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Voice of Business

SPCA steadily fulfilling long list of goals

BARRY COULTER

Over the past several years, the go-to centre for animal welfare in the region — the East Kootenay SPCA — has seen its stature and reputation rise around the province, culminating in its being awarded B.C.'s Branch of the Year, in May, 2015.

The EK SPCA is this month's Cranbrook Chamber of Commerce's featured business.

Located just outside Cranbrook on Highway 3/93, the EK SPCA is the centrepiece of a vast territory, from Creston north to Golden and Kimberley to the Alberta border. It's a shelter and adoption centre that takes in surrendered animals if the owners can no longer care for them, abused and neglected animals, and strays from all over the region.

"We provide medical attention for animals in need who come into our care," said Manager Brenna Baker. "A lot of these animals need extensive vet treatments and/or surgeries. We also ensure all of our cats, dogs and rabbits are spayed and neutered, vaccinated, dewormed, and microchipped prior to be adopted out."

The SPCA provides assistance to the community as well by offering low income spay/neuter certificates for owned and free roaming cats. It also acts as an education centre for the entire community, running summer kids camps that sell out every year, and hosting visits from schools and clubs throughout the year.

The EK SPCA is one of the largest in the province, not just in terms of territory, but in terms of "clients."



Brenna Baker, Manager of the East Kootenay SPCA, with friend.

"In 2015 we took in over 900 animals," Baker said. "This included surrenders, strays, abused and neglected animals. We took in cats, kittens, dogs, puppies, rabbits, guinea pigs, rats and birds. Some days we can have more than 60 cats and kitten in our care."

The shelter runs with a team of eight full- and part-time staff. Volunteers also play a big role, and will play an even bigger role.

"We are just beginning to build our volunteer program," Baker said. "Currently we have over 30 active volunteers. They help out in many areas from cleaning kennels, walking dogs, fundraising and education. We also have some volunteers who help out with administra-

tive duties and grounds and maintenance."

More than \$80,000 in renovations and improvements have gone into the shelter over the past two years, but there is still a long way to go, Baker said.

We have been working hard to improve the quality of our shelter, but we still have a long ways to go.

"We have another cat room that needs to be totally renovated, our dog area needs major renovations, and a proper ventilation system needs to be installed in a few of the cat rooms."

"And we are always striving to increase our live release rate (more animals leaving the shelter to forever homes. Four

years ago the live release rate was only 54 per cent. Last year we were over 94 per cent. This is one of the highest in North America."

Baker said one of the main goals this year is to educate the community and advocate on behalf of those animals who cannot speak for themselves.

"We all need to work together to help fight animal cruelty and pet over population. It would be great that if one day the BCSPCA would have to change their entire focus to education because most of our shelter will be so low on animal intake due to the people changing and becoming responsible pet owners."

"Resources are always a challenge for the East Kootenay Branch. "Our medical costs for 2015 exceeded \$85,000," Baker said. "This continues to rise as we try and save more animals."

"We have big dreams and plans such as an education centre that could be utilized by our communities whom we serve, a barn and proper corrals so we could take in farm animals, an onsite vet clinic to assist the community will low income spay/neuters and dentals for their pets. These are just a few goals on a long list."

Baker added that the community is a big part of the SPCA's success. "Our branch doesn't receive any federal or provincial funding to operate so we rely on fundraising, donations and grants to do the work we do. Thank you to everyone who donated time and money to the BCSPCA!"

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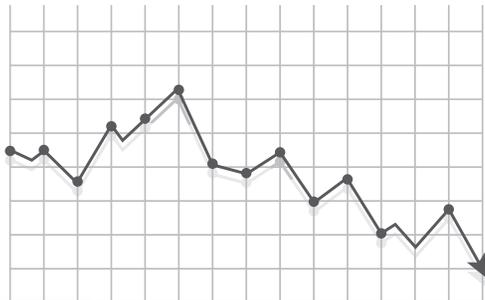
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BRITISH COLUMBIA
Bill Bennett, M.L.A.
 (Kootenay East)
 Province of British Columbia

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 Phone: 250-417-6022
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 bill.bennett.mla@leg.bc.ca

WELCOME to our NEW MEMBERS

It has been a busy summer at the Chamber with the membership constantly growing.

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 Phone: 250 426 6849
 Brad Turner
 Email: bsheahan@telus.net

7-Eleven
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 Sandy Graves

J'adore Laser Skin Centre
 Phone: 250 489 3433
 Ashley Nicholas
 Email: jadorelaser@shaw.ca

Easy Financial Services Inc.
 Phone: 778 550 2095
 Spice Hart
 Email: branch2127-mgr@goeasy.com

Rocky Now 2015
 Phone: 866 822 2666
 Alexandra Thomson
 Email: info@rockynow.com

Sherwin Williams
 Phone: 250 426 5555
 Brian Tompkins
 Email: sw8863@sherwin.com

Canadian Rockies Landscape Corp.
 Phone: 250 417 5550
 Jennifer Krotz
 Email: allseasons@canadianrockieslandscape.com

Edward Jones – Brandi Archibald
 Phone: 250 417 2910
 Brandi Archibald
 Email: brandi.archibald@edwardjones.com

Welcome!

THANK you for your investment.
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B.C. Throne Speech 2016

"Success is not for quitters"

The Speech from the Throne has outlined the B.C. government's broad plans and priorities for 2016 and in the run-up to the next general election in spring 2017.

The speech touched on themes such as government economic and fiscal policy during turbulent economic times, steps to relieve the pressures of a high cost of living, and efforts to say "yes" to economic development initiatives while managing the environment.

With an agenda that "Stands up for B.C.", the speech hints at commitments that will more likely materialize fully in next week's 2016/17 budget.

These include infrastructure spending, steps to mitigate high housing prices, and increased funding for social services, especially child protection.

Throne Speech highlights include:

- Economic Development:** The government says it will "stand up for B.C." to protect jobs in the province's key sectors while "getting to yes" on economic development projects. The province re-affirmed its commitment to its Five Conditions on heavy oil pipelines. Priorities for the coming year include work toward securing the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement and renewal of the softwood lumber agreement with the United States.

- Housing Costs:** The government will review home assigning practices (also known as shadow flipping), will bring in incentives to increase the housing supply, and will introduce steps to allow for better opportunities to enter the housing market. The government will also work with municipalities to reduce the hidden costs in home purchases, and to make those hidden costs clear and transparent to home buyers.

- LNG:** The government acknowledged that the global economic downturn is limiting its ability to predict how many jobs or how much revenue the LNG industry could create in B.C. The commitment to a Prosperity Fund was restated as an endowment to future generations, financed through future LNG revenues.

- Climate Change:** The government will continue consulting on its climate action strategy before releasing a final Climate Leadership Plan later this year.

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Executive Director's Soap Box

By David D. Hull, Executive Director

Never Under Estimate the Power of Many

The effect of many figurative or literal hands coming together on a singular focus or effort can have an amazing affect. I could list a dozen platitudes or clichés stating the same point but reality is always the better illustrator.

This past December the Cranbrook business community came together for three events in ten days to raise money to address social needs in Cranbrook. The Turkey Drive, the Bankers' Auction and the Miracle on Baker Street brought in well in excess of \$100,000. Collectively many hands made quick fun work of a big job.

In 1985 Rotarians worldwide came together to eradicate polio. Hundreds of thousands worked to ensure that children are immunized against this crippling disease. Since the PolioPlus program's inception more than two billion children have received oral polio vaccine. In concert with the World Health Organizations the scourge that is polio is being eradicated. No one country, organization or group could have made these demonstrable gains. But the hands of many did. Never underestimate the power of many.

This week is BC Chamber of Commerce Week. The week is set aside to highlight the seldom trumpeted successes of the local, provincial and federal Chamber movement. Chambers across the province make a special effort this week to let folks know what goes on year round on their behalf.

The BC Chamber of Commerce is the collective hands of every Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade, big and small, across BC coming together for the common purpose of advancing trade and commerce in our province. Without the many the

very effective efforts, and sustaining successes, of the BC Chamber would not be possible.

The BC Chamber is the most recognized and effective business advocacy organization in the Province. For those old enough to remember the E.F. Hutton advertisements it is like that. When the BC Chamber speaks, people listen.

BC Chamber members gather annually to adopt policy and positions that create the frame work of advocacy efforts going forward. From Valemont to Vancouver and Surrey to Smithers delegates representing the thousands of individual BC businesses across the province consider

grass roots developed policies for addition to the policy book.

Connecting businesses of all sizes, from all sectors of the economy, from every region of the Province to advocate for public policies that will foster a strong, competitive economic environment that benefits businesses, communities and families across British Columbia is the powerful effect of many coming together.

As a result of its broad business perspective, the British Columbia's Chamber's views are sought after and respected by government, business leaders and the media. The BC Chamber meets regularly with provincial

and federal cabinet ministers, deputy ministers and senior government officials on behalf of the British Columbia business community.

The power of the many Cranbrook Chamber of Commerce members coming together will be really evident in 2016. A year of transition, repurposing and positioning in 2015 have the Chamber poised to make some significant policy statements and advocacy gains this year.

The power of the many will be evident in representing the business community and advancing trade and commerce in Cranbrook in 2016.

Cranbrook Chamber Reacts to BC Budget

Finance Minister Mike de Jong has unveiled his fourth consecutive balanced budget and once again the Chamber has declared that while not flashy it is a budget that will provide certainty going forward.

Overall the Chamber is pleased with the the government's commitment to disciplined spending, paying down direct operating debt, and improving B.C.'s tax competitiveness.

The province is projecting a thin surplus of \$264 million on revenues of more than \$48 billion. Despite this, the provincial debt will grow by more than \$1.5 billion this year, to 67.7 billion, thanks to new capital expenditures.

"While other provinces grapple with debt, deficits and economic uncertainty BC has balanced the budget for a fourth year in a row," said Chamber Executive Director David D. Hull. "This is the kind of certainty and stability that provides reassurance to the business community going forward."

"It's clear that is not by coincidence that B.C. will lead the country in economic growth this year," stated Hull. "The government's commitment to strong fiscal management

in recent years, as demonstrated in today's budget, positions our province to remain ahead of the pack for years to come."

The Chamber applauded today's announcement that B.C. will establish a new Commission on Tax Competitiveness, with a goal of modernizing the current sales tax system. "Keeping taxes competitive is crucial for businesses of all sizes in Cranbrook. Tax competitiveness will help business of all sizes and encourage expansion and investment" said Hull.

The government has committed to living within its means. "The government has aggressively tackled its direct operating debt reducing it by almost 80 per cent over the past 10 years. At the current rate, its estimated direct operating debt could be completely eliminated by 2020," said Hull.

Budget 2016 also includes several modest initiatives to support further economic development across the province, including: a Rural Dividend Program to strengthen and diversify rural economies, new money for highway maintenance, a further extension to the Mining Flow-Through Share tax and the Mineral Exploration tax credit measures.

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(Pictures from left to right in order below)

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Dr. Catalina Lopez-Correa, MD, PhD, VP of Sector Development and Chief Scientific Officer, Genome BC

Curbing Infections: How drugs and virus genetics have drastically improved treatment in HIV and Hepatitis C
Dr. Richard Harrigan, Director of Research Laboratories, BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS

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Voice of Business



President's Report

Planning for economic prosperity

As the leading independent voice of business in our community, the Cranbrook Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with other key stakeholders, champions and advocates on major issues affecting the economy of Cranbrook. One of the ways we do this is by developing policies that articulate the Chamber's position on key economic issues and priorities.

The Cranbrook Chamber of Commerce wants to stimulate sustainable economic growth in our community. The focus should not only be on present realities, but also on ensuring future generations will inherit a stronger and more prosperous Cranbrook. To that end, the Chamber encourages and

supports economic development activities and initiatives in Cranbrook and area that are broadly developed and widely supported, and consistent with the following principles:

- A comprehensive strategic plan is needed to provide direction for economic development. The plan must articulate the unique features and opportunities that differentiate our community from others, and describe objectives and priorities along with associated strategies and action plans. These will help form benchmarks by which to monitor performance of the plan, the work of staff, and the overall success of economic development efforts.

- Our approach to sustained economic growth should not be one-dimensional but should look to building diversity and resilience in the community's economy. How we grow matters as much as how much we grow. The plan must strive for a balance between attracting new business and investment, and ensuring the strength, vitality and growth of existing businesses.

- Because economic growth in the East Kootenay will inevitably lead to economic success in Cranbrook (and vice versa), we should look for opportunities to partner with adjacent communities in our region.

- The plan should ensure an integration of the economic, social, cultural and environmental components of our community. In particular, we must recognize that our natural environment and our natural resources are key contributors

to our quality of life and to a sustainable economy.

- Resilient local leadership with a strong community vision is essential. Leadership does not imply one person or local government, but rather the engagement of an array of community minded citizens, business leaders, and representatives of key stakeholder organizations to collectively participate and drive the economic development process through a shared sense of ownership.

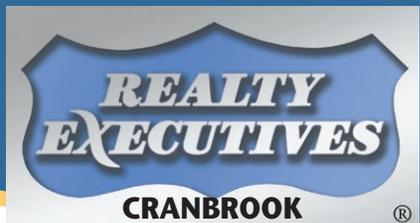
The Chamber of Commerce is committed to realizing the ultimate goal of making Cranbrook a renowned community for building a business, pursuing a career, and fostering entrepreneurship. In other words, a great place to live, work, play and do business!

Submitted by David Struthers

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