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“TROPICAL PARADISE”

at our -
20th Annual Dinner & Auction

Thursday, February 26, 2009
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 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. – Cocktails & Viewing
 6:30 p.m. – Great Dinner Buffet –
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REGISTRATION

*Please fax completed form to the Chamber office 403-327-1001
 Chamber’s 20th Annual Dinner & Auction **“TROPICAL PARADISE”**

Contact: _____ Company: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please Reserve _____ seat(s) @ \$35.00 or _____ Reserved table(s) of 8 @ \$280.00

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**Chamber will arrange pick-up of Auction items*

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in the months of December 2008, January 2009

We extend a warm welcome to our newest members in December 2008 and January 2009 and look forward to their participation.

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All member businesses and their employees are eligible to participate in these programs and benefits, which include:

- **Group Insurance:** for businesses – small & large
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- **Free Link** for your business from the Chamber’s website to your website www.lethbridgechamber.com
- **Advertising opportunities** in Chamber News
- **Member discounts** for various Chamber events
- **Inquiry referrals** to member business (all Chamber members are listed alphabetically and categorically on the Chamber’s site)

**If you would like to know more about the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce, please call 403-327-1586 or e-mail us at office@lethbridgechamber.com. Also, check out the Chamber’s website at www.lethbridgechamber.com.*

Employees Honoured at 2nd Annual FIRE Awards Reception

(First Impression Recognition of Excellence Awards)



Dennis Hatt

About 175 people – employers, employees, friends and family members – came out to honour the nominees and winners of the 2008 – FIRE Awards, at a special reception hosted by the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce on January 29th.

Dennis Hatt and Barry Litun were the MC's for the fun-filled evening, which was "sparked" by Gillian Nish (keynote speaker) who had the audience join her in singing "Takin' Care of Service".

From amongst the nominees in attendance, awards were presented to individuals in 8 categories, who were awarded for their excellence in customer service:



Barry Litun

Accommodation Award Winner:
ELIZABETH HANSEN, Lethbridge Lodge Hotel & Conference Centre
 - Award presented by Kerry Dalton,
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Adventure Tourism Award Winner:
JEN BUIT, Helen Schuler Coulee Centre
 - Award presented by Gillian Nish,
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Attractions Award Winner:
TRUDI STRUTH, Lethbridge Hurricanes
 - Award accepted on behalf of Trudi by Patrick Bilyk,
 1st Choice Savings & Credit Union – *Award Sponsor*

Events & Conferences Award Winner:
TARA SCHNELL, Big Brothers & Big Sisters Association
 - Award presented to Rick Austin (on behalf of Tara) by Kerry Lowe,
 Economic Development Lethbridge – *Award Sponsor*



FIRE Awards Nominees



Food & Beverage Award Winner:
CAROLYN NOSS, Express Coffee & Tea
 - Award presented by Steven Dyck,
 Lethbridge College – *Award Sponsor*

Services Award Winner:
VALERIE REEVES, Lethbridge Public Library
 - Award presented by Charity Kirton,
 Lethbridge Centre – *Award Sponsor*

Transportation Award Winner:
JAMES NORDQUIST, Lethbridge Transit
 - Award presented by Lynette Harder,
 Express Coffee & Tea – *Award Sponsor*

Travel/Trade Award Winner:
LEONA GRANGER, Chinook Country Tourist Association
 - Award presented by Len Bowcott,
 Lethbridge BetterBook Phone Book – *Award Sponsor*

Special appreciation to all categorial award sponsors (listed above) and sponsors in kind: Corporate Express, Chinook Country Tourist Association, Lethbridge Lodge Hotel & Conference Centre – and the volunteers on the Chamber's Tourism Connection Committee.



Elizabeth Hansen (L),
 Kerry Dalton (R)



Gillian Nish (L),
 Jen Buit (R)



Valerie Reeves (L),
 Charity Kirton (R)



Carolyn Noss (L),
 Steven Dyck (R)



Kerry Lowe (L),
 Rick Austin (R)



James Nordquist (L),
 Lynette Harder (R)



Leona Granger (L),
 Len Bowcott (R)



"Takin' Care of Service"
 Gillian Nish

"Your Voice of Business"

continued from page 1

Your Chamber is being pro-active in this regard and have prepared letters to the local Chambers across the border asking them to advise their Congressional Leaders of the negative implications of the "Buy American" provision. We remain hopeful that the American Politicians will see the global picture and take action to prevent a "trade war" which will clearly have a negative impact the world and likely deepen the current recession. We are hopeful our neighbors will realize this is no time for "protectionist measures" and will change their plans before it is too late.

It was disappointing that **Perrin Beatty**, President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber was unable to attend the January 22 workshop and dinner meeting because of a death in his family. In his place, the Canadian Chamber sent **Michel Barsalou**, Executive Vice President, Communications and Service from their Ottawa office and **Terry Draycott** of Calgary, a member of the national Board of Directors.

Mr. Barsalou facilitated the workshop and Mr. Draycott delivered Mr. Beatty's speech. We were more than pleased that the Canadian Chamber provided well-qualified substitutes, and the meetings went ahead as schedules. The workshop provided much needed information to Chambers in the area and we enjoyed the company of Mr. Draycott during the supper meeting. We have provided an open invitation to Mr. Beatty to come to Lethbridge at a future date.

On January 29, the Chamber hosted the second annual FIRE Awards Reception. The Chamber received over 100 nominations, and many of the nominees able to attended the recognition supper. Not only did we enjoy a barbequed roast beef buffet, the guest speaker, **Gillian Nish** provided a spirited discussion and song to the music of Randy Bachman's, "Taking Care of Business". Congratulations to all of the FIRE Award nominees, our sponsors and especially to the Tourism Connection Committee for a job well done.

We will have two resolutions to present to the Board at the end of February. Both resolutions passed through the Committees last week. AITA's "Water for Sustainability" and the Governmental Affairs "A Vision for Alberta Royalty Reviews" are an accumulation of months of hard work by these committees. Both of these resolutions, if passed by the Board, will be presented at the Alberta Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting in Grande Prairie at the end of May. We will provide you with more information on these resolutions during the next few months.

Dennis Hatt
 President, Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce
 "Your Voice of Business"



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**A Rough Road for Canadian Business:
Where Do We Go From Here?**

Terry Draycott, a member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, was the keynote speaker at a recent dinner hosted by the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Draycott spoke on the Parliamentary Political crisis in Ottawa this past December. He pointed out how the Lethbridge Chamber and chambers across Canada worked with the Canadian Chamber, urging federal politicians to work together to ensure that the economy remains front and centre, despite the excessively partisan politics on all sides, before the Governor General prorogued Parliament. Chambers across the country have made it clear to members from all sides of the House of Commons that the public's interests should come first and partisan squabbling be set aside when Parliament returns.



"The Canadian Chamber's Economic Outlook for 2009 projects economic turbulence ahead. The slowdown in the economy is being felt everywhere and is beginning to impact Alberta with the dramatic drop in energy prices," stated Draycott.

"Governments and central banks around the world have taken unprecedented measures to stabilize the financial system and restore credit flows. Success, however, may not come quickly."

The Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce is an active member of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

**Budget Addresses Key Economic Issues:
Canadian Chamber of Commerce**

"Since the meltdown in global financial markets last fall, we have called for a comprehensive strategy to limit the impact of the recession on Canada and to speed recovery. While there are elements that we would have designed differently, the government has consulted extensively and has answered our request to show how it thinks we can get our economy moving again. In the interests of all Canadians, the plan should be given a chance to work," said Chamber President and CEO Perrin Beatty.

In his Budget speech, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty responded positively to a number of the Canadian Chamber's proposals to mitigate the impact of the recession and stimulate the economy, including:

- Accelerating infrastructure spending
- Providing greater access to credit for businesses
- Offering tax relief for low- and modest-income Canadians
- Providing incentives for new business investment
- Continuing the previously-announced corporate tax reductions
- Strengthening labour adjustment programs and training for unemployed workers

The Canadian Chamber welcomed the extensive budget consultations and engagement of the Government, and how it took into account the suggestions from the Chamber network across Canada. However, it noted that the government's projections for recovery are more optimistic than most private sector economic forecasts, and it will closely monitor progress to ensure that deficit financing does not become permanent. "Both yesterday's Throne Speech and today's budget announcement acknowledged that economic conditions have deteriorated rapidly and that the government needs to respond urgently. While the next several months will be rough for both families and businesses, and we will watch carefully to ensure that Ottawa does not return to long term structural deficits, the fact that we now have a clear strategy should help to restore consumer and investor confidence over the medium term. We believe it is an important step forward," said Mr. Beatty.

**Lethbridge Chamber's Voice Heard in
Federal Budget Outcome**

The Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce, along with chambers across Canada, participated in pre-budget consultations, prior to Federal Budget 2009 - Canada's Economic Action Plan.

"We were very pleased that several of the recommendations submitted by the Lethbridge Chamber, to Finance Minister Flaherty for inclusion in the pre-budget consultation, were considered in the budget outcome." states President Dennis Hatt. Lethbridge Chamber budget recommendations included were:

- Reduction of personal income tax rates
- Investment in infrastructure, stressing the importance of the inclusion of rural communities, including Lethbridge
- Commitment to provide monies for skills and training
- Enhancements to Employment Insurance
- Support for the transition to a Canadian securities regulator with willing provinces and territories

**Business Reaction to Federal Budget
"We'll Wait and See"**

The federal budget failed to overwhelmingly sway business leaders revealed a poll conducted by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce of its members.

When asked if the federal budget contained the right measures to address the economic challenges facing Canada, less than half of the respondents answered yes. To the question "Has this budget made you feel more or less confident in Canada's economy?", 27% answered yes, while 53% responded that their level of confidence remained unchanged.

"We wanted to take the pulse of our members immediately following the tabling of the budget" said Perrin Beatty, President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber, "and the results tell me that, while business leaders want to be optimistic about the future, they will await tangible results before giving a definite thumbs up to this budget."

Respondents also remained unconvinced that the measures announced in the budget would help their business with a third saying yes, a third saying no and a third remaining uncertain.

Over 500 business leaders from all regions of the country filled out the Canadian Chamber's online poll. The full survey results are available on the Canadian Chamber's web site at www.chamber.ca

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