

# Representing the Interests of Business for the Growth and Prosperity of Our Members and Communities

## President's Message

Without much effort, each of us can easily recall the excitement felt as a young child awaiting the arrival of the jolly bearded man we love to call Santa Claus. Today, the same excitement and anticipation of the arrival of gifts for our community can be felt, only in a somewhat different format.

Earlier this year the "Santa Claus of the provincial legislature" wrapped up for us in their gift bag, the Business Tax Review. This past fall, the same jolly fellows of the legislature workshop worked to support the major development of the canola plants. Once again, these same Santas boarded their sleigh and like the old man himself, dug deep into the province's goody bag, slashing the provincial PST by 2%. This PST reduction allows for an additional \$323.5 million remaining in the hands of business and the consumers, and ultimately, producing an increase of income to further inject into the economy. It is estimated that 54% of net tax reduction will accrue to business, 41% to consumers and 5% to public institutions (hospitals, municipalities, schools, etc.). The above changes, gift wrapped for the business community and citizens of Saskatchewan certainly are appreciated and worthy acts.

Clearly the provincial leaders have found the spirit of giving and it is now time that we put our wish list together for the federal leaders in Ottawa. We can start by asking the leaders in Ottawa to come clean on the promise for Equalization. If implemented, Saskatchewan could receive an estimated \$800 million in additional funds with the exclusion of natural resources from the Equalization formula. The Equalization revenue that is rightfully ours could eliminate the burdensome \$670 million property education tax that heavily weighs on Saskatchewan. Imagine the possibility of having your property tax bill decreased by some 50 to 60%. We could then proudly boast that we are the most affordable place to live in Canada. Being differentiated on affordability immensely increases an attraction for small business or industry head offices to operate in Saskatchewan. But how do we make this happen when our leaders responsible are so far removed and isolated in Ottawa? To start, we could demand our local MP, to stand tall and represent our interests and enter the Ottawa workshop with the goal to force Equalization for Saskatchewan. Then Ottawa's Santa Claus can tie the reindeer together and deliver what is rightly Saskatchewan's. People of Saskatchewan voted with trust for the 14 MP's that are now sitting in power to represent our province's specific interests and unique concerns. How about it – want to join others in giving a gift to the citizens of Saskatchewan? Ultimately, only time will tell, for memories will exist as rumors abound regarding a possible election.

As the frantic shopping season that generally coincides with the magic of the Christmas season is approaching for some and already well under way for others – I ask that we consider our loyalty to our community during those shopping sessions. Everyone understands that by providing loyalty to our community we help to keep it alive, but many seem to ignore this basic truth leaving to bigger centers for many of our Christmas purchases. The majority of retailers make over 35% of retail sales during the Christmas season. Specifically looking at Yorkton, approximately 30% of businesses holding Chamber memberships are in the retail trade, which equates to about 2,500 individuals jobs directly related to retail. Rather than pouring our monetary resources into other communities, why not consider asking business owners if they can provide the products we desire prior to passing our dollars outside the region? If the money is going to be spent regardless, why not utilize it in a way that you will directly benefit from? Food for thought as we prepare to paint a smile on our face to slug through shopping in preparation for the Christmas season. Let's support Yorkton in retaining and growing those 2,500 jobs. Yorkton is our community to invest in and shopping in Yorkton is a simple investment that we all can make.

Lastly, I want to pass along huge congratulations to the committee and many volunteers that brought the World Junior A Hockey Challenge to Yorkton. Great job! In addition, we must recognize the people that worked so hard to make Grain Millers Harvest Showdown a success. Congratulations to the Yorkton Exhibition Association. Our community has many great people that make the difference and when teamed together, these people make Yorkton one of the best places in Canada. If you are involved in any positive group in the city, then YOU are one person that is making a difference, and know that your efforts are greatly appreciated by many. If not, I encourage you to get involved in our community. Now is the time!

James Wilson - President



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## Members We Refer for November

*Just to name a few!*

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Yorkton Bowl & Arena • The Brick • Yorkton Exhibition • Dusty's Place • Tapp's • Bonsal's Appliance Repair • Culligan  
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and  
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*On Behalf of the Board of Directors and Administration  
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*We would like to take this opportunity  
to wish you all the best  
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*On Behalf of the Board of Directors & Staff of the  
Yorkton Chamber of Commerce 2006,  
we wish you a safe and happy Holiday Season*