



Mission Chamber of Commerce **Business**TRACK

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FEBRUARY 2016

CHAMBER WEEK February 15-19th Empowering B.C. businesses

February 15, 2016, marks the beginning of Chamber of Commerce Week, an opportunity for B.C.'s more than 125 Chambers of Commerce to showcase their hard work on behalf of businesses across the province.

This year, Chambers are celebrating the theme of "Empowering B.C. businesses" – a theme that highlights how Chambers strive to empower and grow each business in their community.

Every day, Chambers actively strengthen local businesses through networking events, mentorship opportunities,

professional development activities and other unique programming. Whether hosting events and business awards, supporting young entrepreneurs through mentorship programs, providing community-tailored support such as hospitality training in tourism communities, or organizing unique travel experiences for companies interested in learning more about different international markets, Chambers are sharply focused on empowering each and every member business to succeed.

Simultaneously, the

Chamber network – B.C.'s largest business organization – is advocating for policy changes to further drive local businesses' success.

Right now, for example, B.C.'s Chambers are leading efforts to advocate that the provincial government maintain a low tax rate for credit unions, which provide a key source of local business financing for communities right across B.C. This is significant because for 44 communities in B.C., there are no alternative lenders. Keeping that credit union tax rate low is critical to seeing sufficient dollars flow into community businesses, both to launch start-ups and to enable established businesses to secure growth financing.

Chambers are also leading efforts to establish permanent inter-municipal business licenses. These licenses provide business owners with the geographic flexibility that many need, particularly in areas such as the construction trades. Right now, inter-municipal business licenses are moving from a pilot project to a permanent fixture in four Lower Mainland communities, including right here in Mission; the Chamber network hopes to further build on this success, with a vision of one day having a single cross-B.C.



In 2015, the BC Chamber of Commerce once again hosted a luncheon with the B.C. premier and Cabinet, providing an opportunity for local Chamber members to speak directly with government leaders about business issues of interest to their communities.

business license.

These are just two positive changes that the Chamber network is leading for B.C. businesses. Among many areas of impact, B.C.'s Chambers have been a leading voice:

- encouraging balanced budgets at all levels of government;
- calling for a made-in-B.C. value-added tax to support businesses in investing in their own growth;
- calling for solutions to B.C.'s skills gap; and
- encouraging municipalities to actively support local economic development.

All of these policy pushes, together with Chambers'

local efforts, empower B.C.'s businesses and drive British Columbians' success.

So as B.C. celebrates Chamber Week, don't miss the opportunity to swing by the Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce to learn about all the programs, benefits and services we have available to you. Join in on some Chamber Week events like our "Friends with Benefits" event on Feb 19th, and celebrate the many ways that B.C.'s Chambers empower local businesses and strengthen our communities.

For more information about the Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce, to become a member or to attend an event, please visit us online at missionchamber.bc.ca



As members of the BC Chamber of Commerce, B.C.'s Chambers are part of B.C.'s most extensive business policy development process, creating dozens of new policies annually to enhance B.C. as a business jurisdiction. Pictured here: Attendees at the BC Chamber's 2015 AGM in Prince George, setting the network's policy agenda.

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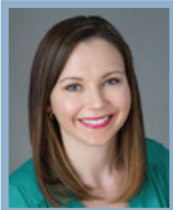
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FEBRUARY 2016

President's Report

It is with great anticipation that I look forward to another "growing season" whether it be flowers, crops, businesses or as individuals.

There are a great many reasons to celebrate the past year at the Chamber and to project forward in anticipation of an improving economic environment especially here in British Columbia.

Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce is a hub that can connect you to resources on the north side of the Fraser River. We want businesses to thrive in Mission. Through connections, support and advocacy, we work to grow businesses in the region. Please plan to attend our Networking Event "Friends With Benefits" on Friday February 19th from 4 - 7pm at the Chamber office to learn more about the benefits that our local chamber offers plus what the BC Chamber offers.

Do you know that 70 percent of our member businesses have 5 employees or less? Membership numbers in the Chamber are stable and while some business has moved on, an equal number are coming in. The value the Chamber adds to and for business is growing along with the membership. Another way to take advantage of your Chamber network is to attend the 9th Annual Fraser Valley Chambers of Commerce Business showcase whether as an exhibitor or an attendee. It is happening Wednesday, April 27th from 3 - 7 pm.

We have a strong foundation at the Chamber which is complemented by a Board with a passion for Mission and its business community. We are moving into the election of board members in March. I would encourage and welcome any member to join with the Board as it continues to develop programs for the benefit of all businesses in Mission. Contact the Chamber office to learn more about how you can serve the business community in Mission while guiding your local Chamber of Commerce.



Ann Harper *PRESIDENT*

Don't Miss our next Luncheon February 18 with FortisBC

Energy at Work – FortisBC recently completed a natural gas pipeline relocation in the community. Representatives from the company will review this project and explain how it benefits the natural gas service in the area. You will also hear how the company is innovating its services with Renewable Natural Gas and Natural Gas for Transportation. Are you considering how you can be more efficient with your natural gas consumption? Whether you're upgrading appliances, building new or renovating, we've got energy-efficiency rebates to help you save. As your Energy Solution Manager, Colton Aston will walk you through the existing programs that FortisBC has available that just may help to make that renovation more feasible.

LOCATION:

Best Western Chapel Room

DATE: February 18th

TIME: 11:30 - 1:00pm

Book your spot today online

missionchamber.bc.ca

or by calling Allison at 604-826-6914

Speakers:

Joan Isac,
Community and Aboriginal Relations Manager, FortisBC

Joan is a relationship builder, ensuring work FortisBC undertakes in a community is clearly communicated to local government and the public.

Suzan Williams,
Project Manager, FortisBC

Suzan Williams joined Fortis BC (Gas) in 1995 and has worked for Operations in various office and field roles including mains and services installation, managing the Emergency Operations Centre in Surrey and ensuring compliance management of field crews.

Colton Aston,
Energy Solutions Manager, FortisBC

A self-proclaimed "natural gas nerd" - from natural gas deep fryers to space heating boilers, Colton enjoys working with small and mid-sized commercial clients to understand their natural gas needs.



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Deborah Bleasdale takes pride in serving freshly made fare to her customers.

PHOTO: KEVIN PLASTOW, MISSION CITY RECORD

Spotlight on Business: Sweet Spot Café: The Power of Small

Kathleen Rake

CLICK MEDIA WORKS

Sweet Spot Café is small, but packed with good food and exceptional service—the sort that earned them the Power of Small Award for Business Excellence from the Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce.

“When you are small like us, you get to know your customers by name,” said Deborah Bleasdale, Sweet Spot Café owner. “And since I make practically everything fresh daily, by hand and in small batches from scratch, keeping small works well for us and our customers.”

Bleasdale has managed to combine her two passions at her business: Cooking and gardening. She received formal training at the Pierre Dubrulle Culinary School

in Vancouver and maintains a full garden at the back of the premises, where you’ll find one of Mission’s best-kept secrets—a delightful patio.

“The patio, with its lush green surroundings, koi pond and waterfall increases our capacity by another 25 seats and is a beautiful respite for our busy customers,” said Bleasdale. She uses the produce from the garden in her menu items. “And you can’t get fresher or more local than that.”

The menu at Sweet Spot Café offers vegetarian and gluten-free choices. As well, because Bleasdale takes pride in what she serves, she’s chosen Caffè Umbria for her coffee and Karla’s Specialteas as her tea supplier.

A Mission resident for 20 years,

Bleasdale opened Sweet Spot Café in March, 2011 and currently employs one full-time and two part-time staffers.

“I can often get our regular customers’ orders ready for them as I see them approaching. They like that,” said Sarah Drozdzik, who works at Sweet Spot. “And because we understand what it means to be small, we can support our neighbours—other small businesses,” she added.

Sweet Spot Café is open for breakfast, lunch and afternoon coffee Monday through Saturday at 33057 1st Ave., Mission. Call (604) 287-2800 or visit www.facebook.com/SweetSpotCafeMission for more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 18th

CHAMBER MONTHLY LUNCHEON

Speaker: Energy at Work – A FortisBC Presentation on Rebate Programs and Review of Work in the Community

Place: Rockwell’s Chapel Room

Time: 11:30am-1:00pm

Price: \$20 members
\$25 non members

February 19th

MISSION CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESS AFTER HOURS: FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS

Join us during Chamber week to get access to exclusive benefits from our Chamber certified providers.

Place: Mission Chamber of Commerce

Time: 4:00-7:00pm

Cost: FREE to members

March 10th

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS – MISSION HOSPICE

The Business after Business mixer is the best way to make connections within the Mission Business community. Bring your business cards and be ready to network with your fellow members!

Place: 32180 Hillcrest Ave

Time: 5:00-7:00pm

Cost: FREE to members

March 17th

CHAMBER MONTHLY LUNCHEON – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Join us for the year’s round up, covering financials and election of new members to the Board of Directors.

Place: Rockwell’s Chapel Room

Time: 11:30am-1:00pm

Price: \$20 members
\$25 non members

Get ready for Spring!

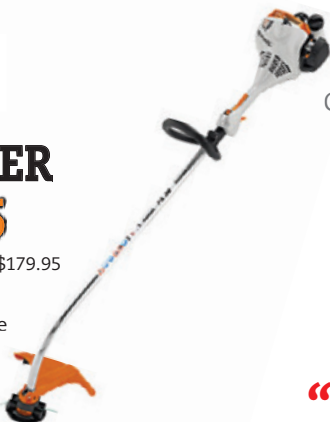
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Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce (MRCC)



Mark March 17, 2016 in the calendar and join us for our Annual General Meeting, to elect new members to the Board of Directors and to get a roundup of the last year.

The Board of Directors serves as the elected policy body for the Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce and is responsible for approving the annual programs of work and supporting the budget, overseeing committees and for directing the general activities of the organization. Director positions are a two year commitment with an opportunity to move into the Executive after one year. To be nominated you must be a current member of the Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce and be in good standing. Attendance to monthly board meetings held on the first Thursday of each month is required, along with a further commitment of no more than 5 hours a month to help with Chamber business.

If you would like further information or to nominate someone for this position or volunteer yourself, please contact the Chamber of Commerce at execdir@missionchamber.bc.ca for a nomination form.



2016 CHAMBER TEAM

"Membership has its benefits!"



execdir@missionchamber.bc.ca

Kristin Parsons
Executive Director



member_services@missionchamber.bc.ca

Allison Jack
Member Services



info@missionchamber.bc.ca

Joe Freebairn
Tourism Services



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'Friends with Benefits' Networking Event

Join the Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce during Chamber week for our Friends with Benefits networking event to get access to exclusive benefits from our Chamber certified providers. Smart business owners know that being a Chamber member has tons of benefits. Great things happen when members get together. Come learn, share ideas and find business opportunities.

Date: Friday February 19

Time: 4:00-7:00 pm

Location: Mission Chamber of Commerce

34033 Lougheed Highway

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Inclusive Hiring is Good for Business

Rotary at Work BC is modelled after a very successful Rotary Club initiative that began in Ontario about seven years ago. In simple terms, the project is an education and awareness initiative that informs Rotarians, and other business people about the strong business case, and overall VALUE to any business that is realized from hiring individuals with disabilities. Since its inception in southern Ontario, the project has spread throughout the province to hundreds of Rotary clubs, and thousands of key business people and community leaders. A few of the positive outcomes from the Ontario project include: economic benefits, shifting attitudes about this population, and the employment of many individuals with disabilities.

"It's not charity, but good business sense. Hiring people with disabilities connects employers with employees who WANT to work. To be able to earn a living is a basic need and Rotary at Work BC helps."

Bill Robson, District Governor for Rotary District 5050

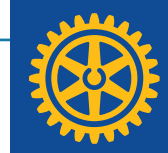
Significant research into companies of all sizes across North America has shown that by tapping into this rich pool of talent, many businesses have realized increased productivity, improved staff morale, lower absenteeism and staff turnover - all supporting greater economic value and a stronger bottom line.

Not only does the initiative provide "new" research and information, but also strives to dispel myths that employers have about this labor pool. Below are a couple of the most common misconceptions.

MYTH - "Individuals with disabilities should be placed in less risky jobs."

In fact, an extensive survey done by the Dupont Corporation revealed that:

- 67%** of workers were part of lower medical costs
- 63%** lower time away from work
- 78%** lower overall costs associated with workplace accidents
- 97%** of workers who have a disability rate average or above average in safety on the job



ROTARY
— at —

WORK
British Columbia

MYTH - "These individuals do not perform as well and require extra supervision." The Dupont study and a Harris study found that:

- 88%** of individuals with disabilities rated Good or Excellent in performance. (DuPont)
- 46%** actually work harder than others. (Harris Study)
- 86%** have average or above average attendance records. (DuPont)
- 5x's** more likely to stay on the job resulting in lower turnover costs (Pizza Hut Study)

Community presentations led by the Project Coordinator, and Rotarian - **Dave Stark** to business groups introduce the well-supported Business Case, framed by stories from local employers, and employees that will challenge your view of this large, and skilled talent pool. It is hoped that business owners, and others will look at hiring from this segment of our population as an opportunity, and that hiring people with disabilities is, "Good for Business."

For further information on Rotary at Work BC,
or to book a presentation, contact:

Dave Stark - Project Coordinator 604-619-3233 or
dstark@rotaryatworkbc.com or visit: www.rotaryatwork.com

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