



Chamber Newsletter

May 2007

Check out our new web poll:

What is the biggest impediment to business growth in the Humboldt district?

ARE WE GROWING??

Increased traffic on the streets, increased sales, new lots opening and a shortage of housing! That seems to be the talk amongst everyone these days. We are experiencing GROWTH and does it feel GOOD!

We are seeing people from the west and other regions re-locating to our beautiful, safe and full serviced community. When speaking with Aaron Lukan from the Humboldt Housing Authority, he has never had the family housing division fully occupied with a waiting list in the 12 years he has been with the housing authority. There is an unprecedented demand for housing. How else could we measure growth without the knowledge of actual population numbers? Uhaul! Our local Uhaul dealer has seen increased activity. People are moving into our region from the west.

We must also look at investment. According to the City of Humboldt, in 2006 there were 14 building permits issued totaling \$860,000 from January to April. From January to April of this year, approximately 25 building permits were issued totaling \$2 million.

BUSINESS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Some may think that a mentoring program is something new. Not true! Dave Thomas was mentored by Colonel Saunders, Henry Ford was mentored by Tomas Edison and Bill Gates was mentored by Warren Buffet. Mentoring has been around for many years and proves nothing but success.

Mentorship builds a strong bridge, accelerates business growth and keeps businesses within a community.

Mentoring is all about sharing knowledge and experience. A mentor is a sounding board for a Protégé. So why would you want to be a mentor? Mentoring provides personal satisfaction.

Many mentors comment on the feeling with their own careers after having taken on a mentorship role. Mentoring creates industry recognition. By contributing to the career development of their protégés, mentors are building positive recognitions for themselves and their entire organization. Another reason to be a mentor is to build skills. Mentors enhance their own management, leadership and interpersonal skills through interaction with their protégés.

A protégé will experience many benefits of being mentored. By being mentored, the mentor can help the protégé build effective networks and contacts within the industry. A mentor provides support and encouragement. A mentor offers the objective advice, emotional support and positive feedback protégés need to build successful careers. Working with a mentor helps reduce the time required to develop new skills.

The Humboldt & District Chamber of Commerce is introducing the Business Mentorship Institute to our region. In order for the program to start, we will need a list of Mentors and Protégés. If you are interested in being a Mentor or Protégé, contact the Chamber office. There will also be follow up calls made to our membership.

*I get up every morning determined to both change the world and have
one hell of a good time.*

Sometimes this makes planning my day difficult.

E.B. White

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Tim Thibault
Humboldt Sign Services

Donna Muench
Cottage Boutique

Calvin Lukan
Modern Meat & Abattoir

Lorrie Bunko
Chamber Manager

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What an incredible year it's been. We've seen two major real estate investments made by Big Sky Farms and Conexus, and two more potentially coming in the new Hospital and a major retail outlet. There are people moving home and new people following them from Alberta and other major urban centers in search of affordable housing and more relaxing lifestyles. As a teenager and young adult in the 1980's I remember my parents and their friends reflecting on the 1970's as a time of economic expansion and unprecedented growth., now I can relate. It's good to be us! Now what? How do handle this new attention? How can we prosper in this era of new growth and eventual new competition? These are tough questions that are not easily answered, but there are a few initiatives the Chamber is bringing forward to help with all this change.

The mentorship program described on the preceding page offers opportunity for both new and experienced business people to share ideas and concerns on all topics involving business and personal growth. Mentorship programs have proven extremely successful in the communities where they have been implemented and I believe that Humboldt will be no different.

The Chamber is planning on hosting a fall seminar based on doing business in a big box world. Although we have been competing with big box via the internet, mail outs and Saskatoon, having one down the road will certainly change that dynamic. Change often presents opportunity; this seminar will help us find out where to look.

We are always discussing and visioning what the role of the Chamber is within the City and the region regarding economic development and business services. This year will be no different. We have recently been informed that we qualified for additional funding through the "Community Works" program. This will allow us the hire administrative personnel and free up our Manager Lorrie Bunko to do more member and non-member visits. These visits provide us with valuable member input; please feel free to openly discuss any ideas with Lorrie, myself or any director.

In the past as summer approached we tended to relax and take things as they came. The "Dog Days of Summer". Don't count on this summer being the same, new people, new business, and new opportunity. Have a great summer.



NEW HARASSMENT LEGISLATION

A new piece of legislation has business groups concerned that it may go too far and may be too difficult to police and enforce. Amendments to the Occupational and Health Safety Act expand the definition of workplace harassment to include behavior that impacts on a worker's psychological and physical well being and which could cause the worker to be intimidated or humiliated. In other words, workplace bullying beyond the traditional definitions of harassment based on race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Under the proposed amendments occupational health officers would make rulings on harassment complaints as they now do but the amendments include the appointment of an adjudicator to hear appeals. The government stated it will hold hearings and consult with business and labor groups before the amendments are proclaimed. However, organized labor has already said the amendments were overdue and are particularly pleased that an adjudicator would be appointed.

BRINGING IT TOGETHER UNDER ONE ROOF

Exciting changes will be noticed on the first weekend of November this year. The Fall Harvest Showcase, Humboldt Oktoberfest, German Market Platz and the Kinetite Arts & Craft Sale will all be taking place on the same weekend. Exhibitors will see increased traffic and the public viewing the shows will appreciate the combined events under one roof. The Humboldt & District Chamber of Commerce will be incorporating the Prairie Peddler Adjudicated Art & Craft Show & Sale. Historically, the Prairie Peddler was hosted by Quill Plains Regional Recreation Association. The QPRRA is designed to initiate and develop awareness of such programs and then to hand them off to other organizations to make the event even greater. The HDCC is excited about taking the event and incorporating into the tradeshow.

The Humboldt & District Chamber of Commerce encourages all businesses to participate in the tradeshow. This is an opportunity to market your business, meet potential new customers and network amongst other exhibitors at a minimal fee.

The Humboldt & District German Heritage Society have also moved the Oktoberfest celebrations to the same weekend. The HDGHS have been working very hard in the last few years to grow their event and make the Oktoberfest celebrations come alive. Tradeshow exhibitors will receive a ticket to the Oktoberfest celebrations which includes the German Market Platz on the Saturday evening. This will replace the exhibitor social that was always hosted by the HDCC on the Saturday evening.

The German Market Platz is hosted by Quill Plains Regional Recreation Association, the Humboldt Golf Club and the City of Humboldt. At this event, you will find enjoyable entertainment, People's Choice Wine Tasting Contest and the Bier King or Queen Contest.

For further information on these events, contact the Humboldt & District Chamber of Commerce. Application forms will be mailed out shortly to all businesses.

CHAMBER GROUP INSURANCE PLAN “BENEFIT CHECK”

Group insurance tips for your business:

1. With the cost of group benefits, you want to pay for the coverage's that work for your company. Even smaller businesses should choose a custom program: why pay for a package with benefits you don't want? The Chambers Plan tailors plans for 20,000+ employers across Canada.
2. Employee benefits are a significant part of your overall payroll costs, so it's worth standing back and reviewing your objectives from time to time. Your group insurance representative is a great source of ideas, whether you want to control costs or introduce new options to your plan.
3. If you own your company, and it provides health and dental benefits to employees, you can use a “Cost Plus” program to top up owners' coverage. That lets you pay expenses not normally covered by group benefits, like laser eye or cosmetic surgery, in pre-tax dollars.
4. Many companies provide health cards which pay the group benefit plan's share of expenses at the point of purchase in the pharmacy. It's a great way to help employees confirm the amount of coverage for a new prescription while there's still time to discuss alternatives with the doctor.
5. Do you make a retirement savings (RRSP) contribution once a year? That's great but you don't get the tax break until you file your tax return. Why not make smaller contributions monthly, by payroll deduction? Your money gets invested sooner, and you get immediate tax relief.

Brought to you by Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Plan.



DID YOU KNOW???

- There were 4,868 new motor vehicle units sold as of February 2007, which was a 13.7% increase over the 4,282 sold in 2006. Passenger car sales (\$) manufactured in North America decreased 9.1% while those made overseas increased by 2.9%. Commercial vehicles made in North America increased 20.9% and those made overseas increased by 8.7%. Total sales were \$179,704,000 which is up 13.9% over February 2006!
- As of February 2007, there were 41 bankruptcies in Saskatchewan totaling \$6,621,000. This was down 53.8% from February 2006. Agriculture and forestry experienced the highest bankruptcies.
- The total refined petroleum products for December 2006 were 4,501,992 cubic meters compared to 4,162,835 cubic meters in 2005. This represents an increase of 8.1%. The largest increase was in propane with 17.7%.
- Saskatchewan's March unemployment rate was 3.8%. The total number of employed was 504,400. The educational services industry had the highest percentage change over last March with a 20.2% increase.



Upcoming Events

June 8
Sunshine Scramble Golf Tournament

June 29—July 1
2007 Summer Sizzler & Rodeo

Welcome Summer Staff

The Humboldt & District Chamber of Commerce would like to welcome our summer staff for the 2007 season.

**Dana Renneberg
Cody Penrose
Ashley Prokosch**

These students bring a wealth of knowledge of Humboldt and area.

MANAGER'S MESSAGE

I am back, refreshed and ready to get back at it! It was quite enjoyable being at home with my kids for the year. I was able to experience Humboldt feeling like a consumer instead of the manager for the Chamber.

It was quite reassuring to know that most of what I needed was right here in Humboldt. I was able to access the goods and services I needed and if it wasn't available, someone was able to order it in for me.

Aside from that, I see that the Chamber was very busy during the past year. There was lot's of ground work done on programs and events that will be taking place in 2007. Hats off to Heather Gabriel, Mary LeBlanc and the Board of Directors for the hard work that was done while I was gone.

Some of the items that are on the Chamber's agenda right now are a Mentorship Program, Jr. Achievement Program and focusing on the labor shortage within the district along with other important agenda items. I am very excited to act on these plans and implement them. The mentorship program is going to be an asset to any business. There have been a few people that I have spoke with that would benefit of such a program. We are also experiencing a labor shortage in the area which include a variety of businesses. We are in the progress of initiating meetings with partners to attract labor to our area. More detailed information will be released in the near future.

Another focus of the Chamber is our membership. We need to increase our membership and raise the awareness of the importance of the Chamber. There are great efforts being made to create and implement programs and assist with current demands that are out there. We are striving to foster an environment for which businesses can grow and your support would be greatly appreciated. I am already starting to recruit new members and grow the Chamber.

I am also experiencing an increased traffic volume in the office. I have had numerous meetings with people from Alberta that will be relocating to our area. What an exhilarating feeling to know that people are moving here and appreciate our quality of life—like we do. The question that I ask these people when I meet with them is what made you choose this area? Their responses varied but the common message amongst all of them was this area is a full-serviced, safe and centralized community. We don't know how long this growth is going to last—is it just a phase or is it going to continue? I am not sure but let's take it day by day, value the growth and continue planning for the future. Welcome our new residents in the area with open arms and make them feel at home.

On behalf of the Humboldt & District Chamber of Commerce, I would like to send out my condolences to the Pfeil and Elias families whom experienced significant losses in their families. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

I would like to remind everyone that if you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Chamber office. I am here to offer any assistance you might be needing.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer!



2007 Fall Harvest Showcase

Saturday, November 3
11:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m.

Sunday, November 4
12:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.

Book Your Booth Today!!

Congratulations to...

**Richard Jenkins from
Reflections By Richard
for receiving his
Masters of
Photographic Arts**