calgary's Original Cowboy Honky-Tonk Celebrates 40 Years



Story and photos  
by Mary Savage

Archival photos  
supplied by  
the Ranchman's



Left to right - Kai Dvorkin, Korina Dvorkin, Wendy Daniel, Missy McDonald, Harris Dvorkin

Calgary's original cowboy honky-tonk, the Ranchman's, is gearing up to celebrate 40 years and no one hosts a good time like the Ranchman's! They were Calgary's first country dancehall and cookhouse and four decades later, they are still number one and the only authentic honky-tonk in town! Located at 9615 Macleod Trail South, it's hard to miss the iconic red vertical sign along with the larger-than-life patio that holds 750 patrons.

Forty years later, some things have changed, but others have remained the same. The list of bands that have graced the Saddle Room stage reads like a who's who of country music and many got their start at the Ranchman's. From Kenny Rogers and Loretta Lynn to Paul Brandt, Toby Keith and Shania Twain, they have hosted hundreds of the biggest names in Country Music.

Today, you will find a brand-new state-of-the-art sound system, a Jumbo-Tron, over 35 large, flat-screen TVs, complimentary Wi-Fi in the cookhouse and a Twitter board to keep you tuned in.

In addition to their popular Saturday afternoon jam sessions, they have added a You-Tube Jam on Tuesday nights to give rising local musicians and young artists a shot at fame. As well, the

Ranchman's continues to host and sponsor the Country 105/Lammler Rising Star Talent Contest.

Propped on the ceiling trusses of the Saddle Room, you will find over 100 trophy saddles that are displayed by various World and Canadian Pro Rodeo champions; like World Champions Jimmy Gladstone, Mark Roy and Tuff Hedeman. "We have more trophy saddles than the Rodeo Hall of Fame!" says Harris Dvorkin, co-owner and president.

The Ranchman's is rolling out a new menu that offers a choice of healthy options like baked potatoes piled high with a variety of toppings. Ranchman's infamous barbecue ribs, brisket, steaks and burgers will always be available – they are the signature dishes that keep the patrons coming back week after week.

Ranchman's Classic Catering takes great pride in 'bringing Ranchman's party to your party'. From live to mechanical bulls, six different portable smokers, a 1,000 person tent with stage...they can bring any party to your party! They can accommodate events up to 2,500 people and Korina Dvorkin, Catering and Purchasing Director, B.H.R.M., heads up the division. Korina will help plan your next event – that people will talk about for decades.

In 1972, Harris Dvorkin, Kevin Baker and Kai Smed (1923-1983) purchased the then cafeteria and 90-seat dining lounge that has evolved into Calgary's best dancehall and cookhouse.



Harris Dvorkin



Back row - (left to right) Harris Dvorkin, Missy McDonald, Kai Dvorkin  
Front row - Korina Dvorkin, Wendy Daniel





Harris and his wife, Lynette Dvorkin, with business partner Kevin R. Baker



Original building in the late 1970's

"Forty years later, we are still in the same location, in the same building with the same principals, and we still are a country honky-tonk cookhouse and dancehall," says Harris proudly. "We have never changed our philosophy and our guests have always been our priority; creating a warm, friendly and safe atmosphere. When it comes to having fun we are the only hospitality establishment that plays country music 365 days a year!"

"When we opened, the cowboys would show up in a truck, complete with a wooden frame box, and a 'horse in the box.' And if they were really high rollers, they had an AM radio in the truck," adds Harris with grin. "Today they arrive in a \$60,000 truck – towing a trailer that could cost as much as \$500,000 – complete with living quarters!"

Indeed, the Ranchman's hosts a great time, but they have always maintained a very safe environment, in fact, it's one of the safest bars north of the border. "We want to make sure people get home safe and that they are not intimidated or bothered – it's the safest bar in Canada," says Kai Dvorkin, Facility Director.

"Our door hosts have a strong presence because you're not just a guest, you're family. We walk guests to their vehicles and we have a long-standing relationship with Mayfair Taxi. We have built a very safe environment thanks to people like Missy McDonald, Vice President and General Manager," says Kai. "It's like coming to a neighbourhood pub, but on a much grander scale – inside, we hold over 1,000 people!"

For larger groups, the Ranchman's Overland Express will pick up guests in their bus or limousines. If you're celebrating

a special occasion, contact the Ranchman's to find out how you can book their complimentary limo or bus. Likewise, the Ranchman's transportation is also available, to rent, for any personal occasion. "We are strong advocates of 'arriving safe,' so we provide safe and responsible options," explains Kai.

The Ranchman's staff is an amazing group of people – both past employees and present ones. "Our employees are very dedicated and loyal, and many come back every year to help with Stampede," says Missy. "Some of our employees worked here 30 years ago and now their kids are working here – we have three generations of employees!"

"We are constantly evolving and you will always see something fresh and new at the Ranchman's," says Harris. "We have recently renovated the kitchen and added new ovens, smokers and a Rational. We have added more lights to the stages and we have a new DJ booth. All signs have LED lights, we have installed new low-flow toilets and sinks, and we have a great recycling program."

Beyond the bright lights and big names, the Ranchman's Renegades, the fundraising arm of the company, has been a mighty force when it comes to giving back to the community. "We have raised well over \$4-million through various fundraising endeavours. As well, we have done countless benefits with the World of Rodeo for competing cowboys that have been injured or taken ill," asserts Wendy Daniel, Marketing Director. "Competing cowboys don't always have insurance and when they are injured, the bills are huge. Our first fundraiser was in 1976 and we raised \$25,000 – an



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Wayne Vold and Harris Dvorkin



amount of money that was unheard of back then.”

A Stampede tradition for 30 years is the Cowboy vs. Firefighter Pole Climb Competition in support of the Firefighter Burn Treatment Society and Canadian Professional Rodeo Association (Cowboy Benefit Fund). On the first Monday of the Calgary Stampede, the contest pits 10 cowboys against 10 firefighters as they race each other up a 40-foot flagpole. At the top of the pole sits a bottle of tequila and the last competitor has to untie the bottle and bring it down – without breaking it!

“We are a honky-tonk with a heart. We are community-minded and we are a family-run business,” says Harris. “We treat our guests like family, so there’s a reason why we have four generations enjoying the Ranchman’s.”

As a Calgary Stampede warm-up, the Ranchman’s Renegade PBR Bullbustin’ event is sold out by February every year. The Tuesday and Wednesday nights, prior to the Stampede, the Ranchman’s transform the north parking lot into a bull-riding arena where 4,000 guests (each night) take in the action and then head to the tent, dancehall, cookhouse and patios to continue the fun!

Ask any local and they will tell you the Stampede hasn’t officially started until you hear the fireworks at the Ranchman’s Renegade PBR Bullbustin’ event! “This year is our 13<sup>th</sup> annual bull-riding event, and last year the Ranchman’s raised over \$50,000 for Project Warmth and Child Find Alberta,” says Wendy.

“We’ve always tried to compliment the Calgary Stam-

pede – the legends continue together!” Harris adds with a twinkle in his eye. “When you’re celebrating Stampede, it’s not complete without a visit to the Ranchman’s!”

It comes as no surprise the Ranchman’s has won Country Club of the Year from the Country Music Association 14 out of the last 20 years.

Recently, Harris was given the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Alberta Food and Restaurant Association. He was also inducted into the Association of Country Music in the Alberta Hall of Fame. In 1999, Harris was the second recipient of the Calgary Tourist and Convention Bureau, Doug Johnson Service Award (White Hat). Additionally, he is a life member of the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame, a Life Sponsor of Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever, Rotarian, founding member of the Country Music Association, B’nai Brith and Vice President of the Chevra Kadisha Calgary.

As the Ranchman’s celebrates 40 years as Calgary’s original cowboy dancehall and cookhouse, they extend a heartfelt thank you to all of the guests, business partners, entertainers, associations and all the dedicated employees who have supported the Ranchman’s...and helped to make a good time – great – year after year!

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# NU-WAY FLOOR FASHIONS

## 40 Years in the Making

By Mary Savage

### Glancing Back... For a Moment or Two

When Wayne Gifford and Frank Numan started Nu-Way Floor Fashions Ltd. 40 years ago, they were an installations company. There wasn't a showroom; it was a two-man shop that installed carpets for homebuilders and they earned a great reputation from doing quality work — period. The name, 'Nu-Way', joined the 'Nu' from Frank's last name and the 'Way' from Wayne's first name. And just like the name, the business was straightforward that provided quality workmanship.

During the early 80s, one of Nu-Way's largest contractors closed its doors — causing Wayne and Frank to restructure their business. They had two choices: either fold the company or expand, and they opted for the latter. They opened a store and by 1983, Wayne's brother, Fred, joined the business.

As Operations Manager, Fred took over the internal operations while Wayne continued to run the estimating and installations. Fred had been involved in the flooring industry since high school — making his expertise a great addition to the company. Although business was growing and they had carved out a respectable piece of the marketplace, it was still considered a smaller company, so Fred implemented operating systems to help with efficiency, sales and future growth.

About four years later, Nu-Way hired Shea Gifford to work in design sales on the showroom floor and then she moved into outside sales. Shea excelled and in the mid 90s, she was promoted to Sales and Marketing Manager.



Shea Gifford (on right) working with staff to coordinate products and colors for project.  
Photo by Chad Shire



Fred Gifford, President  
Photo by Mary Savage

When Fred joined the company, they were churning out about \$400,000 in business annually. By 1995, their annual sales were \$9 million and in 2005, Fred bought the company from Wayne, as he was ready to retire.

"We've had a lot of growing pains and we almost went down a few times, but during the economic downturn in the 90s, we grew quite substantially, and we've continued to grow every

year," explains Fred Gifford, President.

"We've kept growing because we've always had a very important attitude toward quality and service: the customer comes first and we have always been very involved with the customer's needs and interest," he says. "We've always had internal systems in place, but you've got to be organized, provide competitive pricing and know your products - it's all one big bundle."

Like most successful businesses, innovation plays an important role and transcends every layer of the business.

"We have always strived to be more innovative and a few years ago, we weren't happy with certain aspects of the operation," adds Shea Gifford, Vice President, Sales and Marketing Manager. "We wanted to fine-tune everything from customer service to showcasing the product lines. We are always evolving and we have always sought new concepts to make the company better."

## *Look Down and Around... it's Everywhere*

When it comes to interior décor, flooring and tile are probably one of the most important decisions any homeowner will make. It has to be durable, long lasting and easy to clean. It makes a statement about your style, and it has to fit your lifestyle and budget. The right flooring can bring a house to life: it complements the furniture, the colour palette and the accessories, but more importantly, the right flooring allows the entire living space to flow together - seamlessly. It is integral to any interior and when it comes to our homes, it's a very personal choice.

"Within the last decade, flooring has really evolved and it's now recognized more as fashion," explains Shea. "For

years, our own industry didn't recognize it as fashion — we called it flooring. It was sold as if it was sold from a warehouse, but the industry mentality has shifted and now it's fashion — not unlike buying a dress or a luxury car. It makes a statement."

According to the Shea, approximately 85 per cent of flooring purchases are predominantly chosen by women because they tend to decide what product is going into the home. "The husbands have input, but it's not usually about the design and colour — it's more about the price and quality. Women are driven by the style, colour, maintenance, quality and then the price - and in that order," she says.

"Women want to know how hard or easy it is to clean. Is it going to show footprints and vacuum cleaner marks? Is cork flooring easier to maintain than hardwood? These are all questions that women will ask before they ask about the price," she adds. Women want to have a beautiful home: it's very personal and they are very emotional and particular about their surroundings.

Ironically, the flooring sector was notorious for being a 'good old boys' industry and that mentality was prevalent until about 1990. Female sales reps were not the norm, but Nu-Way recognized the consumer buying patterns and started to hire more female reps. In fact, they were one of the first stores in Calgary to set the trend.

## *"Green" Flooring*

When it comes to environmentally-friendly floors, corks and leathers are rapidly gaining ground, although wood is also a renewable product. "Corks are a recyclable product because they peel the cork off the trunk," explains Fred. "Cork trees rejuvenate and renew every nine years, whereas with a tree, you have to plant a new one and wait about 25-30 years. Cork is probably the biggest renewable resource in the flooring industry."

Likewise, the leather floors are a product of the Italian leather furniture industry where they use the cuttings from the furniture and recycle it into leather floors. "In today's market, about 10 per cent of consumers are buying "green" floors, but the movement is growing and people are asking about renewable products," he adds.

On the flip side and for products like carpet, currently there are no recycling facilities in Calgary. "If you want to recycle carpet in Calgary, you have to cut the carpet down into two-by-two-ft. squares, shrink-wrap it on a pallet and ship it to the eastern U.S.," comments Shea.

"The freight and gas costs alone are huge, never mind the emissions released into the environment by transporting it across the country, so your only option is to take it to the landfill. The recycling facilities are coming, but until that time, the best thing you can do is choose a green product such as corks and woods," explains Fred. "Some of the new tiles are made from renewable products and homeowners tend to keep ceramic tiles much longer than carpet."

As both Fred and Shea have indicated, being environmentally friendly begins with selecting quality products that will last a long time – meaning you're not replacing them every five years. "The less expensive carpets tend to 'ugly-out' before they wear out," asserts Fred.

"If you invest in a quality product, which tends to be more expensive, then you're not replacing them as often because they've "uglied" out on you. We've become more particular about our homes the last decade, and it's important that our homes reflect that. By putting in a quality product, you are also being environmentally responsible by not contributing more carpet to the landfills as often," he adds.





Above: design boards used to create color walls.

"Women tend to develop a relationship instantly, and typically they have a general idea of what they want," says Shea. "But they can't always articulate the specifics when it comes to interior design."

"A female customer will say, 'I'm thinking about doing an off-white carpet,' and typically, the male rep pulls an off-white sample, but it's not exactly what she had in mind," observes Shea. "The key is to identify what underlying hues she's looking for. Do they want an off-white with grey undertones, green undertones or yellow undertones? We work with her to draw out that information because it's critical. Understandably, the male rep is frustrated and wonders if she's ever going to make a decision!"

## *Through the Double Doors...*

When you enter Nu-Way, the newly renovated showroom awaits you. Unlike most showrooms and at first glance, the selection doesn't overwhelm you; in fact, it feels more like a boutique than a showroom even though the showroom is 7500 sq. ft. and provides thousands of products. Today you will find products showcased by their colour palette, not the manufacturer's label, so if it's off-white carpet you're looking for, it's simply a matter of strolling to the 'off-white' section to begin your search.

But Nu-Way's smart showroom design actually begins with a very innovative concept: style walls. As the showroom draws you in, there are six style walls — each one

capturing a particular flair and blends a variety of textures, colours and samples that are found within each style. And after spending a few minutes with each one, it's easy to identify your unique style. Perhaps you're a combination of two walls, but you will know it when you see it. The style walls are designed to help customers find what they're really looking for because most people have a hard time articulating their exact style.

"Two years ago, we had a design vision and it was the result of our involvement with product manufacturing and being on color and design product councils," explains Shea. "Cheryl Grant, a brand specialist, had produced colour boards and we found them to be both inspirational and potentially a great tool to help our customers, so we commissioned her to work with us to create the style walls."

The style walls illustrate Nu-Way's innovative and proactive approach in helping their customers really get what they want. "The style walls represent the colours and trends for Calgary and the surrounding areas, but they are always evolving because interior design is fashion," says Shea.

"We found that 90 per cent of people did not know what their style was and we struggled to find the right products for them — they didn't know how to verbalize their style," she adds. "Today, they can identify their style almost immediately and it's been very successful."

Through the creation of the style walls, along with years of customer feedback, Nu-Way was able to streamline the selection of products and colours — eliminating the colours that have nothing to do with Calgary's marketplace. They can still select product that is no longer represented on the floor, but Nu-Way doesn't feature it anymore.

"Roughly 80 per cent of our sales come from 20 per cent of the colours. We have brought in many new carpet styles, but we have less displays, so the process is much easier," remarks

Shea. "Women shop by colour — they don't ask for products by a manufacturer. We have created a boutique environment and it's very easy to move from one section to another."

## *Move Over Hardwood... You've Got Competition*

Corks, leathers, natural stones and laminates are some of the new flooring products you will find available today and with the help of technology, they are giving the old standbys like hardwood and tile a run for their money. "Overall, there's been a shift to a more minimalistic presence in the home and you will also find that floors are getting darker while wall colours are getting lighter," asserts Shea. "The grey hues are back — it's the new beige, but it's a softer and warmer grey than what we saw in the 1980s."

Cork and leather flooring offers the richness of a hardwood, but they also offer a host of other benefits. "Cork flooring is very durable, it's warmer, quieter, and it's easier on your body. It's a very different look, but if you like the richness of hardwood, you can achieve that with the corks, laminates and leather floors. Leather also has a wood look, but it's softer," remarks Shea.

"Five to seven years ago, cork flooring looked like a bulletin board. Today, there are advanced stain techniques and they are being manufactured with longer planks and beveled edges. The styles are evolving immensely," she says.

"Leather wears similar to cork. Cork and leather are both durable: cork's advantage is its memory, so when you cut or dent it, it returns to its original form. If you drop something on hardwood it will dent. Cork and leather tend to be more resistant to scratches than hardwood," adds Fred.

Marble, travertine and highly-polished marbles are making a come back as well as honed marble. "Honed marble is buffed to offer a smooth surface, but it still has a matte finish," adds Shea. "Even ceramic tiles are moving toward a cleaner and more linear look."

Large body tiles have been gaining popularity in the last two to three years and today, it's not uncommon to find tiles that measure 20" x 20" or 18" x 36".

Luxury vinyl tiles (LVT) are another product that's making headway into our marketplace. "LVT gives you the same look as hardwood or tile, but they install similar to tile and they are much easier on your body. They are a visual of an individual plank wood or ceramic tile that's installed very similar to tile — you can even grout them," explains Fred.

"The depths of the design are unbelievable and sometimes it looks better than the real thing," says Fred. "They are using

## *The Carpet & Allergies Fallacy*

The carpet industry, as a whole, had to respond to the public's perception that carpet is dirty and it's not good for people with allergies, but the Canadian Rug Institute recently did an article on people with allergies and found they were actually better off having carpet.

"All homes have a certain amount of dust and with hardwood, it continues to be airborne in the room. But with carpet, it will hold or trap the dust and then it's released when vacuumed. A hardwood surface allows the dust to continue to stay airborne unless you vacuum the floor everyday," he adds. "It's a misconception that people are allergic to carpet — it's not the carpet if properly maintained, but rather other things in the home."





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a lot of laser technology to achieve the design and it's incredibly accurate."

Hardwood is still a favorite among customers who love the look and feel of real wood, and floors are getting darker with wider planks. But since Calgary is a semi-arid climate, people have to be careful when selecting a hardwood floor. "Certain products just don't perform in our climate," remarks Shea.

"People would love to put a stain bamboo in their homes, but most bamboos won't work in our climate - even with a humidifier. In the middle of January when it's 35 below, that humidifier can't pump out 35 per cent humidity into your home and if it does, all your windows start to freeze from the condensation," explains Fred. "Bamboo is a reed and the middle of it holds all the moisture. When you manufacture bamboo or hardwood flooring and then install it in a dry climate, it still needs humidity because bamboo, like wood, is a living organism and that's why wood floors expand and contract."

Carpets are another area that continues to evolve with the introduction of silk-like fibers. "The manufacturers are now producing silk-like fibers and the carpets are softer to the touch. It's exciting and the only place you used to see and feel similar fibers was in the really expensive wool broadloom and area rugs," explains Shea.

"But now they are introducing the feel of silk into the nylon carpets and the texture of carpets is also changing. Some carpets will still have a real crunchy feel, but they have introduced new technology to soften the nylon and as a result, the carpets feel soft like silk. As long as you purchase carpet with fibers that are durable, they will perform, so you get luxury and performance," she adds.

Carpet patterns have been very organic in the past, but manufacturers are also leaning toward a more minimalistic



Customer using color wall to coordinate color and product.  
Photo by Chad Shire

look as well. You will find more stripes and harlequin patterns this year, but according to Fred, carpets are forever changing - the options are endless.

"Nothing gives you comfort like carpet: it's warm, it's quieter than any other product and they perform really well if maintained. A carpet doesn't wear out and if you keep it clean, it will last a long time. It may "ugly-out", but it won't wear out," he says with a grin. "Maintenance is the key to carpet longevity."

## *Educating the Customer: The Importance of Humidity*

An acceptable humidifier for wood, laminate and cork is a drip humidifier, not a drum model. Manufacturers require humidity levels to be maintained at 30 - 50 percent and this is considered part of the maintenance program that homeowners are responsible for and exotic woods may require as much as 35 - 55 per cent.

Wood products are made up of living cells and take on and release moisture. At 30 percent humidity, the cells start to change. At 20 percent humidity, the wood fibers will start to have visible changes. Below 20 per cent relative humidity, the hardwood floor's cells and fiber have broken down, hence causing cracking and splintering.

## *Raising the Bar on... Everything*

As the old expression goes, 'you get what you pay for', so if you're looking for quality products that will perform beautifully for decades, it's going to cost a little more. Flooring is an expensive investment and Nu-Way recognizes this investment is all encompassing. From installations and customer service to maintenance and follow-up, Nu-Way has built the business to provide a higher standard — in everything they do.



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“When we implemented our service department, many companies didn’t have one, but we thought differently. We have a fully-integrated service department with service technicians and service coordinators, and about eight years ago, we brought in a quality control group,” explains Fred.

“We put people in the field to ensure the jobs are ready for installation. “They look after trouble-shooting, they work with the customers that want to do their own tear out to ensure its being done correctly and they provide guidance. We implemented these types of customer-focused services before many of our competitors,” he adds.

Today, Nu-Way has 36 employees and each one is a trained professional. Five of the employees are Fred and Shea’s children. The majority of their design team is female - all trained with a design background. When they hire a new installer, they pay special attention to their first five to 10 jobs. They are continually inspecting all of their installations by the quality control team to ensure it’s up to Nu-Way’s standards.

“The quality control team will check the new installer’s work - while he’s on the job — to make sure he’s doing it to our standards. There are shortcuts that can be covered up and the customer would never know the difference - until something fails,” adds Fred. “Sometimes our installers say our expectations are too high, but that’s why we are successful in our industry.”

When manufacturers visit Nu-Way for product knowledge seminars, the employees put them to the test. “In some instances, new reps are apprehensive coming to our store for new product knowledge: we include all of our designers, the quality control team and our service department. Because we are strong on product knowledge and installation, and it is what we are proud of, our employees ask questions about how the products are going to perform in the field, and how they need to be installed, before we determine if it is a product that meets our standards for us to promote,” says Shea.

If you’re looking for quality, expertise and guidance, then Nu-Way is the first place to begin your flooring search. “It’s about educating our customers, knowing who the manufacturers are, knowing where the materials come from and the manufactures process,” asserts Fred. “It’s also realizing what you want from the product. As North Americans, we want to have competitive pricing, but we also want quality and we’re

## Protecting Your Investment

Flooring is an expensive investment and it requires the right maintenance. “Several years ago, a customer walked into the store and told me the hardwood finish was starting to lift. When I asked him what he was using to clean it, he told me he was using Fantastik and an SOS pad,” says Shea.

“After the customer’s visit, we realized the importance of educating consumers when it comes to maintenance. In years past, we had sent flowers as a thank-you gift for their business, but now we send a basket with the right cleaning products with proper directions on how to use them,” she adds.

“With our customers, we try to take them from A – Z,” adds Fred. “Here are the products you need and we will educate the customer to help them get maximum performance.”



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Nu-Way staff operating carpet cutting machine.  
Photo by Chad Shire

willing to pay a premium provided the value is there. Yes, you can get cheaper products that are manufactured in other markets that don't hold the same standards as Canada and the U.S.A., but they won't perform as well year after year."

As Fred has observed, some of the woods coming out of some Asian markets are a very different grade than woods coming from North America. "For example, most Maples in

Asia and are not nearly as hard as the Canadian Maples." he says. "You need to work with reputable manufacturers that will stand behind their products, so if something goes wrong, they will rectify the problem. You don't always get that with all suppliers and manufactures. Then again, you get what you pay for."

## *Giving Back: Finding the People in Need...*

Nu-Way is a huge supporter of those in need, but they are very selective when donating to any organization. Much like the way they run their business, it's not enough to simply write a cheque for a non-profit organization and hope the funds are allocated properly. Over the years, Fred and Shea have worked hard to not only raise the funds, but also ensure all the money is actually helping those who need it the most.

For 13 years, they have hosted an annual golf tournament

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and raised over \$190,000 for local worthy causes — much of which has directly helped people, like patients at the Tom Baker Cancer Center Patient Services. “We are a bit of a renegade when it comes to charity because we want to make sure our money is going to the people who need it,” explains Shea. “We want to see every dollar go directly to those in need, not the big boards or administrations and usually, half of what you donate ends up paying for administration costs. We have worked extremely hard to make sure it gets to the people who need it.”

Last year, they raised over \$26,000 at their golf tournament and every cent went directly to helping the patients. “We spoke with one of the oncologists at the hospital and he explained they had used the money to buy personal recorders for the patients,” she says. “When someone is diagnosed with cancer, typically they recall very little from that appointment — understandably, they are overwhelmed. The recorders are used to record the first two appointments, so once the patient has returned home, they can replay it, share it with family and fully understand what the doctor has told them.” Another portion of the funds are being used to help patients offset those

expenses that are not covered by Alberta Health Care.

‘Toupee for a Day’, through Wellspring Calgary, is another organization that Nu-Way supports. It’s a wonderful charity and around town, it’s hard to miss: the colourful hairpieces reflect all the colours of cancer. This year, Nu Way is hosting the facility for the wind-up event, they are submitting a team for the event and they are a major sponsor.

Nu-Way is also involved with countless smaller charities - they continue to adopt families at Christmas for Discovery House as well as put on charity events for them. They also put on a drive to support the Food Bank. They find the folks in need and help to make their struggle a little bit easier. “We try to give back as much as possible, but we’re fussy about where we donate because it has to land in the right hands,” says Fred.

## Quite Simply... Thank-You

As Nu-Way celebrates their 40th anniversary, they look to the future with vision and excitement, but also with a great deal of gratitude. “We have been successful because of our customers and our employees. Our customers push us to be better and our employees support the vision. It’s never one or two people behind the success — it’s really the customers that drive us forward,” reflects Fred.

As both Shea and Fred have observed, being a leader in any field is something you have to continually work at. “You are the best when you recognize you always have to keep getting better — knowing there is always room for improvement,” they add. Fred is somewhat humble and a little conservative and Shea is quite passionate and outgoing — making them a great team. But they also realize they couldn’t have done any of this without the support of their customers and employees — it’s only through them that Nu-Way can strive to be the best. •

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Mystique Mechanical Celebrates 30 Years

# ‘Slow and Steady’ BUILDS A SOLID BUSINESS

Darren Parkinson  
and Ted Rohling

BY MARY SAVAGE

**W**hen Ted Rohling got his ticket as a journeyman plumber/gas fitter in 1977, he didn’t have aspirations to own a business. He was content to work for someone else, but five years later, the economy took a nosedive and jobs were

scarce – even for the best of the best. Ted had a young family to support and rather than rely on someone else, he opted to work for himself – and it proved to be a very smart decision.

In 1982, Ted and his wife, Marlene, started Mystique Mechanical Ltd. and during the early years, they ran the operation from their basement. Marlene looked after the books and administrative duties while Ted drummed up work. “During the day, I worked on various tenant improvement contracts and smaller commercial jobs,” says Ted, president, Mystique Mechanical. The evenings were spent bidding on future projects and like so many startups, he worked long hours – seven days a week.

Little by little, they grew the business and within three years they moved into an office. In the years that followed, they hired a few tradesmen and gradually expanded the company. ‘Slow and steady’ has always been Ted’s mantra and it appears this approach has served him well.

Today, Mystique Mechanical employs about 70 full-time people and they have worked throughout Alberta and southern British Columbia with an emphasis on multi-family and commercial projects. They have worked on several signature buildings in Calgary and surrounding communities including the Kinnear Centre at the Banff Centre, countless commercial projects and shopping centres, and recently, you will find their crews at the Canmore Recreation Centre. As they celebrate 30 years in business, it appears Ted’s mantra remains consistent with the company’s future growth.



## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS: FROM THE INSIDE-OUT

When it comes to success, all businesses share a few things in common and building solid relationships is at the forefront. “Our intention and

driving force behind the company has always been to build trust and confidence among clients, trade suppliers, subtrades and our employees, and over the years, I think we have achieved that goal,” Ted says.

*Today, Mystique Mechanical employs about 70 full-time people and they have worked throughout Alberta and southern British Columbia with an emphasis on multi-family and commercial projects.*

Mystique Mechanical has built a very loyal clientele and that speaks to the level of expertise and confidence all of their employees bring to any project – from the design phase to the job site.

“We always encourage the staff to be very innovative and to find the most cost-effective solutions for the clients,” he explains. “We have many clients that look to our in-house expertise when it comes to budgeting concerns and cost analysis before the job is developed; it helps them plan their projections.”

About 17 years ago, Ted hired Darren Parkinson, a second-year apprentice who started his career in Edmonton. Once Darren had completed his ticket, Ted recognized Darren’s potential and gradually gave him more responsibility. After running projects in the field for a few years, he moved into the office and learned estimating and project management.



Elements of Mission

*“We have many clients that look to our in-house expertise when it comes to budgeting concerns and cost analysis before the job is developed; it helps them plan their projections.”*

**~ Ted Rohling**

One afternoon, Darren approached Ted about a partnership and in 2004, they agreed it was a sound business move. Darren started to buy into the company and within two years he became the vice president of operations.

“We encourage our tradesmen to cross-train the apprentices below them so they come up through the ranks with a wide skill set. All of our people are very knowledgeable and we have tried to build an environment that encourages life-long learning,” asserts Darren.

“When we hire someone, it doesn’t matter what age they are. If they are committed to the plumbing apprenticeship program than we are committed to helping them. And when they are finished, I guarantee they will be among the best plumbers in the city of Calgary,” adds Darren.

Over the years and during Alberta’s economic peaks and valleys, Mystique Mechanical has grown their staff to meet the market demand just as they have scaled back during leaner times, but most of their staff have benefited from a lengthy and

## Technology & Communications

Since 1984, Mystique Mechanical has been using a computerized estimating system and over the years, these programs have been updated and customized to stay ahead of industry trends. “All of our technology is cutting edge and our software provides a very stable pricing index for both us and our clients,” explains Darren. “Trevor and I have developed the ‘plan room’ program

and it’s accessible by all of our trades and clients. Every modification is scanned and loaded to the project ‘plan room’ which keeps everyone in the communications loop. Internally, it makes our job a bit easier, but more importantly, it keeps the lines of communication fluid with the clients and subtrades.” To learn more, visit [www.mystiquemech.ca](http://www.mystiquemech.ca).



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Jeremy Cousins

Al Whittle





Back Row, left to right: Marlene Rohling, Nancy Rohling and Lisa Knight  
Front Row: Michel Wright Logan



Project Managers/Estimators.  
Front row, left to right: Lony Brown and George Rogers. Back row, left to right: Buck Simpson and Trevor Rohling.

secure work environment. “The longest-serving employee has been with us 25 years and on average, most have been with us about 10-15 years,” says Ted. “Our employees are like family and we treat them the way we would like to be treated. Likewise, this philosophy spans all of our relationships – from our clients to trade suppliers and subtrades.”

And 30 years later, Marlene continues to look after the accounting department (receivables and collections) while their daughter, Nancy, does payroll and human resources. Michel Wright Logan is responsible for payables and material costing, and when you enter the office Lisa Knight greets you at reception.

Ted and Marlene’s son, Trevor, is a project manager/estimator and the in-house computer wizard. In the estimating

and project managing department, they have Buck Simpson and Lony Brown, both whom have been with the company for 15-plus years. The newest addition to the management team is George Rogers, who has been with the company for about 10 years as a journeyman/foreman. “With the increased workload of LEED projects, we’ve become very busy with new policies, so we’ve moved George into the office to help with estimating full time and soon to be the company safety officer,” adds Ted.

“All of our front-end staff (project managers and estimators) are ticketed journeymen and that’s a rarity in our industry,” says Ted. “Many companies will hire juniors for estimating, but we choose to structure our organization differently. And all of our project managers and foremen are leaders within the company – they are important positions and they all contribute to our overall growth.”

“I treat all of our employees like family: Darren is one of my adopted sons!” says Ted with a grin. “We forge strong relations with everyone – you have to in order to be successful and it’s all based on respect,” he adds. “Over 30 years, your clientele base changes, so you’re always building new relationships and you have to very conscious of your clients, employees, subtrades and suppliers.”

Building solid, long-term relationships with their subtrades is also another factor that has helped with the ‘slow and steady’ growth. “We have longevity with our subtrades – some have worked with us for 15-20 years. And clients continue to come back and work with us because they are treated properly,” Ted comments. “A high percentage of our work is repeat business and that speaks highly of our staff.”

Likewise, Mystique Mechanical manages their workload very effectively. “We don’t take on more work than we can handle: we currently have 70 employees, but we keep hiring and training new employees,” adds Ted. “We could go out tomorrow and hire a bunch of employees and secure work, but we would lose control and quality, and that’s not how we’ve built this company.”

Jon Verhulp

Stephan Bass

Carl Kruszynski



Foremen/Leadhands

Front row, left to right: Carl Kruszynski, Ryan Tresise, Al Whittle and Jemery Cousins

Back row, left to right: Tom Bakker, Stephen Bass, Albert Chan, Nic Verhulp, Jon Verhulp, Jon Snijders and Aaron Dubak

## A DIVERSIFIED APPROACH

Another key to Mystique Mechanical’s success is found through their diversified approach. “Our work is a mix of multi-family residential and commercial projects,” explains Darren. “It includes anything from a condominium and a shopping centre to an office tower. If one sector of the industry is lacking, typically we have contracts that are underway in other sectors and it ensures we keep everyone employed. It also keeps us active in many markets.”

According to Darren, the multi-family market is starting to pick up, where as the last few years, most of the work has been

in the commercial sector. “It allows us to cross-train employees: they can do both multi-family and commercial work,” he adds.

“If we look back six years ago, we were doing 75 per cent multi-family projects and 25 per cent commercial. A year ago, it was 90 per cent commercial and 10 per cent multi-family. Today, it’s changing again, but with cross-training our employees, we can control our workload so we don’t have to lay off our core staff,” remarks Darren.

The first major project for Mystique Mechanical took them to Broadcast Hill in 1987 and it was a huge multi-family contract with very tight timelines. “We worked with a management company to get the condo apartments ready for the upcoming

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**FOREMAN/LEAD HANDS**

Aaron Dubak

Nic Verhulp



## Industry Leaders in Safety

Nine years ago, Mystique Mechanical became COR certified – long before it was an industry standard, let alone a safety ‘catchphrase’ because creating a safe environment has always been a priority. “Over the years, safety has been a real concern for us: we all have families to go home to at the end of each day,” asserts Darren.

“Today, safety requirements have become an industry standard, but that wasn’t the case nine years ago. When we became COR certified, I would visit the job sites and our crews had to be in hard hats and steel-toed boots, but they were the exception,” Darren says. “Now we’re at a point where safety is key and it has to be. It is the ongoing safety of our employees that prompted us to become COR certified. It was a personal choice and it’s how we run the business.”

According to Darren, the benefits of having a safe work environment also affect the clients. “Our clients are very happy with our internal safety programs and it provides them with a great deal of

confidence. Regardless of the job at hand, we want to make sure it’s done efficiently and properly,” he adds

“It’s helped lower our Workers Compensation premiums as they are below the industry standard and we’ve won safety awards for no ‘lost-time’ accidents,” remarks Darren. “We review the paperwork, from the job sites, and we study the trends so we can fix a potential safety concern. If it’s not documented, we won’t be aware of it and we’ve always taken a proactive position, not reactive.”

In 1992, Mystique Mechanical became unionized and their agreement is structured like most union agreements, but Ted took it one step further. “Although the union represents our employees we work together as a team to ensure the best outcome exists for all parties involved. We also wanted to ensure our people had full benefits and coverage, 24 hours a day. We offer a benefits package to our employees and it provides better coverage than the industry standard package,” explains Ted. “We have full benefits, long- and short-term disability, life insurance and additional coverage because it’s very important our employees are safe and they are covered all the time.”

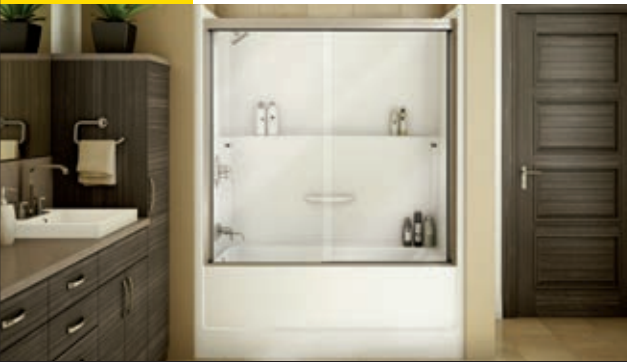
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Multi-family mid-rise

Olympics,” recalls Ted. “There were 27 buildings, 252 units and we had 10 months to complete the job – a schedule that was almost unheard of in our industry, but we completed the job on time.”

They no sooner completed the Broadcast Hill contract when they found themselves back on the same job site – once again under the gun. “We received a phone call on Christmas Eve and they needed us on the job site immediately. The tem-


perature had dropped, we were in the middle of a deep freeze and due to some design/construction issues with the buildings, all the water lines had froze – in every building,” remembers Ted. “The athletes were arriving the third week of January, so we had less than a month to get everything operational again. Our crews worked around the clock – they were completely devoted to getting the job done.”

Most of the work Mystique Mechanical does is not visible



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## Innovation at Work



When you enter the office, a set of stairs takes you up to the reception area. You can't help but notice the slate water feature, quietly trickling and set back from the staircase. In a day and age when remodelling your office via 'feng shui' is fairly commonplace, it's easy to assume this water feature has more to do with esthetics than anything truly functional. Well, not exactly.

"We have a very computerized environment and the static electricity was really bad in the office, so we needed a more humid environment," says Ted. "We looked at all these different options and came up with the waterfall idea in reception. It provides enough humidity to stop the static and it looks really nice, but it's also functional!"





SAIT parkade

project for Mystique Mechanical. It's an 80,000- sq.-ft. facility and it took three years to complete the job. "We started working with the client on the design phase and remained on-site until the project was finished," says Darren. "Building good relations with the client goes a long way to understanding what they need and how we can help them achieve it." Once finished, the Kinnear Centre qualified for silver LEED status.

to the naked eye; it's hidden behind the drywall and under the floorboards, but if the faucet doesn't work or the heat doesn't come on, you sure know it. "Try and live without a toilet!" adds Ted. "The drinking water in the water cooler had to come from a processing plant that was built by a company like ours."

But as Darren explains, their line of work goes well beyond the faucets and heating system. "We've worked on office towers, shopping centres, big-box retailers, recreation centres and similar large-scale projects." Over the years, they have worked on several complex buildings, in recent history the SAIT parkade and Golder building being two of them. "The locations and structures are very unique and challenging," he adds.

The Kinnear Centre at the Banff Centre is another landmark

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Kinnear Center

*“We will continue to see slow and steady growth for the firm. Calgary is a vibrant city with many opportunities for growth and the next couple of years are going to be busy!”*

**~ Ted Rohling**

### CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

When Mystique Mechanical decides to give back, there are a handful of charities they support, but the majority of their generosity goes back to the employees – as a thank you for their commitment, dedication and loyalty. “Over the years, we

have spent a great deal of time and effort with our staff and we want to do something that gives back to them,” comments Ted. “Each year, we have a great Christmas party and we do something that’s very special.”

The parties vary from year to year and have included everything from a skiing weekend, where the employees and their

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spouses are invited, to a five-star dinner. “We feel it’s important to get to know the employee’s family, so we try to plan a special event each year,” he adds.

“Years ago, the foreman and lead hands requested we got together, outside of work, so we created an annual weekend trip. We go to Edmonton or Panorama with our foremen, lead hands and management team,” says Darren. “We offer this to our management team to help build internal relationships. It gives them a chance to spend time with each other and that rarely happens during the workweek as we are all so busy and sometimes we don’t have a lot of time to see each other.”

For their longest-serving employee, Lony Brown, the company celebrated his 25 years of service with a trip to Hawaii for him and his wife. “When you’re involved with Mystique Mechanical, you’re part of the family and we have found our employees don’t want to go anywhere else!” adds Darren.

Mystique Mechanical Ltd. has been a long term Sub-Trade to Optimus Building Corporation (Formally Opus Building Canada Inc.) for many years, they are a very valued Part of the Optimus Family and wish them many years of continued joint Success!

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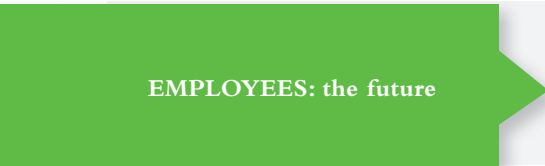
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**LOOKING FORWARD....**

After 30 years, Ted still enjoys the interaction with his staff. Today, he's more of a mentor and truly enjoys helping the younger people. "Over the course of three decades, I've had a lot of dedicated help along the way and I couldn't have done it without them," he says.

As for Darren, he enjoys seeing people start at the entry level and work their way up. "We have a strong foundation, but there's always room for more growth."

As Ted looks to the future, his 'slow and steady' mantra sits at the forefront. "We will continue to see slow and steady growth for the firm. Calgary is a vibrant city with many opportunities for growth and the next couple of years are going to be busy!"

While Mystique Mechanical celebrates 30 years strong, they pause for a moment to extend a sincere thank you to all the people who have helped make the first 30 years so successful.

From the clients and business partners to the subtrades and employees, Mystique Mechanical extends a warm thank you to everyone who has played a role in helping to build the business. We can't list all the names but you all know who you are!

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## Welcome to April's Perspective!



## President's Message

by Alykhan Bandali

The Canadian Forces Liaison Council (CFLC) is a group of Canada-wide civilian business leaders who volunteer their time and efforts to promote the primary Reserve Forces by highlighting the benefits of Reserve Force training and experience to the civilian workplace. I was invited, with other business leaders, to Vancouver on February 14 and 15, to participate in a "hands-on" experience to see reservists demonstrate their talents, skills and leadership competencies, while they engaged in military exercises in the Vancouver waterways. What a privilege it was. In fact, what an honour it was. The quality of individuals, the training and the dedication to perform at the highest levels not only highlighted their abilities, but their potential to immediately impact any organization or business.

Reservists acquire a variety of skills that are transferable to the civilian workplace and thus they are beneficial to employers, especially as many of us here in Calgary face major labour shortages. There is a mutual benefit created by the Reserve Forces, because employers also benefit from the ongoing professional development that their employees and students undertake with the military. Although in Alberta there are employment standards outlining reservists leave, we as employers can be more aware of the real talent and skills that lie with this underemployed group.

Reservists are taking an increasingly active role in Canada's defence missions. Reservists usually train on evenings and weekends, but may also need anywhere from a few weeks to several months of full-time service every year or so to attend training that is vital to advancing their qualifications and skills. In addition, an increasing number of reservists may be offered the opportunity to serve on operational missions at home and abroad.

Approximately 26,000 people in Canada belong to the Reserve Forces. Thirty per cent are students learning at a very early stage in their career many of the leadership skills that we as organizations spend thousands of dollars on every year. I learned enough for me to know that reservists are an excellent yet underemployed talent pool in Canada. It is time that we share this news with all industries because these skilled and talented people need and want to be a part of progressive and engaged organizations that value people and their talents and abilities. In fact, my employer (STEP Energy Services) has on staff a current reservist and is benefiting today from that decision. For more information, please visit: [www.cflc.forces.gc.ca](http://www.cflc.forces.gc.ca).

I hope you enjoy this issue on the labour challenges that face us here in Calgary.

Alykhan Bandali

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## Editor's Notes

by Carole Anne Kaufman and Brenda Kutos

After what may have seemed a short hiatus during the global downturn, predictions of severe and prolonged labour shortages are back in the forefront although the urgency varies widely by geographic location and industry. According to Statistics Canada, the unemployment rate at the end of 2011 was 7.5 per cent. Nationally, employment grew by 1.2 per cent (199,000 jobs) in 2011. In Alberta, employment grew 4.9 per cent (99,000) over the year.

The Calgary Herald reported that a Brookings Institution study of 200 major metropolitan areas across the globe named Calgary as the top economic performer in Canada. An article in the Daily Oil Bulletin quotes Lance Mortlock, senior manager in Ernst & Young's oil and gas practice, as saying "a perfect demographic storm" is already brewing in Canada's oil and gas sector, as companies face climbing labour costs and the onset of severe work shortages, while the Alberta government predicts a shortage of at least 77,000 workers within the next decade. According to Nancy Southern, from the ATCO Group, speaking at an Alberta Venture magazine event, employment insurance and uncompetitive manufacturing in the heavily populated regions of Canada are harming, not helping the labour shortage.

This issue of Perspective is packed with information from consulting companies working with Alberta clients; a follow up to the report from the Petroleum Human Resources Council of Canada on HRTrends and Insights: A Look at Current and Short-Term Workforce Trends within the Canadian Petroleum Industry; an interesting initiative by the Canadian Forces Liaison Council (CFLC) to transition current or former military personnel into the civilian workforce; and finally information from immigration lawyer Peter Wong, QC, on the mechanics of hiring foreign workers.

*Carole Anne Kaufman, Sr. HR advisor, CCS Corporation. She can be reached at (403) 231-8436. Brenda Kutos, CHRP, CPM, CCP, manager, administration for Sword Energy Inc. She can be reached at [brenda.kutos@swordenergy.ca](mailto:brenda.kutos@swordenergy.ca) or (403) 921-4440.*

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by Tamara Nelson

## Strategies and Tools to Combat the Labour Shortage

The favourable economic forecast in Alberta is making businesses of all sizes brace themselves and prepare for the looming labour shortage; that is, if they aren't experiencing one already in their respective industry. We're all generally aware of the statistics and forecast of anywhere between 22,000 to 120,000 cumulative worker shortfalls in the next decade. This article's goal is to present an overview of the labour shortage and present recruitment

strategies and best practices; as well as outline various tools available, that an organization can access. We targeted several consulting organizations that advise businesses on their organizational development and recruitment needs. We asked for comments on these general questions:

- Are your clients expressing concern about current or future labour shortages and the impact on their

ability to meet mandates, and are they (clients) seeking advice on strategy;

- What are your thoughts on where labour shortages will be most impactful and how can those be addressed; and
- Are you aware of any initiatives to supplement labour pools?

We are not surprised that yes, these consulting firms are in fact engaged in strategizing alongside their clients to address this labour shortfall to meet mandated growth targets and organizational development in general. Due to the economic downturn, the hot labour market cooled and the labour shortage projections were re-forecasted, which allowed organizations a bit of breathing room to develop a plan. The main concern continues to be the current and projected need for workers in the skilled trades, information technology, experienced project managers in all fields, health care, engineering and construction sectors.

Recruitment and retention in this climate is difficult. Add to this recruitment and retention in remote areas and/or high-demand professions and it makes the undertaking extremely demanding. The goal is to promote from within and retain top performers; the reality is that turnover occurs in every organization for varying reasons. These factors put a strain on the organization's current human

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capital along with the drain on other organizational resources inhibiting the organization's ability to meet its strategic plans.

While the goal is to primarily recruit from Canada, as it is the most cost-effective and practical option for an organization, the reality is that the human capital gaps cannot be filled with purely domestic workers. The effort very often extends to international recruitment through immigration and the Provincial Nominee or Temporary Foreign Work Programs. These international options have considerable costs and risks associated but have become a necessary piece of the human capital puzzle for organizations.

A human resources professional helps an organization develop a human capital strategy that aligns with their particular industry, business model and strategic objectives. They will guide the organization with respect to best practices and strategies while accessing various resources to assist in meeting the human capital need projections.

To facilitate the recruitment effort, an organization follows certain 'best practices.' The first phase is to clearly define the selection criteria including a job analysis which is a tool to establish and document the 'job relatedness.' This analysis allows the organization to objectively explore the requirements of the position and define variables such as the skill set required, educational requirements, compensable job factors and job duties. It is important to translate this information into a job posting that is both an accurate reflection of the job as well as appealing to the target audience.

Now, the organization has a great job posting and a clear selection criteria outlined, the real question is, 'How does the organization access talent?' The various 'talent

sources' are: experienced workers, workers with transferable skills, new graduates, First Nations, immigrants, older workers, persons with disabilities, visible minorities and youth; all of which can be found both domestically and internationally.

The objective is to determine which of these sources to target while keeping in mind that there is no one solution to fit all. You need to decide what works for the particular organization and industry. Various recruitment strategies include internal job postings, employee referrals, print advertising, Internet and online job boards, career fairs (online and in person) and co-op programs, third-party recruiters and international recruiting. Each of these has pros and cons associated, but test them and monitor what works and eliminate what doesn't. Talk or survey the organization's current workforce; ask them how they search jobs, how did they come to the organization, and why do they like it there? This investigation not only assists in targeting where to most effectively spend the organization's recruitment dollars, it gives the leadership the opportunity to capitalize on strengths and develop a plan to address weaknesses.

There are various tools and resources available to organizations in Alberta that are designed to assist in addressing the critical labour shortage. Developing an interprovincial recruitment plan and targeting those with identified transferable skills is prudent. Again, the primary goal is to recruit from Canada, but the reality is, there will be gaps and recruiting internationally is inevitable. Fundamentally, the underlying assumptions are that the organization will have to further develop the training program to accommodate for various positions and that it is applicable to both interprovincial and international recruits.

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There are two main immigrant options available to an organization to help meet the human capital needs: The Provincial Nominee Program and the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. Both programs are short-term solutions; however they very often need to be part of the long-term human capital strategy of the organization.

The Alberta Provincial Nominee Program is designed to help organizations through this employer-driven immigration program operated by the Government of Alberta in conjunction with Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The federal government offers another option, which is the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, that is administered by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). The application process involves six steps and requires gaining a positive LMO (Labour Market Opinion) that the foreign worker then uses to apply to Citizenship and Immigration Canada for a work permit.

Depending on your industry and organization, high wage expectations may be a barrier to attracting and retaining quality employees. There are wage subsidies available for Canadian organizations as well as subsidies specific to Alberta organizations. Alberta specific initiatives are: Alberta Innovates R&D Associates, financial help when hiring a master's or PhD graduate to conduct research for business-related activities; ForeFront Internship Program offsets funding for interns for commercializing a medical or health-related technology; Training on the Job is a wage subsidy funding program for employees who were injured on the job and are unable to perform previous duties; and Workplace Training is a training wage subsidy that reimburses up to 70 per cent of workplace training costs. There are an additional 10 federally-

sponsored subsidies available for all Canadian organizations ranging from training and hiring various groups including youth and First Nations, to hiring for implementation of e-business practices and technology. Detailed information on these programs can be found at the Canada Business Network: Government Services for Entrepreneurs (<http://www.canadabusiness.ca/eng/guide/1137>).

Whether recruiting interprovincially or internationally, there are issues surrounding retaining the imported workers. Ideally, when an organization recruits an individual, the costs associated to relocation, training and onboarding are recovered through their years of service. The reality is that for an organization to expect 'years of service,' the relocated employee needs to fully participate in the social, cultural and economic life in the province. Again, there are resources for an organization to access to integrate the new employee into not only the culture of the organization, but the culture of the province. Alberta Community Development offers programs and services to assist newcomers in this effort.

There are many other resources available to organizations to address the labour shortage; and as time progresses additional strategies are introduced, so keep your ear to the ground. Thank you to Julia Cordray (Career Fox), Ken Olausen (The AIM Group), Susan Chesney (Robert Half), and Ernst & Young for their participation.

*Tamara Nelson, CHRP, B.Comm, MBA, PhD, manager, human resources and recruitment (Summit Liability Solutions Inc.). She can be reached at (403) 802-3633 or <http://www.linkedin.com/in/tamaranelson>.*



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# Foreign Workers as a Strategic Resource for the Labour Shortage in Alberta

by Peter Wong

At the start of 2012, Alberta once again appears to be on the verge of a significant labour shortage in skilled and unskilled occupations. Foreign workers can be a solution, but it requires considerable planning and attention to the process.

## Planning Stage

Decide what type of workers, how many, and what qualifications are required – certifications, language skills, specific education and what wages are to be paid. These questions need to be explored with the appropriate provincial authorities (see [www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca](http://www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca) for more information).

## Obtaining Approval

As a basic principle, foreign workers should not be hired unless there are no Canadian citizens or permanent residents readily available. That determination is made by the federal government through the Labour Market Opinion (LMO) process. After the positions are advertised (there are many requirements), and are still vacant, then an application for the LMO is submitted to Service Canada.

## Labour Market Opinion (LMO)

Applications to Service Canada are presently taking 12 weeks to process due to the high volume of applications. Once approved for one or two years, the foreign worker applies

for a work permit either at a port of entry into Canada or at an embassy abroad. Processing at a port of entry is immediate but the downside of that is if they are not ready with the necessary documentation to prove qualifications they can be asked to leave Canada immediately without being allowed to enter. Embassies may take several weeks to process work visas with additional requirements

that the worker is clearly aware that work outside of the conditions of the work permit could result in severe consequences for the foreign worker, including departure from Canada.

Foreign worker employer records are subject to audit by Service Canada. Failure to meet the requirements of the LMO may result in the employer being unable to access the process in

*Foreign workers can be a solution, but it requires considerable planning and attention to the process.*

such as police certificates and other documentary requirements, and medical examinations, before they issue work visas.

## Other Considerations

Once the worker arrives in Canada, there is a possibility that a competitor may offer a better position to the worker, causing them to switch employers. Conversely an employer can discharge a foreign worker on the same basis as that of a Canadian employee, even though that worker was sponsored to Canada for one or more years. An employer must take steps to ensure that the foreign worker is in compliance, including setting up their payroll from the correct employer, that job duties are in accordance with the job title, and

the future along with the possibility of other sanctions. Further, foreign workers have access to a provincial employment ombudsman who is mandated to ensure foreign workers' rights are protected.

Employers may wish to go further and sponsor the foreign workers for permanent residence under programs such as the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP). The AINP has resulted in thousands of foreign workers becoming permanent residents and citizens of Canada.

*Peter Wong, QC, is a lawyer in Calgary practising exclusively in the area of immigration law. He can be reached at Caron and Partners LLP in Calgary at (403) 260-1585 or by email [pwong@caronpartners.com](mailto:pwong@caronpartners.com).*



## Shared Labour Challenges Call for Innovation

For Canada's oil and gas industry, attracting and retaining talent while balancing economic, environmental, regulatory and societal changes, will require forward-thinking HR practices.

"The dichotomy of the economic volatility and the current and expected growth for various sectors of the petroleum industry – such as oil sands and shale – presents unique opportunities for organizations to change how they approach and manage workforce challenges," says Cheryl Knight, CEO and executive director of the Petroleum Human Resources Council of Canada.

The council partnered with Deloitte to conduct the Q3/Q4 2011 Short-Term HR Trends survey to collect employers' perspectives on short-term labour market issues and trends within the upstream and midstream petroleum industry. A total of 40 industry companies participated in the survey, representing over 32,000 oil and gas workers in Canada.

"As Canada's petroleum industry recovers from a difficult downturn, we see a familiar challenge has returned. There are companies out there that can't find the people they need for certain jobs," adds Van Zorbas, Deloitte Canada human capital national energy and resources leader.

The current labour market remains extremely competitive; many growth locations are in remote areas of northern British Columbia and northeastern Alberta, where it is difficult to attract workers.

In particular, there is a high demand for engineers, technicians, technologists, trades, operators, supervisors, specialists, and business operations and support personnel in the petroleum services, exploration and production, and oil sands in-situ sectors. While all levels of experience are required, companies consistently noted increased demand for workers with intermediate-to-senior level experience.

These HR trends and workforce challenges further escalate the chronic labour shortages that companies are facing for a variety of occupations, including experienced engineers, steam-ticketed operators, maintenance trades, field operators/specialists, experienced rig crews, and environmental and regulatory specialists. Future growth may be impeded without deliberate intervention to address these labour and skills shortages.



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In response to these challenges, some companies surveyed are adopting proactive tactics. These include providing more training to help employees move into leadership roles and to meet technical, safety and job-specific requirements. Close to a quarter of companies surveyed are also actively focusing on improving the mobility of their people. Mobility strategies can include internal transfers from areas of low activity to in-demand locations, and improved transportation logistics to remote locations.

The report identifies five future best practices that can help organizations with attracting, sourcing and developing talent. These include: tapping into under-represented labour pools (such as immigrants, women, youth and aboriginals); better practices to improve the mobility of workers; strategies to enhance productivity; workforce planning; and collaboration – across industry and with other partners, such as educational institutions and local communities.


Calgary-based Savanna Energy, for example, has developed a unique partnership with the Calgary Catholic Immigrant Society (CCIS). New immigrants who are legally entitled to work in Canada and are interested in employment in the service rig industry can apply to

CCIS/Savanna's training program where they receive four weeks of full-time training (employment preparation, life and work management skills, and safety awareness) along with hands-on technical training on rig operations and maintenance. Savanna provides employment offers to candidates who successfully complete the training. The initiative helps increase workforce diversity while providing opportunities for new Canadians.

"We hope the data from the Q3/Q4 2011 Short-Term HR Trends survey will provide valuable insight to companies as they plan their workforce strategies," says Knight. "While innovative approaches exist, there is still much to be done to sustain the industry into the future."

*Access the full Q3/Q4 survey report at [www.petrohrsc.ca](http://www.petrohrsc.ca).*

*The Petroleum Human Resource Council of Canada is the primary resource to address workforce development and labour market issues in the Canadian petroleum industry. The council collaborates with partners to develop strategies, solutions, products and services that help industry develop a sustainable, skilled and productive oil and gas workforce.*



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# A New Kind of Wireless

New competition has heated up the wireless telecommunications industry as a shifting landscape brings new options for consumers

BY SIMON HANSEN

**W**hen the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) held wireless spectrum auctions about four years ago, it opened up the floodgates to an onslaught of eager bidders hoping to gain access into Canada's wireless telecommunications market. Most were disappointed and the handful of companies that did get licences began hitting the market in early 2010.

WIND Mobile is owned by privately-held Globalive Communications Corp., a company founded in 1998 by Tony Lacavera – one of several brands that falls under the Globalive group,

including Yak. – which launched its wireless service in Toronto, Calgary and then Edmonton in 2010. It charged Ken Campbell with overseeing the company's entry into new markets as Wind's chief executive officer at the time.

"I think it's clear that not everybody is going to survive this," Campbell said during the launch. "It's going to be a very intense, competitive market in the next little while. You're going to see a lot of head-to-head competition, so we'll have to see what happens ... but there's room for another national operator."

*Continued on page 106...*



## COMMUNICATION IS EVOLVING IN TODAY'S BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT



Technology has brought us many different tools for communication in the past years – email, instant messaging, telepresence, interactive collaboration – but until recently, these tools have not necessarily worked together. Not only that, but people are not necessarily working together; our increasingly mobile workforce has people working from home office, airport lounges, even coffee shops! The combination of technology and mobility makes that ‘personal’ touch much more difficult.

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Imagine having to get six executives from remote locations across the country together in one room for a critical business meeting the same day. Or having to address “face-to-face” a widely scattered employee population with company news before the media beats you to it. Even if it was doable, the costs would be prohibitive, the disruption to day-to-day business activities significant, and the loss of productive time normally spent on core business activities bottom-line regrettable.

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Business customers are among those leading the trend toward greater use of data, from wireless telemetry to pipeline tracking, from fleet management to metering and any number of other uses.

*...continued from page 103*

Fast-forward to 2012 and it's clear the wireless space has remained intensely competitive, which has brought several new options to market for business and personal consumers alike. Wind may have been one of the first new competitors out of the gate, but several others followed, including Mobilicity and Public Mobile, owned by Data & Audio-Visual Enterprises Inc. Regional Internet, home phone and cable service provider Shaw Communications Inc. shelved its plans, meanwhile, to launch a wireless brand to focus on other areas of business. The big three remain the big three: Rogers, Telus and Bell.

What does it mean for the business consumer? Obviously more competition generally yields better prices and services, but how do you gain new customers in the business segment – estimated to be close to 100 per cent penetrated among companies? “Wireless is being used in other ways beyond just the ubiquitous wireless phone,” says Campbell. Business customers are among those leading the trend toward greater use of data, from wireless telemetry to pipeline tracking, from fleet management to metering and any number of other uses.

With today's smartphones, the demand for greater and greater data capabilities is causing a real need for wireless carriers to continually improve their networks to handle the increased traffic. There is really no limit, per se, as to how much the companies can expand the size to meet requirements – except money. It takes a lot of investment to keep up to consumers' ever-changing usage patterns.

The average penetration rate in Canada has been estimated to be between 75 to 85 per cent, depending on location. The established players – Rogers, Bell and Telus (and more than a dozen brands owned by them) – are clearly aiming at the next generation of smartphones and the increasing trend toward more data usage.

With the advent and incredible adoption of smartphones, these new phones are not too different than laptops and computers in terms of their processing power, according to a Telus Corp. spokesperson. Being able to instantly gain access to all of your files, programs, contacts and emails on your next-generation smartphone is just a reality taken for granted by consumers today.

For business consumers, there are also many third-party options available, such as consultants who will go into a company, analyze the wireless usage habits of its employees and then customize a company-wide plan tailored to those patterns using the latest wireless technology.

One such company, Intriga Mobility Inc., utilizes a combination of role-based support, standard processes and its wireless manager 2.0 proprietary software to improve an organization's cost, control and visibility of cellular users, devices and environments. Intriga Mobility's managed services and solutions aim to optimize an organization's mobility management, provide process automation and standardization, and delivers a platform for cellular device management.

A company based in Ottawa, TrueNorth Avionics, is carving





The one thing that won't be going anywhere is consumers' love of their wireless phones – something of an addiction for many people.

out its own niche with jet-set business clients. Just like a corporate jet is a business tool, the company recognized those clients also need another critical tool while in the air: the ability to stay in touch while in the air using the latest tablets, wireless smartphones and email at 20,000 feet. The U.S. is TrueNorth's key market with about 5,000 corporate clients and the company is expanding into the Asian market rapidly.

Heather Pauls watched the industry evolve from the inside for years. After working for Telus for several years, she founded her own company in 2007, HPCI, which works on behalf of corporate clients to analyze their cellphone usage habits and then identify which carrier meets their needs for the lowest possible price.

When local number portability was introduced, meaning customers won the ability to move their cellphone numbers around from carrier to carrier, it marked one of the biggest recent moves to make the market more competitive, she says. She adds the new entrants into the market are the next logical evolution in an industry that gives new meaning to the terms fast-paced and highly competitive.

As she searches for the best deals for her clients – she saves them an average of more than 40 per cent on their wireless bills annually – it's not easy to keep up with the continually fluctuating price schemes for business clients. It

comes down to the fact the carriers make it challenging and complex, says Pauls. She receives dozens of proposals every quarter and no one proposal is the same. It's impossible for businesses to keep up with that, she says.

HPCI only gets paid when the company secures her clients a savings and she claims that for every dollar paid to HPCI, \$1.50 is returned to the client company. She's taking a cautious approach to the new companies entering the wireless market, as many are generally taking a no-contract approach to their marketing plans. It's one thing to be committed to your carrier through a written contract, however without a contract in place the wireless carrier is not committed to the consumer, either, she reckons. Prices could change and there is no real certainty – something businesses need to plan for in their budgets. HPCI started with Pauls and her laptop and has grown to several full-time employees and a network of independent service providers.

You can bet on one thing to be sure: as long as the wireless industry is so lucrative and ubiquitous, new wireless players are sure to come and go. The one thing that won't be going anywhere is consumers' love of their wireless phones – something of an addiction for many people. **BIC**



# Get into the Swing of Things Preparing for **Golf** Season

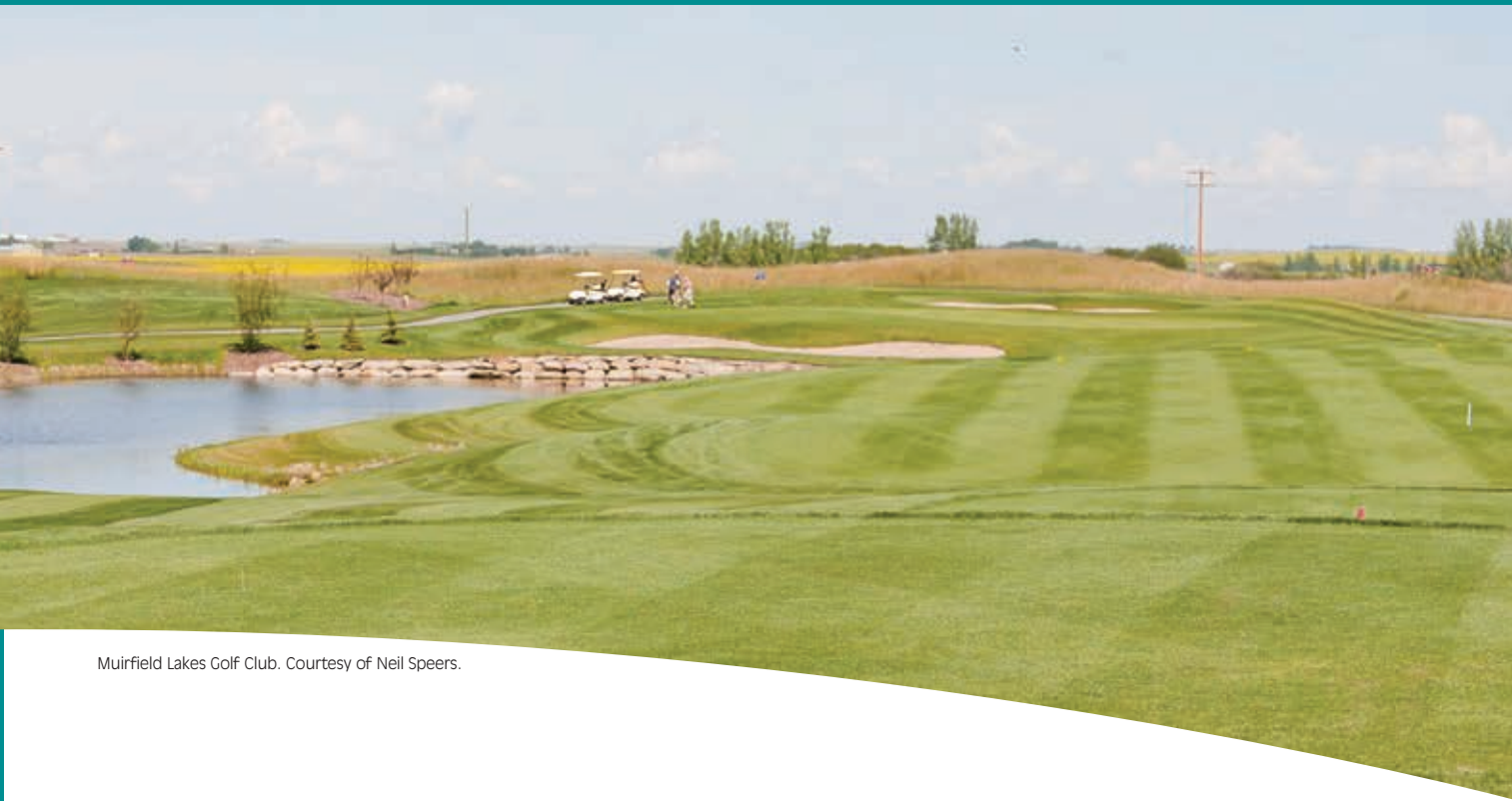
Aaron Whitfield at Muirfield Lakes.

**BY BRIE THORSTEINSON OGLE**

**L**iving in Calgary is rough for the committed golfer. All winter long, chinooks tease those eager for a touch of green by eating away the snow, only to have it return before the course is fully revealed. Golfers take heart; there is light at the end of the tunnel. You can actually improve your game while the snow flies by adopting the helpful tips and tricks set out before you. In fact, you might actually make it through your first week of the season with little more than a cramp in your hand from writing down your awesome score.

You can actually improve your game while the snow flies by adopting the helpful tips and tricks set out before you.





Muirfield Lakes Golf Club. Courtesy of Neil Speers.

The pre-season fundamentals start with an honest appraisal of your existing equipment and your current form.

“Equipment is a definitely a good place to start,” says Scott Staley, director of golf properties and general manager of Muirfield Lakes Golf Club. He offers the following advice for a quick review of your existing gear.

- Begin with your grips by checking if they are worn. If you notice some wear, it is time to replace them. New grips allow you to have the right grip pressure that assists with flexibility in the swing motion.
- Listen to your clubs. If there is a rattle in the shaft it means that the swing weight or epoxy could be loose which is easily removed by a club technician.
- If you are an avid golfer and committed with your practice, have your clubs tested for lie and loft to make sure they are consistent to your particular needs. See your local pro or technician for assistance.

Once your gear is accounted for, there are a number of places where you can go during the winter months to work on your swing, but Staley points out that 80-yard driving ranges can get old pretty quick. Instead of risking overuse before the course opens, he recommends a few easy form checks you can do from the warmth of home, such as working on your posture and balance in front of a mirror.

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Muirfield Lakes Golf Clubhouse. Photo by Stuart Dryden.

“Stretch, stretch, stretch,” says Staley. “Flexibility and strength are the keys to a powerful swing motion and a healthy injury-free golf season.”

- Stand in an upright position with your knees slightly bent.
- Tilt at the hips, keep your back straight and let your arms hang in front and above your knees.
- Look in the mirror at a straight on view and side view.
- Balance your weight equally throughout your feet but control the balance with the balls of your feet.
- Do you look like a tour pro? If not, go back and start at the beginning. After all, you have all winter to improve your stance.

The long, dormant period golfers know as winter also takes its toll on the physique of even the most committed athlete. Staley warns that those who skimp on stretching could risk a healthy season in the long run.

“Stretch, stretch, stretch,” says Staley. “Flexibility and strength are the keys to a powerful swing motion and a healthy injury-free golf season. I fully recommend yoga to assist with building strength and flexibility and to keep you from being injured. Too many times I have seen golfers race to the driving range at the start of the season and suffer with elbow, wrist and even back injuries after hitting two buckets of balls.”

Now that your equipment is tuned and polished and you have enhanced your flexibility and form, you can start to ramp up your training. Staley recommends the following tips to move you from winter prep to green ready. **BIC**





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## Why Do Kids Make Golf Look Easy?



**Scott Orban**  
C.P.G.A. Golf Professional

**G**olfers are always amazed at how junior golfers seem to be able to pick up the game and strike the ball so well in a short amount of time. They have some advantages that adults can learn from and adapt into their learning and life situations.

Kids have the advantage of knowing how to learn; they are at a point in their life where they are physiologically receptive to developing all motor skills and thus the golf swing. Adults also tend to overanalyze the golf swing and this impedes the learning of motor skills. Instruction can help by assisting the adult mind to focus on what is relevant for each individual golfer.

Kids have the advantage of health. They don't have any aches and pains that may be hampering them from making an effective golf swing. Adults have a few miles on their body parts and may need to learn compensations in the golf swing, get in better shape or engage a health professional to work on a particular ailment that is limiting the swing. McKenzie Meadows Golf Club's academy offers a Spring Swing Tune Up program that helps golfers become more physically ready and able to perform the golf swing while developing motor skills by repeating the same motions.

Kids have the advantage of time. Many junior golfers will spend the better part of a day at the club; practice a little, play 18 holes, get some lessons or tips from the pros, eat a big plate of fries, practice some more.... What a life! This is their greatest

advantage over adults in learning the game. Adults need to incorporate all of the above into their golf lifestyle – less the fries.

To help adults achieve the kids advantage described above, our golf academy has designed the IPP (Instruction, Practice, Play) system of golf improvement. Golf teachers know that if players don't practice they will not improve very quickly, or may not be able to apply it in game situations. The IPP program provides five sessions of instruction, and this is accompanied by a practice card for five range buckets, as well as the option of going out on McKenzie Meadows Golf Course to play five times an hour before dark on the first few holes of the course. At that time of day golfers are able to play a few holes without the pressure from a group or others on the course. It is important to get some playing experience, hit shots from a variety of situations or just play a couple holes. This is as close as adults can get to the experiences that the junior golfer is having, while still living their life.

Everyone loves the freedom that junior golfers exhibit when hitting balls or playing a game. Play like a kid this year and although they have some advantages, so do we.... They may play with no fear and get to eat fries, but we get to enjoy the 19<sup>th</sup> watering hole.

Scott Orban, Director Operations  
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Being a semi-private club allows for a perfect combination of private course rigour and beauty with public course accessibility and affordability. This makes the championship course attractive to golfers far and wide and with its new, lower equity membership prices, there has never been a better time to join.

Valley Ridge is more than just a round of golf however. Every year, thousands of visitors enjoy everything from high-profile golf tournaments to business meetings and wedding



celebrations. Three elegant banquet rooms are surrounded with floor-to-ceiling windows that overlook the golf course, stunning gardens, tranquil ponds and waterfalls. The club is open year round for seasonal celebrations, including Christmas parties, anniversaries and other special events.

This spring, Valley Ridge Golf Club is proud to be featured in the book, *Spectacular Golf of Western Canada*. Come and discover the "spectacular" course and experience all it has to offer.



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# Consumers' Choice Award

## Bon Ton Celebrates 90 Years!

Great service, the highest quality products available and a dedication to the community, that is what it takes to be the best, and the best is Bon Ton Meat Market. For the 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive year Bon Ton is being recognized as a Consumer Choice Award winner.

"It's telling us that we're doing something right," says operator Greg Keller.

Now in its 91<sup>st</sup> year of operation, Bon Ton Meat Market has had some changes over the years, but the way they do business has always remained the same. The market dates back to 1921, when it was first located on the corner of 7th Avenue SW and Centre Street. The meat market has moved locations a couple of times since then, and ownership has changed, but the commitment to service, products and the community still remain their top priorities.

Located in the Stadium Shopping Centre on Uxbridge Drive NW, Bon Ton has a long history in Calgary of giving people what they want and seeing them come back for more.

In 1997 Fred Keller and his family became the sole owners of Bon Ton and it has been an integral part of the family ever since. Now run by Fred's son Greg, the success of Bon Ton Meat Market is a shining jewel in a community that appreciates a well-run, community-minded business.

During the recession they hardly felt any change because they continued to operate in the same honest, professional way since their inception. And, unlike many businesses, they are bucking the trend, when it comes to employees. Staffing is the last place they make cuts. When a customer walks into Bon Ton, they will receive the undivided attention of a qualified staff member. They are never passed off or ignored. The atmosphere is fun, and the staff is informative.

"We really encourage and strive to have a fun, friendly yet very professional atmosphere," says Keller. "You need to have knowledge, experience and the skills necessary to prepare all the different cuts of meat properly. The meat cutters at Bon Ton share over 250 years of experience between them which is something we are very proud of," says Keller.

The products and services they offer have expanded, but the care and quality remains the same. Today's Bon Ton Meat Market goes beyond being a premium meat market as they also have homemade pies, other prepared dishes and a full-service deli.

In the end, it all goes back to serving the community and respecting the great customers and people who make up Calgary.

"It's extremely important to give back and be a part of the community that supports you.

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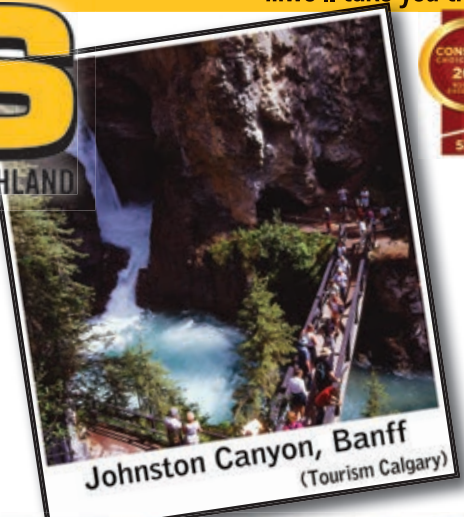
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## The Road to Asia

Exporting Alberta oil lies through Aboriginal lands

BY JESSE SEMKO



Shawn Atleo

“Achieving full engagement and forging understanding is our standard of how we can and must do business together.”

~ Shawn Atleo

Just as Aboriginal communities played an important role in forming Canada during the time of the fur trade, their ongoing co-operation and involvement has once again become vital in shaping our country’s future – as we develop our energy sector and begin to build pipelines to export these natural resources to the energy thirsty markets of Asia. The key to this development is creating a better way of working with Aboriginal groups who are often stewards of this great land.

Speaking at Calgary Chamber event in March, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Shawn Atleo pointed towards a path of getting business and Aboriginal com-

munities to work together to achieve this goal. Atleo encouraged oilpatch businesses in Calgary to go beyond the consultation legally required in Canada’s regulatory review processes and to build stronger business partnerships with Aboriginal communities, based on respect for community interests, recognition of rights, and the cultivation of long-term relationships. “Achieving full engagement and forging

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understanding is our standard of how we can and must do business together," he said.

Atleo spoke as part of the Aboriginal-Business Connection series. Hosted by the Calgary Chamber, this series has heard from Aboriginal experts, members of the Aboriginal community and government representatives who've shared insights on how these groups can work together. The series concludes in May with a report equipping businesses and Aboriginal communities with the tools needed to build successful working relationships.

The Calgary Chamber believes that developing a better way of working with Aboriginal communities is an important part of achieving Alberta's economic potential, particularly as we look for ways to export our natural resources to Asia. Four out of five of the world's largest oil consumers are in Asia including China, Japan and India.

China alone is the world's second largest user of oil and is the largest consumer of energy. More than half of China's global oil supply is sourced from foreign sources, which accounts for 60 per cent of global oil demand growth. By 2015 that figure is expected to rise to 70 per cent.

"Resource extraction in the North and the export of our energy products to Asia requires engagement with Aboriginal communities," confirms Ben Brunnen, director of policy and government affairs and chief economist with the Calgary Chamber of Commerce. "Our future prosperity hinges upon building successful Aboriginal-business partnerships based on recognition and respect with a shared vision of success."

For more information on the Aboriginal-Business Connection series, visit [calgarychamber.com/abc](http://calgarychamber.com/abc).

# The Tipping Point

Calgary is in the midst of a massive mind shift that's changing our city – one person at a time

BY JESSE SEMKO

Change is in the air. At first, we didn't even see it coming. But lately, something has happened – Calgary has come of age and people everywhere are taking notice.

The proof is everywhere. In the past few years, *Maclean's* magazine has named Calgary the fourth most cultured city in Canada and the third smartest. *The Economist* said we're the fifth most livable city and Mercer Consulting has ranked us number one in Canada for quality of living.

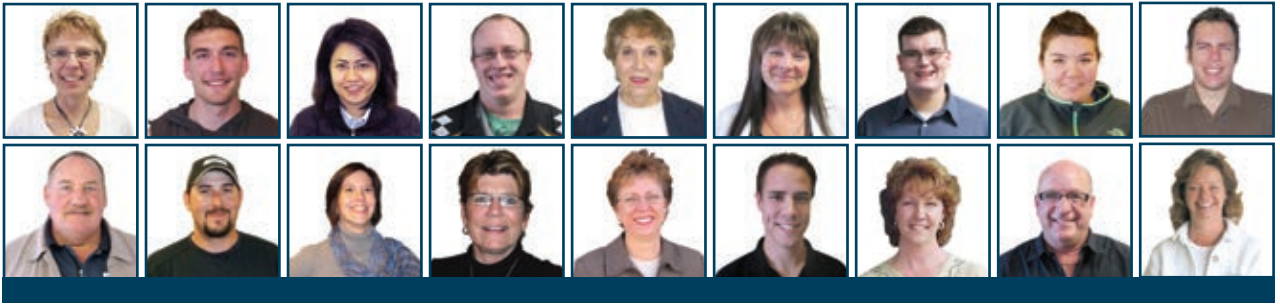
Of course, these are only some of the acknowledgments Calgary's received. And while they're nice to hear, the tricky part going forward is making sure Calgary not only maintains its status as a top city, but surpasses it.

To help make this city a better place to live, the Calgary Chamber started the iF series last year. The iF series is based on the idea that change always starts by wondering "what if...?" What if the way we are doing things isn't the best way? What if there is a better way? From these initial "if"

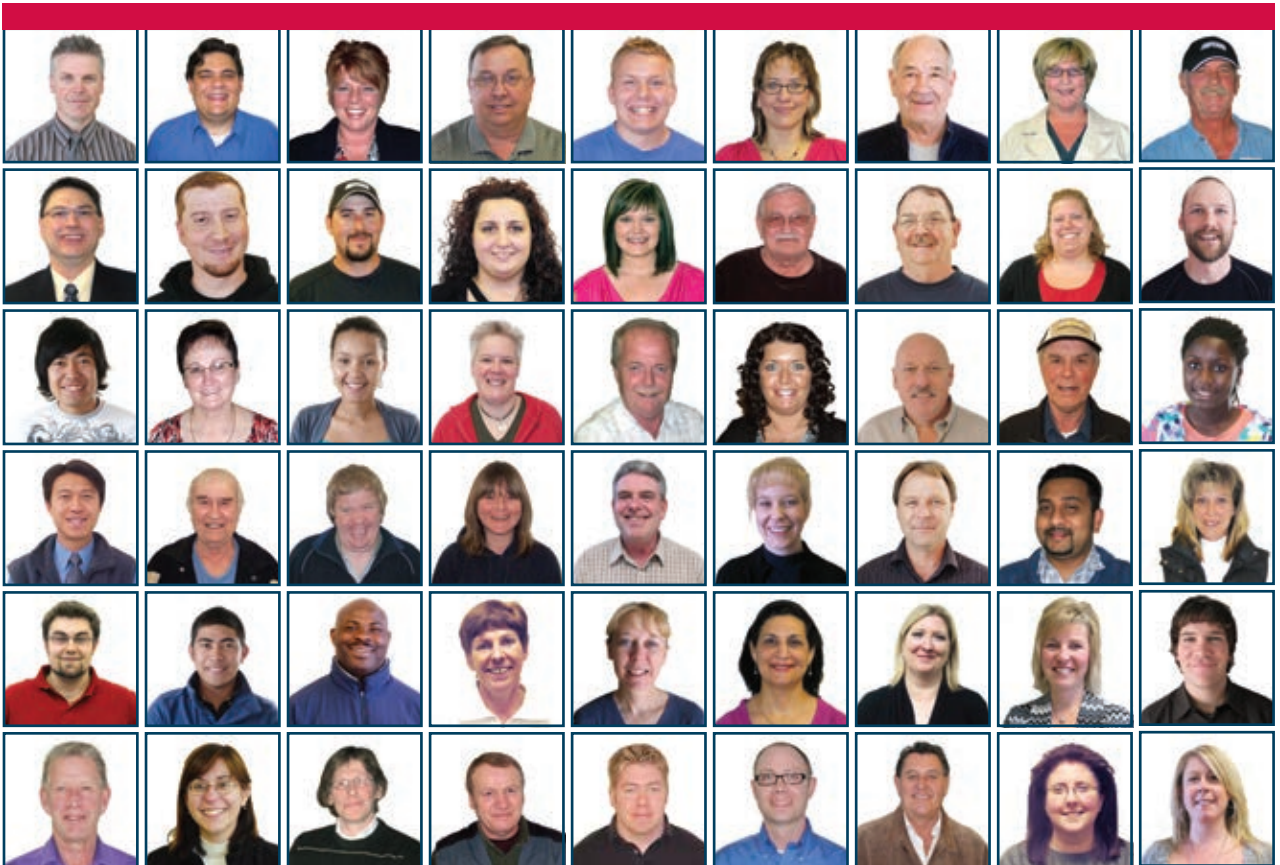
questions people then go on to challenge old, ineffective ways of thinking and pursuing courses of action that can result in incredibly cool and innovative change.

From these initial "if" questions people then go on to challenge old, ineffective ways of thinking and pursuing courses of action that can result in incredibly cool and innovative change.





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Recognizing this pattern, the Calgary Chamber started the iF series to hear from a number of prominent Calgarians on their own “if” ideas, and how they believe these ideas can make Calgary a better city. A resounding theme that came from the last iF series event held in February is the power a single person can have in bringing about change. One of the presenters, Jag Johal, a licensed acupuncturist with Johal Health Centre, challenged the more than 100 people in attendance to take stock on how their outlooks and attitudes affect others around them. As an example, Johal pointed to the situation of the Vancouver riots where the actions of a group of emotionally-charged people caused other normally law-abiding citizens to act out of character, leading to riots and vandalism.

“How we feel is so very contagious,” he said. “Our minds are incredibly powerful. Wherever our mind goes, that’s where we go with our thoughts and actions. These actions can and do go onto influence others.”

Another iF series presenter, Michael Green, founding member of the One Yellow Rabbit theatre troupe and creative producer of Calgary 2012, agreed with this idea. Green pointed to the opportunity individual actions can have in reshaping Calgary’s identity. “We can be whatever we want this city to be. But it all starts with us,” said Green.

For more information on the iF series, visit [ifseries.ca](http://ifseries.ca).

## Upcoming Events

From celebrating the city’s movers and shakers to providing inside knowledge to businesses, the Calgary Chamber has an event for every need

### April 6 and 16

#### 7:15 A.M. Networking Club

Speed dating meets Toastmasters at this networking event where other small businesses learn about what you do, and go on to spread the word on your business. It’s almost like having an entire marketing department working on your behalf.

For more information, visit [calgarychamber.com](http://calgarychamber.com).



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Saving the day is all in a day's work for CTCC event services team

By Gord Hawker

## SMOOTHING OUT THE WRINKLES

Upon entering a banquet or meeting room at the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre (CTCC), what strikes most people is the sense of order that pervades the room. Tables beautifully set. Chairs placed in precise rows. Linens pristine and crisply pressed. Not a wrinkle in sight.

That sense of order and calm is the handiwork of the CTCC's event services team. Their role is to smooth out all the last-minute details that inevitably come with every event. CTCC Director of Client Services Christina Rolle is constantly amazed by what her team accomplishes. With the scale of some events, the tight room turnarounds, and the need to coordinate audio-visual, staging, décor, food service and materials handling, it is a real balancing act.

"We work so well together as a team," says Rolle. "No two events are exactly the same. But everyone knows their role and there are no egos. When time is tight and different teams need access to the same room at the same time, we just work out a plan and things get done."

By way of example, Rolle conveys a number of 'tales from the trenches' that BIC readers might enjoy. A night during the 2009 Grey Cup celebrations stands out as one of the more memorable during Rolle's 19 years at CTCC. The Saskatchewan Roughriders' Riderville party in Macleod Hall featured a concert by Canadian band Trooper. Just as the band was to go on, their management requested barricades and security in front of the stage.

"It was five minutes to show time. No time to call in more security," explains Rolle. "We quickly assembled 3-foot tradeshow pipe and drape across the front. And then the event manager, A/V manager and I spent the evening holding back the 2,500 or so happy party-goers. It was a last-minute improvisation, but it worked."

Accommodating famous visitors always leads to interesting moments. While some stars like Céline Dion have proved to be "calm, gracious – even taking time to shake housekeeping and catering staff's hands and thanking them for their work", other lesser-known artists have been much less gracious and made odd demands in their contract riders.

When former US President George W. Bush had a speaking

engagement at the CTCC, the security arrangements were extensive and involved working with the RCMP and US Secret Service. "There were background checks on all staff," remembers Rolle. "Every move was choreographed, which was no small feat with such a large entourage. Canine officers had to inspect each room after set-up. One dog decided to have some fun with us. It got very upset and jumped up on a table and started barking. It turned out to be nothing, but we had to do a fast reset of that table before guests could enter."

Even local events can bring interesting requests. Rolle and her staff have accommodated live bison, horses and a bull. There was also a corporate fundraising event at which employees of an unnamed company paid to see their CEO kiss a pig. Rolle also remembers fondly a request to supply an elephant for a bride and groom to ride into their reception.

"Sadly, that was one request we couldn't accommodate," she shrugs. "We keep a lot of things around here, but no spare elephants."

But given their reputation for service, there's no doubt the CTCC's excellent event staff were able to ensure the couple's special day went smoothly.



*Christina Rolle and her event services team manage all the last-minute details to ensure CTCC events run smoothly.*

# Calgary Economy Back on Track for Another Uptick

BY BRUCE GRAHAM

**W**estern Canada's most vibrant economy is back on a roll. A strong comeback in retail sales, greatly reduced office vacancy rates and the return of jobs, jobs, jobs have convinced the staff and board of Calgary Economic Development that one of the shortest, nastiest slumps in city history has drawn to a close.

To backtrack a moment, the bottom fell out of world economies in the fall of 2008. And although Canadians were largely shielded from the worst effects of the global crisis, most of us took our lumps from economic headwinds. But based on a series of upbeat economic indicators, there are plenty of reasons to feel bullish about the future and reason for the robust economic forecasts included in the recent provincial budget.

So let's get straight to the good news, starting at street level: more than 3,100 jobs came roaring back last year, slashing the city's unemployment rate to 4.9 per cent from an almost intolerable 7.7 per cent in May 2010. Those figures are still more impressive when you factor in the addition of thousands of new workers to the labour force. In all, Calgary enjoyed a remarkable employment growth rate of 4.9 per cent, four times the national average – accounting for more than 16 per cent of all the jobs created in Canada.

Clearly, we're once again a go-to destination for Canadian

jobseekers. According to last year's census, Calgary is the fastest growing metropolitan centre in the country, with Edmonton not far behind.

The jobs have returned and more qualified people will be soon needed, so CED's labour attraction campaign, *Calgary. Be Part of the Energy*, will continue to drive home the point.

The message is there's still a lot to like about Calgary's business environment. Just ask the Chinese, who have invested nearly \$20 billion in Alberta's energy industry since 2009. Most of us have known this for years, but we need to keep selling our strengths to the world at large.

While Calgary still relies on the energy industry as a primary source of growth, this strength has helped to diversify our economy in related industries such as IT and financial services (where employment has nearly doubled in 10 years). Construction and real estate have also helped to protect us from external headwinds, as has our strong base of corporate headquarters.

All you need to do is walk a single downtown block at high noon to sense a fresh attitude and a new confidence on the street. This city is getting back to where it needs, and expects, to be.

It seems there is good reason to feel good about the future as we look to 2012 and beyond.

## Pond Hockey Tournament Highlights Calgary's Energy

BY MARY MORAN

**O**n February 10, 2012, Calgary Economic Development, in partnership with Hockey Calgary and the Calgary Flames Hockey Club, hosted the *Calgary. Be Part of the Energy* pond hockey tournament at Arbour Lake.

The community event, featuring novice players from Hockey Calgary, the Calgary Canucks and the Calgary Flames, showcased Calgary's energetic hockey community to the rest of Canada through the national broadcast of CBC's Hockey Day in Canada. "Hockey Day in Canada is a great opportunity to show the country the tremendous spirit and energy in Calgary," says Bruce Graham, President and CEO, Calgary Economic Development.

With the current labour shortage in the city, Calgary

Economic Development is continuing to promote Calgary as the number one city to live in Canada. "Through a partnership with the city and private sector, CED's *Calgary. Be Part of the Energy* marketing campaign is focused on attracting people and business to Calgary. Hosting this tournament is a fantastic way to show Canadians this is not only a great place to make a living – but a great place to make a life," adds Graham.

Over 300 kids, families and guests took part in the event and other activities including a "Battle of the Blazers" contest, where coaches decorated a blazer and participated in a faux-fashion show for prizes, as well as a hero talk and autograph signings. For more information about *Calgary. Be Part of the Energy* visit [www.bepartoftheenergy.ca](http://www.bepartoftheenergy.ca).



# Big New Numbers and the Elusive International Traveller

BY STEWART MCDONOUGH

## Big New Tourism Numbers

Calgary led the nation's metropolitan centres in tourism spending growth in 2011 with an 8.1 per cent increase in visitor spending according to the Conference Board of Canada. Based on this forecast and information from Statistics Canada for 2010, visitor spending in Calgary is estimated at \$1.3 billion in 2011. The latest data from Statistics Canada shows that the number of visitors to the Calgary area grew from 4.7 million in 2009 to 5.1 million in 2010.

## The Elusive International Traveller

International travellers stay longer and spend more than domestic or business travellers. They are the crème de la crème, the crown jewel, the so on and so forth, and they are hard to capture. Globally, two of the forces affecting this market are that more people are travelling and there are more destinations competing for their attention.

Marketing to international travellers directly is primarily the providence of the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), their provincial counterparts including Travel Alberta and major international attractions like the Calgary Stampede. Tourism Calgary's travel trade team provide the CTC and Travel Alberta with Calgary's unique stories, dynamic imagery and most compelling experiences as they develop their international marketing campaigns.

Where Tourism Calgary plays a lead role is in working with tour operators and online travel agencies that reach into our key international markets – targeting consumers indirectly through intermediaries. The travel trade sales and marketing cycle can require several years to build relationships, market a destination and develop itineraries that are then sold to consumers.

Tourism Calgary first develops and builds relationships at various marketplaces (industry conferences). Interested operators are then encouraged to visit Calgary for product development trips. Once the operators are excited about



Monique Morrison, Manager, Travel Trade at Showcase Canada Asia



the Calgary product, tour itineraries are developed and joint marketing agreements secured.

2011 was a banner year for Tourism Calgary's travel trade department. At five travel trade marketplaces, 382 appointments with tour operators resulted in 2140 member referrals. Tourism Calgary also hosted 25 product development trips throughout the year with 242 participants. Out of these relationships 14 new itineraries were developed, twice the previous year's total.

To illustrate the value of new itineraries consider Stella Travel Services. In years past, they have carried one four-day Calgary Stampede itinerary. Starting in 2011 they have included a five-day Essential Calgary itinerary that treats Calgary as a base from which to visit the tremendous attractions surrounding the city. Itineraries like these transition Calgary from gateway to hub, keeping travellers in Calgary hotels and restaurants.

Stella Travel is an international tour operator in the United Kingdom, Canada's largest overseas tourism market; the new itinerary was sent to 600,000 travelling consumers and 7000 travel agents.

The power of joint marketing agreements is demonstrated in a partnership with the Calgary Stampede and tour operator Canadian Affair that launched a January

sale campaign in the United Kingdom. The Calgary brochure was sent to more than 325,000 households and included a white cowboy hat for the first 500 bookings with a minimum of one night in Calgary. Canadian Affair booked more than 10,000 hotel room nights in Calgary in 2011 and their January sales during the Stampede promotion were up 35 per cent over the previous year.

Marketing campaigns with online travel agencies like Orbitz, Travelocity and Expedia, the development of new itineraries and joint marketing agreements result in more than 75,000 room nights sold in Calgary, which is always accompanied with visitor spending in restaurants, attractions and shops.

## Innovator's Toolkit Series

# Innovate Calgary Provides Tech Entrepreneurs with Toolkit for Success

BY ANDREA MENDIZABAL

**"T**he Innovator's Toolkit series challenges you to think in a realistic yet intuitive way," says Steven McIlvenna, Program Manager, Entrepreneur Development at Innovate Calgary. "Our mission is to support and equip entrepreneurs so they can pursue their vision all the way into the marketplace."

The Innovator's Toolkit is a new, topical six-part series for technology entrepreneurs and companies focused on the most effective best practices for company development. From understanding your market to uncovering financing options, it is designed to provide innovators with valuable insight from 'been there, done that' mentors, entrepreneurs and executives.

The series is produced by Innovate Calgary, a full-service organization offering technology transfer and business incubator services to researchers, entrepreneurs and businesses within the advanced technology sector. It is designed to arm innovators with a toolkit for success, and an applied process of working through opportunity, design and development. Entrepreneurs engaging in the series will also have access to a program of continued coaching and mentoring.

The Innovator's Toolkit series, comprised of half-day sessions, runs from April 12 until June 14, 2012, and can be taken as a full program or as individual sessions.

### Market Discovery – April 12, 2012

Learn to identify customers willing to pay for a solution while gaining valuable insight into what they demand. This session provides innovators with a better understanding of the process for bringing a tangible market connection to their innovation.

### Business Model Design – April 26, 2012

Learn about the integrated nature of a business model, and how to examine and refine the revenue model to support its delivery. This session demonstrates a method for identifying and designing the key elements needed to deliver value to customers.

### People + Leadership – May 10, 2012

Build 'mental capital' as a key part of your startup. Using a leadership model that gets results, innovators will gain an understanding of advisory board creation, the value of networking, mentor groups, and how to attract the right people to an organization.



### Market Capture – May 24, 2012

Set your offering apart in a meaningful way. Not only will innovators learn to build an authentic brand that is connected to its customers, but they will also learn about market planning and how to get from concept to first sales to growth.

### Money & Milestones – June 7, 2012

Discover the diversity of available financing options. Learn from investors and fellow entrepreneurs about financing your opportunity, from seed to venture capital, and the pros and cons of each. Innovators will learn the importance of managed growth, when and how to 'bootstrap' without giving away equity, banking options, and how the government can help with funding and grants.

### Intellectual Property Strategy – June 14, 2012

Did you know if you file for a patent too early, you can limit your chances for success? Determine whether and when you need intellectual property protection. Innovate Calgary's intellectual property experts provide answers while guiding innovators through the full breadth of intellectual property protection options for their companies and technologies.

"This series is a great way to engage Innovate Calgary and our programs and services. We also offer a Go-to-Market program and a deal generator financing forum as their opportunity advances," says McIlvenna.

For more information about the Innovator's Toolkit series, or to learn more about Innovate Calgary, contact: Steven McIlvenna at [smcilvenna@innovatecalgary.com](mailto:smcilvenna@innovatecalgary.com), or 403.284.6419 or visit [innovatecalgary.com](http://innovatecalgary.com).

Sign up to receive email updates about the series by contacting Amanda Khuu, Program Coordinator, at [akhuu@innovatecalgary.com](mailto:akhuu@innovatecalgary.com).



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BY DAVID PARKER

# MarketingMatters

I've had the privilege of taking a couple of tours of Heavy Industries' 26,000-square-foot facility, a fascinating place that has evolved from creating local signage and small 3-D props to working directly with some of the most respected artists and largest brands in the world.

The creative team still manufacture great local advertising signs like the stylized Fender Stratocruiser above the entrance to Guitarworks but this Calgary company has also completed many other gems around the world like a 65-foot tall elongated girl holding shopping bags for the Orchard Central shopping mall in Singapore.

Heavy Industries has also become a go-to name for sculptors. It worked with Jill Anholt to construct her design of a 30-foot tall concrete and stainless steel structure on the waterfront in Toronto and was chosen to fabricate and install Anholt's 'TransitStory' artwork that is integrated with the metal air grates on the LRT platform at 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Centre Street SE.

It was quite a production requiring some 2,500 feet of mild steel and over 15,000 welds to meet structural standards. Each figure is painted in multiple colours from a set of six unique pantones, necessitating more than 29,000 feet of masking tape and 104 litres of paint to create the planned esthetic.

Heavy Industries has fabricated and installed sculptures all over North America and as far away as Japan, Munich, London and Singapore, but 'TransitStory' is the first public art piece in its own city.

Melanie Simmons has accepted the position of public relations specialist in the corporate communications department at SAIT Polytechnic. A graduate of the school's CTSR program, she comes to Calgary from a media relations position with the Sun Peaks Resort near Kamloops, B.C.

MCF Housing for Seniors has adopted a new name as part of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. Although it has been a leading provider of affordable independent living and supportive living housing for low-income seniors in Calgary for that many years, CEO Arlene Adamson felt that the name wasn't as well known in the city as it should be.

With the help of Juice Creative that handled a comprehensive corporate identity exercise and designed a new logo, it will now be known as Silvera for Seniors with a tag line of "Building Community."

Hafiz Mitha and his creative team at JOI Media, a digital agency housed in the historic Grain Exchange Building, has been giving back to this community since the company was launched in 2008.

Its main focus has been with JOI to the World, an initiative that in its first year filled 300 boxes of essentials that were delivered to the needy through local organizations. Last Christmas that figure rose to more than 4,000 – boxes donated by Instabox, printed by Rhino Print Solutions and handled in space provided by Maple Leaf Storage.


In sharing the vision with friends and many new acquaintances through the use of social media, Mitha says JOI Media came into contact with many young people who said they wanted to give to charities but were unsure of which to choose.

After a year in development, JOI Media has created an online fundraising platform called Katapult, under the management of Tameeza Mitha, that allows organizations to tell their stories with words, photographs and videos to create awareness and secure funding for their campaigns.

Local members of the Calgary chapter of the International Special Events Society, POP Kollaborative and E=MC<sup>2</sup>, were both big winners of awards at the society's industry event held in Tampa, Florida.

POP Kollaborative won for best corporate event with a budget between \$25,000 and \$500,000 and E=MC<sup>2</sup> won for best event staged in the multiple locations category.

Kicker was founded in 2005 by a group of former award – including Emmy – winning journalists experienced in high-impact storytelling. Today it is producing TV commercials, documentaries, corporate and marketing videos to award-winning animations, motion graphics and online training modules that have been produced for clients and shown in 23 countries.

President Paul Bzeta has added to the staff by hiring Angelique Silberman as Kicker's new vice president, development. Most recently with Tag Advertising, Silberman is well known in Calgary production and agency circles and abroad with over 250 nominations for projects in film and television including two nominations for producer of the year at Cannes. 

## Parker's Pick:

I got a kick out of the Beansers' ads on Trigger's website. Fun.



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