

# The VOICE of Business

## President's Message

I am honoured to be elected as President of the Yorkton Chamber of Commerce in what I see as very exciting times for Yorkton. I'm looking forward to working with this year's Board - a combination of veteran Directors and new, young entrepreneurs and business people.

One of the goals of the Chamber is to expand and grow the membership base. And we must be mindful that we are representing our members to all orders of government, their agencies and committees on issues that affect all of our members.

With the growth and expansion currently going on in Yorkton, it is important for the Board of the Chamber to monitor any concerns or problems our existing or potential new businesses may be encountering. We must be prepared to help in any way we can.

An important event for the Chamber in 2014 is the Celebrate Success Business Awards. These Awards highlight and showcase a lot of existing and new companies and the exciting things they have going on. Recognition at this event can be a highlight for these companies.

I look forward to hearing from our member businesses about concerns or issues. As a Board, we will certainly do our best to help our members address these. My door is always open. And with our staff members, Juanita Polegi and Sherry MacDonald as my

"right hand team", I am confident the Board will be able to stay in touch with its members.

In terms of goals for the Chamber, the Board identified the Yorkton Regional Airport as an important asset to the community. The Board is hopeful it can work with the Airport Authority in generating ideas that will assist the continued maintenance and expansion of this valuable facility.

Housing was also identified by the Board as being an area on which to focus. One of the key concerns businesses have when trying to attract workers to our community is whether there is the availability of adequate and suitable housing. The Board is hoping to work with the proper agencies and organizations to help address this problem.

Other key goals that are of concern to the business community include:

### HEALTH CARE

*Yorkton requires a new Health Centre to*

- attract new businesses and employees. It will also attract Health Care professionals.

### EDUCATION

*Supporting the Trades & Technology Centre*

- The Chamber recognizes the opportunities the Centre offers not only to people in the area but from other parts of the province, the country and the world! The Chamber will continue to work with the



*President Don Rae*

Parkland College in lobbying for programs and services which are in demand in the Parkland region.

### MONITORING BARRIERS TO BUSINESS AND GROWTH

#### *City Policies*

- The Chamber will work with the city to ensure the city's policies and bylaws do not adversely affect business growth and expansion.
- Issues around growth and expansion are good problems to have. It means the city isn't stagnant and as businesses move to the city, the city's tax base increases which is good for all.

The 2014 Board of Directors is made up of good people. I am confident that 2014 will be a good year for the City and for the Chamber.

## *Congratulations!*

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## Directors Engage in Strat Planning

In early January, the Board of Directors engaged in a Strat Planning session facilitated by Tom Seeley. Tom had them review the Mission Statement "To promote and protect the interests of members and businesses in Yorkton and district" which they agreed continues to reflect the mission of the Chamber.

The Directors then recalled and reflected upon the long list of successes and achievements in 2013.

It was agreed that the priorities of the Board in 2013 continue to be relevant in 2014. These include working with the Yorkton Airport Authority to assist in the expansion of the Regional Airport; supporting housing development initiatives; supporting the Parkland College in its quest to secure programs that address the

current labour market; and monitoring City of Yorkton policies and bylaws.

During the January Board meeting, each Director selected one of the 4 standing committees on which to serve. The Standing Committees

include Business Development; Events; Marketing & Communications; and Policy. The President, Vice President and committee chairs also serve on the Executive committee.



*Susan Stewardson (left) does some explaining while Joel Martinuk, Sherry MacDonald and Cheryl Kustra listen.*

## Junior Achievement Program



Mrs. Valerie Gendreau (far right) accompanied some of her students from the Yorkton Regional High School to the recent Chamber Business Breakfast where the students shared their experiences setting up companies through the Junior Achievement program. Levi Morin and Logan Leslie were the reps who talked about "Homestyle Hockey", a company which recycled broken hockey sticks by making them into furniture. Bailey Pelchat, Andrea Landstad and Andrew Lindsley represented "String Theory", a company that made decorative lampshades and orbs from string. Both companies made a profit and both donated 10% of their profits to a charity. And each of the shareholders took home some extra cash! Nine students were shareholders of Homestyle Hockey while twelve students were involved with String Theory. Congratulations to these young entrepreneurs!

## Upcoming Dates to Remember

**February 13**  
Chamber Business Lunch at St. Gerard's Parish Hall. Guest Speaker - Sask Power.

**February 15**  
Chamber Member Fees Early Bird rate due

**March 3**  
Chamber Business Lunch - Province wide presentation by Sask Certified Management Consultants on their project tentatively called "Sustaining Saskatchewan's Growth - Capitalizing on the Attitude."

**March 13**  
"Countdown to Celebrate" Lunch - Announcement of Celebrate finalists

**March 31**  
Deadline for renewing City of Yorkton Business Licences

**April 2**  
Celebrate Success Business Awards at St. Mary's Cultural Centre



*Sherry MacDonald, on behalf of the Yorkton Chamber of Commerce, presents a cheque to Kathy Connors of the Soup Haven. The donation is equal to the prize money the Chamber received for its success in the Oatmeal Eating Contest at the Grainmillers' Harvest Showdown.*

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## Did you Know?

- With input from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the federal government announced that Employment Insurance rates would be frozen at the 2013 level in 2014.
- The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce has indicated that \$860 per private sector employee per year is the direct return on investment businesses receive each year because of the tax reforms for which the Chamber has successfully advocated.
- The Saskatchewan Chamber is also the lead in advocating to the provincial government reductions in the Corporate Income Tax. It was recently announced that reductions will occur beginning in 2014.

## Farewell / Hello to Directors

As of December 31, the terms ended for 2013 Chamber Directors Doug Kitsch, Dick DeRyk and Tom Seeley. A member of the Chamber Board for 6 years, Doug served for 6 years on the Policy committee and 3 years on the Executive committee. He was also the Chamber's liaison for the city's Environment committee.

Dick DeRyk was a Director of the Board in the '80's and returned in 2010. He, too, served on the Policy committee and the Executive. Dick was also the Chamber's rep to the City's Steering Committee for the Official community Plan.

Tom Seeley was elected to the 2010 Board. Serving on the Policy committee for those 4 years, Tom was also the Chamber's liaison to the city's Housing Development committee. And he guided the Board through its Annual Planning sessions.

Dick and Tom spent several hours researching and revising the Chamber's Constitution, Bylaws and

Policies. They were then charged with the task of developing a protocol for the Performance Review of the Executive Director.

Thank you to all the retiring Board members. Your interest in the Chamber, your ideas and your knowledge were greatly appreciated.

On January 1, five new Directors joined the Board. Brady Harland, Gordon Pritchard, Krissy Morrison, Melissa Honour and Stephanie Buckle. The new Directors have participated in Director Orientation, the Board's Planning session and have selected the committee on which they will serve for the year.

Susan Stewardson was appointed to complete the remainder of the term vacated by Charlene Gibley.

The Chamber welcome the new Directors to the Board and looks forward to their fresh insights and new ideas!



*Twelve of the 16 Directors of the Yorkton Chamber of Commerce 2014 Board attended the Installation of the Directors conducted by Deputy Mayor Randy Goulden at a recent Chamber Business Breakfast. This is a long standing tradition where the Directors accept their Charge of Office and affirm their intent to perform their duties.*

## It's Time to Celebrate!

The 2014 Celebrate Success Business Awards will happen April 2! This exciting event recognizes businesses and organizations for their achievements and contributions to the community.

The Events committee is busy putting the final touches on the Nomination forms and Nomination packages. Keep an eye on your Chamber email blasts about details.

There are 10 Award categories open for nominations. Be sure to nominate those businesses which you feel are deserving of recognition. And be assured that self-nominations are more than welcome. After all, who knows your business better than you, the owner or manager?

Together, let's make the 2014 Celebrate Success Business Awards the best yet!

