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# Voice of Business

cranbrook  
**chamber**  
of commerce



## Spotlight on Member Business

### Willow Appliances celebrates 40 years

*Townsmen Staff*

Forty years in business is no small feat. However, a local outfit has done exactly that, as Willow Appliances is celebrating the milestone this year after opening in Cranbrook in 1975.

Owned by Warren Bedell, it's a family affair as he took over the operation from his father in 2000, with other siblings also involved in the business over the years.

From laundry appliances to dishwashers to refrigerators and more, Willow offers not just the top brands of the products themselves, but also the service and expertise to fix and repair any issues that customers experience.

That is just one factor that makes them unique to the region.

"The fact that we have parts and service, we're the only people in Cranbrook that have a parts department and an in-house service technician," Bedell said. "Nobody else does."

"... We are pretty much a success right there, because we fix what we sell and back it up."

The business has seven employees and services mainly the Cranbrook and Kimberley area.

Bedell joked that he never envisioned himself getting into business, but then ended up working for his father at the

store and eventually carrying on the family legacy.

"I officially bought the business and took over in 2000. I had the reins years before that, but that's when it became legal," Bedell said. "He just wanted to retire and needed someone to step in and I did."

From brands like Whirlpool, Maytag, Amana, KitchenAid, Jenn-Air and more, there are plenty of products for his staff to sell and to troubleshoot if a customer has any issues.

"We sell the quality and we're going to back it up because it's not a perfect world. Stuff does happen, so there's no runaround, no phoning 1-800 numbers trying to get a third-party technician in there," Bedell said. "We are there. You call us, we'll take care of it."

"For us, nothing really changes, just the product changes so you have to keep up on it and know the sales and service end of it."

While business always has its challenges Bedell and Willow Appliances has thrived, however, he hopes to encourage people to shop local and looks forward to celebrating more

milestones in his business career.

It's definitely a challenge being so close to the U.S. and Alberta—that's one of the biggest things, is trying to keep the people shopping local," Bedell said.

For more information on sales and services, give Bedell a call at 250-426-5237 or visit the company website at [www.willowappliances.ca](http://www.willowappliances.ca).



### Federal Election 2015

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce is actively engaged in Election 2015.

Four pillars have been identified as crucial as Canadians prepare to go to the polls.

They are

- Access to a Powerful Workforce
- Access to Capital
- Access to Technology and Innovation
- Access to Markets

#### This month's focus is on Access to a Powerful Workforce

Canada's competitiveness will depend, in large part, on its ability to find and foster workers with the skills businesses need to succeed.

The shortage of skilled workers is making it impossible to meet the rising needs of many sectors.

We need to better align skills development with immigration policy goals.

We must also fix the increasingly complex and costly immigration system currently in place, allowing employers to find workers with the skill sets needed for them to compete in the new global marketplace.

The Canadian Chamber calls on all parties to commit to:

- Investing in more and better labour market information
- Ensuring immigration changes stop unduly limiting employers' access to the international talent they need
- Addressing the serious processing issues and inflexible features of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program that are negatively affecting employers' access to workers in a range of sectors
- Providing incentives for employers to offer more post-secondary co-op placements and internships
- Creating a financial incentive for employers to retain employees through to the completion of their apprenticeship training



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**WELCOME to our NEW MEMBERS**

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

**Tarralin D. Hanson, Notary Public**

Phone: 778 517 5520  
Tarralin Hanson  
Email: tarralinhanson@shaw.ca

**Shelley LePage, Realtor  
Re/Max Blue Sky**

Phone: 250 426 9871  
Shelley LePage  
Email: lepage.shelley@gmail.com

**Interior Designs by Adrienne**

Phone: 250 489 9563  
Adrienne Gerein  
Email: adriennesdesigns@gmail.com

**Fisher Peak Performing Artists  
Society**

Phone: 250 427 4882  
James Neve  
Email: familyneve@gmail.com

**Clear Sky Radio**

Phone: 250 464 4100  
Melissa Hamm  
Email: melissa@su7mmit107.com

**Kootenay Savings Commercial  
Services**

Phone: 250 342 4875  
Christa Gubler  
Email: christa.gubler@kscu.com

**Murray's Office Plus**

Phone: 250 426 2241  
Heidi Brookes  
Email: office@murraysoffice.com

**Cap-It Cranbrook**

Phone: 778 520 2005  
Nicole Kaffman  
Email: nicole.kauffman@cap-it.com

**Nancy Heidmiller – Royal LePage**

Phone: 250 919 8248  
EK Realty  
Email: Nancy@ekrealty.com

*Welcome!*

**THANK you for your investment.**  
We encourage you to support our Chamber of Commerce Members.

**BC Chamber Election Position**

The federal election on October 19th is of particular importance given that the global economy continues to show a stubborn sluggishness that is affecting Canada's overall economic growth.

It is critical that all federal parties are aware of the need for policies that focus on the fundamentals of a strong economy and the important role business, in particular small business, plays in this growth.

BC Chambers of Commerce have long been the primary voice in the Province ensuring that the issues of concern to the business

community are front and centre for every party, party leader and candidate seeking election.

It is through the integrated nature of the Chamber network that Chambers are able to work in partnership in order to positively influence the direction of government at the federal, provincial and local level to the benefit of businesses, the economy, and citizens alike.

The BC Chamber of Commerce has derived the issues of importance from the BC Chamber Policy and Positions Manual. The selected areas in this package are intended to focus on issues that the Chamber believes require a greater degree of focus from the respective parties, or areas that were felt to be of specific importance to B.C.'s economic success.

**The Importance of  
Small Business**  
CALL TO ACTION

Given the sizeable impact small businesses have on the economy, the Chamber calls on all parties to affirm the importance of small business to the ongoing success and sustainability of communities in B.C., across the country and to the national economy as a whole.

**Finance and  
Government  
Spending**  
CALL TO ACTION

Government has a fundamental duty to act responsibly when spending the taxpayer's money and to ensure they keep our tax regime competitive and efficient.

**International Trade**  
CALL TO ACTION

The Chamber calls on the federal government to capitalize on the rapidly growing Asia Pacific markets by doing more to promote future and existing free trade agreements

to ensure Canadian businesses, especially small businesses, to take advantage of the economic opportunities.

**Skills and  
Immigration**  
CALL TO ACTION

Government must commit to working with the private sector to develop real solutions to the skills challenge facing the B.C. and Canadian economy.

**Transport and  
Infrastructure**  
CALL TO ACTION

Continued federal government leadership and investment in B.C.'s transportation infrastructure and network is critical to advancing and taking full economic advantage of our position as the Gateway to Asia Pacific.

Full details and background on these positions can be found at [cranbrookchamber.com](http://cranbrookchamber.com) under the Election 2015 tab.

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(Tickets must be purchased prior to reserving a table)*



**SAVE  
THE  
DATE**

**FEDERAL ALL  
CANDIDATES FORUM**

**Wednesday, October 07 the Cranbrook Chamber of Commerce is holding an Election 2015 All Candidates Forum.**

**The event is being held at The Heritage Inn & Conference Centre with the doors opening at 6:30pm and the event starting at 7pm.**

**The Candidates from the four major parties have confirmed their attendance.**

**The forum is open to the general public in addition to Chamber members.**

**No RSVP required. Please attend and be part of shaping our country's future**





Executive Director's Soap Box

By David D. Hull, Executive Director

It was Ronald Reagan's supply side economic ideas — the policy of marginal rate tax cuts, a strong dollar, trade globalization, deregulation of key industries all of which unleashed a great wave of entrepreneurial and technological innovation that transformed and restructured the US economy. He knew that the key to sustained success was a strong economy.

As we approach the Federal Election in October Canada's economy is at a historic crossroads. Canada's value proposition in the global economy has shifted dramatically. Canada, now more than ever, must identify and champion opportunities where it can be a global leader.

When Canadians go to the polls on October 19, they will chart the course for Canada moving forward. The Chamber sees this election as a pivotal time for Canada's economy. The decisions and actions in the near term going forward will determine Canada's economic success in the long term.

We all want to ensure Canada remains strong and competitive in this fast-changing world. The Chamber wants to see our economy grow and we want more jobs for Canadians.

The outcome of this election will be central to ensuring we have a rising and sustainable standard of living and a strong economy that is able to generate the wealth we need to provide for our aging population and the social programs we cherish.

Never has the world seen such a portability of people, capital, products, and services. Competition for our businesses, and our economy as a whole, spans the globe.

The challenge today, more so than ever, is that we are competing with traditional economic powerhouses and emerging nations in the global economy - and we are losing ground to the frontrunners.

Ten years ago, we were the world's 10th largest exporter. Today, we rank 13th.

Until recently we were the largest trade partner

with the United States by a considerable margin. Looking at year to date statistics we are barely clinging to #1 with China set to surpass us sometime this year and that is with the Chinese economy slowing dramatically.

In 2014, the World Economic Forum ranked Canada 15th in global economic competitiveness; down five spots from a 2009 ranking of 10th.

The question we are faced with is: how do we stop this decline and turn things around to bring Canada back to the front of the pack?

The Cranbrook Chamber of Commerce joins the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Chambers across Canada in calling on political parties to engage with businesses and commit to practical solutions and actions in the four areas that are critical to the competitiveness of the Canadian economy:

- Access to a Powerful Workforce
- Access to Capital
- Access to Technology and Innovation
- Access to Markets

Details on the Chamber's position and the calls to action can be found on the Cranbrook Chamber's website.

This Election is REALLY Important ... IT IS ALL ABOUT THE ECONOMY

These measures are the best way to enable the Canadian business community to compete and win in the global economy.

Investing in our economy is the only way to create great jobs for young people, develop new technologies right here at home, and produce the wealth that pays for the education, infrastructure, health care and the other advantages we value as Canadians.

The upcoming election is a unique opportunity to shape a Canada that is stronger, more economically stable, and more competitive. We need a Canada that wins.

Thank You Cranbrook!

It has been my honour to serve each of you for the last 21 years. I will cherish the great memories and fun times owning and operating your local Sears store.

It is time for my retirement and the store will be closing on September 29, 2015.



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Dave Struthers

President's  
**Report**

## September 2015 at The Chamber

As the calendar page flips over to September, it's looking like a very busy fall. The Chamber has a number of events and activities planned, beginning with this week's special general luncheon where Mayor Pratt will provide the annual "state of the City" address and share council's vision for the future of Cranbrook. The luncheon will also include a special general meeting where we'll be asking members to adopt the newly revised bylaws that will govern the Chamber's operations going forward.

Later this month, on September 22, the Chamber will host another Good Morning Cranbrook seminar, featuring a presentation on the solutions that Consumer Protection BC offers to citizens throughout the province. And on October 1, the Chamber and Cap-it Cranbrook will co-host a "Business After Hours" event at Cap-it's business location. Please take advantage of these excellent

opportunities to network and interact with others in the business community. You can learn more about these events and register to attend by visiting the recently enhanced Chamber web site, [www.cranbrookchamber.com](http://www.cranbrookchamber.com)

**October 1, the Chamber and Cap-it Cranbrook will co-host a "Business After Hours" event at Cap-it's business location.**

With the Federal election now only weeks away, it's important to remind everyone that the Chamber of Commerce is an apolitical organization. We will not be supporting or promoting any specific candidate

or political party. However, we will be hosting an all-candidates forum on October 7, where we'll encourage candidates to discuss the specific actions and initiatives they would undertake to enhance business development and economic growth in Cranbrook and area. Please register to attend this important event, and most importantly, please ensure that you vote on October 19!

On a final note, I would like to thank all the dedicated Chamber volunteers who once again worked countless hours throughout the summer staffing our Visitor Information Centres. All residents of Cranbrook owe a debt of gratitude to these fine women and men, who are such excellent ambassadors for our fair City.

Thank you!

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