

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

President's Message

My initial thoughts upon taking on the Presidency of the Chamber of Commerce this past year were: "What did I get myself into?" But with each meeting I attended and with each issue that was brought forward, discussed and resolved, I became very well aware of what I got myself into: The Yorkton and District Chamber of Commerce is the "voice of business in Yorkton" and we have had a lot to "talk about"!

We have continued this past year to act as a liaison between the business community and all orders of government. From the city to the federal government, we have continued to bring forward issues that are important to our membership. The Chamber's presence at all City Council meetings helped the Board stay abreast of issues within the city.

In April, the Chamber held very well attended, informative conference, aimed to address the housing shortage in Yorkton. By facilitating a forum of this nature, with like-minded individuals, all with the goal of minimizing the housing shortage in our region, great connections were made and progress will continue in this area.

The Employee Recognition evening held in May, brought forward more nominations for Employee of the Year, than ever before. The event showcased phenomenal individuals who would be welcome on any employer's team.

The Chamber Business Dinner gave our businesses the opportunity to discuss issues facing their respective businesses and industries directly with government. Premier Brad Wall was encouraged to invest in the Parkland region by providing the funding needed for the College's Trades & Technology Centre. Attention was also drawn to the fact that our airport is in need of improvements. Our "voices" were heard that evening!

Our Public Policy and Business Development committees took care of business on a variety of issues. One of the highlights was meeting with BHP Billiton to discuss where the Chamber could assist in ensuring that the proverbial "road is paved" to the Yorkton-Melville area for a new potash mine.



Dolores Harris will complete her term as President of the Chamber December 31

During the summer, the Chamber staff endeavoured to reach out to our membership and survey them in person. Members were asked such questions as: What has the Chamber meant to them; what issues are they facing; and how could the Chamber assist? This exercise proved to be very enlightening and mutually gratifying. I hope this is something the staff will continue to do in future years.

As President of the Chamber of Commerce, I want to personally thank Juanita Polegi, the Executive Director for her dedication, organization and passion for the Chamber. She truly has been the glue that has held the Chamber together this past year. Thank you also to Sherry MacDonald, Director of Marketing and Administration for her contributions to making the office run smoothly, for getting the invoices collected on time and for always having a cheerful smile for the Chamber members when they visited the office or attended a Chamber function. And thank you to the Board of Directors for making my term as Chamber President a memorable, rewarding and positive experience. You have been a great group to work with. Thank you for making my job easy.

Season's Greetings to Everyone! May the Wonder and Peace of Christmas be yours this holiday season. Stay safe and have a terrific New Year!



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If you are interested in becoming a Chamber Member, please contact the Chamber office at 783-4368.

YOUR MEMBER FIRST REFERRAL

November - 2011

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Welcome and Farewell to Directors

A couple of new faces will be at the Chamber Board table in 2012! The Chamber was pleased with the slate of 10 candidates who put forward their names for the 8 positions on the Board. New to the Board are Susan Stewardson of the Scotiabank and Carol Yaholnitsky of Good Spirit Air Service. Welcome to Susan and Carol. Both ladies are serving their first two year term as Director.

Returning to the Board are Dick DeRyk, Brent Murdock, Chad Hilton, Tom Seeley, Robby Bear, and Doug Kitsch. They will join those Directors serving the second year of their term including Ron Irvine, Amie Zamonsky, Ryan Hoffman, Cassidy Westberg, Corey Werner and Dolores Harris.

Retiring from the Board are Ron Evinou and Lawrence Wegner. Ron joined the Board in January 2006 and served 3 consecutive terms as Director. Ron served on a variety



Ron Evinou
completed 3 terms
as Director



Lawrence Wegner
completed 2 terms
on the Board

of committees and the Executive. Lawrence Wegner joined the Board in January 2007. He served 2 terms as a Director. Lawrence was also on a variety of committees and was President in 2010. He was Past President in 2011.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

December 5

Voting for the Yorkton's entry into the Aviva Community Fund begins
www.avivacommunityfund.org

December 31 - 2011

City of Yorkton Business Licenses expire.
Time to renew!

January 11, 2012

Chamber Breakfast and Induction of Board Members.
7:30 am. Location and Guest Speaker to be announced. Watch for emails.

March 31

Deadline for renewing City of Yorkton Business Licenses.

On behalf of the Chamber members, Directors and Staff, thank you Ron and Lawrence for interest and commitment to the Chamber of Commerce. Your contributions to the Chamber are greatly appreciated!

Congratulations

- To Saskatchewan East Enterprise Region (SEER) on receiving 2 Economic Development Awards of Excellence from the Sask Economic Development Association (SEDA) for the 2010 TransACTIONS conference. The conference was recognized for its great success in bringing together a cross section of both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Individuals and in providing a rare networking opportunity.



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The Year in Review

While visiting a number of businesses this past summer, it was suggested that the Chamber "blow its own horn" and tell the membership more often about the activities in which it has been involved. With this the last issue of the Courier in 2011, and with the 2012 membership dues soon arriving in mailboxes, this seems a good time to do that.

The Chamber has 16 Directors. Each Director serves on at least one of the Chamber's Standing Committees - Executive, Business Development, Events, Marketing and Public Policy. In 2011 a special Governance Committee was formed to review the Constitution and Bylaws.

Executive Committee

- Consists of the President, Executive Vice President, 1st, 2nd & 3rd Vice Presidents and the Past President.
- Two primary purposes: 1) Supervises the Executive Director and 2) Able to make decisions on behalf of the Board between regular Board meetings.
- Met with MP Garry Breitkreuz to discuss the importance of the Yorkton Airport and Parkland College. Also discussed with him the need for changes in federal taxation on rental housing properties in order to ensure sufficient housing is available not only in the city but the constituency.
- Met with City Council to discuss business development and community needs.

Business Development Committee

- Ensures Yorkton offers and maintains a "business friendly" environment.
- Met with BHP Billiton to discuss what the company needs in Yorkton and area if a mine is developed in the area.
- Partnered with a company to offer Customer Service seminars.
- Presented the Housing Conference in April.

Events Committee

- Planned the Employee Recognition Event in May.
- Planned the Chamber Business Dinner in September.
- Planning the Celebrate Success Awards Gala in March 2012.

Marketing Committee

- Opened facebook and twitter accounts for the Chamber.

- Developing an updated look for the Chamber.

Public Policy Committee

- Develops and recommends to the Chamber Board position statements on selected municipal &/or provincial issues affecting the local business community.
- Met with City's Director of Finance for an update on the 2011 city budget and assessment rates.
 - Letter sent to SAMA asking that the interval between assessment periods be shortened.
- On behalf of a member business, mediated a dispute between the business and the city.
- A member of the committee is the Chamber's rep on the Steering Committee for the Official Community Plan.
- Met with the RCMP to discuss policing concerns in the city.
- Two letters sent to the Federal Minister of Human Resources & Skills Development Canada regarding the process and procedures surrounding the Canada Summer Jobs program.
- All Candidates' Election Forums held during both the Federal and Provincial elections
- Prior to the Provincial election, proposed a number of issues facing both the Province and City and asked the membership to select the top 3 for each area.

Other

- Held a Debate about the future of the Canadian Wheat Board.
- Partners with a number of businesses and organizations in delivering events and information to the community.
- Someone from the Chamber attended each City Council meeting.
- Provide loans to small businesses through the Small Business Loans Association.
- Produce 11 editions of the Courier and update the Chamber's facebook page.

The 2012 Board of Directors will meet early in January to determine its main priorities and strive to achieve results in those areas.

*On behalf of the 2010
Board and Staff of the
Yorkton Chamber of
Commerce, we wish
you a safe and happy
holiday season!*

