



THE VOICE OF BUSINESS

NEWSLETTER

2022 FALL / WINTER EDITION

WILLIAMS LAKE & DISTRICT
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2022 BUSINESS EXCELLENCE

MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS:

- Cariboo Chilcotin Gymnastics Association
- Cariboo Orthotics
- Casey Bennett Photography and Design
- EXP Realty

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President's Message



Welcome to all new members and thank you to all our members for your ongoing support and commitment to the Williams Lake & District Chamber of Commerce. Your support allows the Chamber to provide ongoing services and benefits.

Thank you for electing me as your president, I look forward to working with the board of directors and Chamber staff on your behalf.

It has been a tough couple of years, and we are pleased to have been able to put on the Business Excellence Awards. Congratulations to all who were nominated and Congratulations to all our winners!

We are very proud of the resilience of our business community, and we will be scheduling our monthly lunch meetings on the last Thursday of each month except December and August. We will have informed guest speakers and the luncheon is a chance to network with other members.

On behalf of the Chamber executive and staff we wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year!

Paul French

President, Williams Lake & District Chamber of Commerce

*Businesses working together to
make our community even better*

The Williams Lake & District Chamber of Commerce

is "The Voice of Business": Businesses working together towards economic and social well being to make our community a better place to live. We promote the well being of business and foster a work, shop and play at home atmosphere.

Executive Director's Message by Jason Ryll

As we close out 2022, we must look back at some of the highlights of this past year. This year has been one of substantial change – from vaccine mandates and a relative conclusion to a global pandemic, to a summer that included the return of large-scale community events, to municipal elections in the fall that brought substantial change around the province and also, a new provincial leader. It's often stated that change is the only constant in our world, as with that recap, that proves accurate.



organizations, and we will all need to adapt. Doing things the “old fashioned way” might work for a handful of businesses, but it will not be the norm going forward. The business world has gone digital and can be done now using a cell phone. What we do as support organizations is coach these business owners on what challenges they should consider now and into the years ahead. Whatever challenges lie ahead of us will be faced with a renewed optimism that we can face together. After all, that's what creating a community is all about; looking after each other.

The challenges associated to business are also ever changing. We've seen interest rates skyrocket, supply-chain disruptions affect the ability for businesses to hold stock, and a worker shortage felt in every part of the western world. While I vacationed in Ireland this fall, the amount of “help-wanted” or “hiring now” signs I saw was astronomical. This solidified for me that this isn't only a local Cariboo challenge, nor a Canadian challenge, but one that we are all faced with.

How we face these challenges is going to be through collaboration amongst businesses and

Jason Ryll
Executive Director
Williams Lake & District
Chamber of Commerce



**Member to Member
2023**

Any members looking to join the member to member program, or if you have questions about it, contact Talia at 250-392-5025 or talia@wlchamber.ca



L to R:
Diane Baerg, Shannon Pigeon,
Julie Beyer, Kaitlyn Green

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Talia's Take

This year we welcomed over 21,000 visitors to Williams Lake.

The Tourism Discovery Centre had many events this year including Junk in The Trunk in April, Loose Moose trail opening hosted by the Williams Lake Cycling Club in June and Made in the Cariboo Craft Fair in November, just to name a few highlights. As for the Chamber, we hosted our annual Golf Tournament in June, and our Business Excellence awards in November. You will find pictures and details on the nominees as well as winners in this newsletter.

We welcome anyone to stop by and check out what's new in the Gift Shop, walk through the Museum, grab a coffee or a cold drink and say hi. In this newsletter, there are a few coupons to take advantage of here at the TDC. If you're looking for ideas on things to do in the area, there are staff that are eager to help you plan your adventures or suggest new ones this winter.

We continue to host monthly Chamber Member lunches on the last Thursday of each month, excluding December and August. For anyone interested in becoming a chamber member or if you have questions please reach out.

Happy holidays!

Instagram: [Williamslakevisitorcentre](#)

Facebook: [Tourism Discovery Centre](#)

Williams Lake & District Chamber of Commerce

www.wlchamber.ca

www.tourismwilliamslake.com

Talia McKay

Executive Assistant

Williams Lake & District Chamber of Commerce

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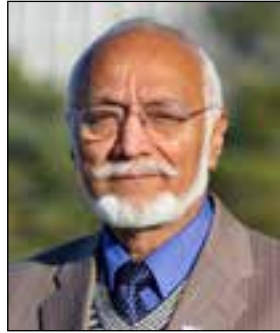
Mayor's Message

by Mayor Surinderpal Rathor

I am pleased to have the opportunity to write my first Chamber message as Mayor of Williams Lake.

I was honoured to attend the Business Excellence awards gala on November 12th. It was a wonderful evening dedicated to celebrating our business community. The Chamber outdid itself again – many thanks to the volunteers who made this event happen. Thank you also to our dedicated businesses who do so much to make Williams Lake an economically diverse and vibrant community, and congratulations to all of this year's nominees and winners!

As Mayor, I am focused on fostering a community based on partnerships and strong, healthy relationships. With the challenges brought on by the pandemic and the current economic climate, promoting and supporting new investment in



Williams Lake is more important than ever. Investment could come in the form of new businesses, new industry, and new economic opportunities, but only if we create an investment-friendly climate that encourages economic stability and prosperity. I look forward to working with the Chamber to continue to promote this growth for our community.

As we head toward the holiday season, I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas. I look forward to continued growth and prosperity for Williams Lake in 2023.

Surinderpal Rathor
Mayor, City of Williams Lake

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Grow your business!
Contact our Business Development partners!



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT **Cariboo Chilcotin Gymnastics Association**



The Cariboo Chilcotin Gymnastics Association started in 1978 and is a non-profit organization run by a board of directors. Currently, we have 14 volunteer board members.

The gymnastics club provides gymnastics programming for children, from crawling and up. All coaches have multiple levels in training certification. Programs offered for girls and boys include Parent and Tot; Mini 3-Year-Olds; Super 4-Year-Olds; Mighty 5-Year-Olds; Can Gym Level 1-12 for ages 6 and up; Teen Gym; Parkour; and Competitive. We have approximately five hundred registered athletes each season.

In addition to our regular programs, the club offers birthday parties, field trips and group bookings at the facility.

The club is a non-profit organization and relies heavily on the generosity of community members. We welcome donations from individuals, local businesses, and organizations.

This season, we wish to see our facility full of happy, healthy athletes of all ages and walks of life,

learning and experiencing life skills throughout the sports of gymnastics and parkour. We wish to allow all children to express themselves freely and feel like a part of our gymnastics family. We hope to allow all children in our community to have the opportunity to move and to be active safely, regardless of gender or ability.

Our next seventeen week session will run February to June 2022. Follow our Facebook page for registration dates. Email wlgymnas@telus.net or call 250-398-7331 for more information.

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT **Cariboo Orthotics**



Meet Alicia, the owner of Cariboo Orthotics. Alicia is one of two of our local Pedorthists servicing the Cariboo and Chilcotin regions. What is a Ped-or-thist you might wonder? A Pedorthist is a clinician within the “foot expert” realm, with some differences from the career of Podiatric Medicine (DPM). A Pedorthist will have a Bachelor of Health Sciences (or Kinesiology) degree AND 1-2 years of post-graduate schooling on orthotics, footwear, foot conditions etc. A Pedorthist will typically have more training on

bracing and splinting and sports medicine rehab devices than a Podiatrist but are generally unable to do the skin and nail treatments & prescribing that a Podiatrist can do. If you have foot pain and live in the Cariboo/Chilcotin - seeking out an initial assessment with Alicia or Olivia (our local Pedorthists) is a wise first step. They can advise whether a trip to a DPM is worth your time and money and give various treatment options to try. Treatment plans often include products that can help rehab your condition, stretches and exercise suggestions and they can also cast for and order custom devices like orthotics, braces, and shoes.

What sets Cariboo Orthotics apart from other orthotics/bracing/compression garment experiences? Check out the Cariboo Orthotics google reviews and you will quickly understand - these ladies truly care about you, they listen, they work with you, and they educate you so that your goals can be achieved. Whether you see them with a prescription or referral in hand, or just to learn more about your feet/gait/knee/ankle conditions - they are happy to help.

Appointments can be booked online at www.caribooorthotics.com (check out their new e-commerce store)! You can also call their Williams Lake clinic at 778-412-9833 and be sure to let them know if you live out of the city as there are numerous satellite clinic options available.

Be sure to follow Cariboo Orthotics on Facebook and Instagram (@caribootics)!

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT Casey Bennett Photography and Design



Casey Bennett started his photography journey in 2005 here in Williams Lake. Equipped with a used Nikon F90, several rolls of now discontinued Kodak black and white C-41 film and a desire to learn, he found himself roaming through the sweaty crowds of angsty concert-goers at Walt's Cafe on Oliver Street. For a brief, beautiful period, the now defunct cafe was host to several small indie concerts throughout the years. In that time, Casey made connections with several of the bands by taking their photos and sending them copies for their Myspace pages. Several of these bands were from Victoria and Vancouver. It was through these interactions, Casey decided he would leave Williams Lake and seek out bigger opportunities on the island.

In Victoria, Casey continued to focus on his love for concert photography and even became part of a local collective of photographers simply known as the Rocktographers. They photographed concerts big and small. A punk show in the basement of the Salvation Army one night and

into the pit of a pyrotechnic light extravaganza at the arena the next. It was through this archaic style of photography that Casey learned how to think on his toes and capture the spontaneously wild nature of a concert. It wasn't very long until he was asked to photograph a wedding. A couple had stumbled across his Myspace, loved the black and white imagery of tatted up punks thrashing about. They booked him.

Throughout his years on the island, Casey found himself working as a freelancer; shooting campaigns for software companies, shopping malls and of course, musicians. On the side, he had secured a job with the University of Victoria, cataloging through their archives, photographing campus life and covering convocation. In 2014, Casey decided to take a step back from photography and enroll for graphic design courses in Vancouver. A year later, he was making the move from the island to the big city.

Fast forward, Casey has been slowly growing his

graphic design business here in Williams Lake. Upon returning to the Lake City in 2016, he's been working with several local non-profits and small businesses to help them by designing their logos, brochures, business cards and a couple of websites. His photography has been more focused on personal projects that interest him artistically. He's since invested back into shooting film, using a 4x5 and medium format camera to make his photographs and develop his own film at home. Over the past two years, he's even released two popular zines - one self published and the other published by a popular UK based publisher. However, he is opening his services up again for portraits, corporate headshots, and anything essential to his clients needs.

Being a creative is not just about designing something 'cool' for his clients, but it's a challenge to help solve their problems and design

content that will generate attraction to their business as well as their needs. A good design can convey an attitude, a message and become a personal signature that is recognized everywhere. With that, Casey insists on building a trustworthy relationship with the client and creates an environment where they become part of the collaborative process. The more he's able to bring their voice and personality into the project, the more accurate the design becomes – the same for his photography. It's always been about creating a relaxed atmosphere. That's where creativity thrives.

When he's not working on photography or design, you can catch him kayaking on one of the several beautiful lakes in the region or reading a good book.

Facebook: Casey Bennett Photography & Design



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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT **EXP Realty**



I think work ethic and passion go hand in hand because when you do what you love, for the people you love, everyone wins. Starting in real estate almost 4 years ago with another local brokerage, I made the decision to bring eXp Realty to Williams Lake March 1st, 2021, and have been overly impressed with the results, both for me and my clients ever since! EXP Realty is a technology forward and extremely innovative brokerage that pushes the latest in real estate technology, and most updated education available keeping the agent's and clients real estate experience as flawless as possible. Since starting in real estate 2019, I've won an MLS Award every full year licensed and am now a 2x ICON Agent within eXp Realty. I'm super energetic and love serving the Williams Lake and surrounding area alongside my fiancé/unlicensed assistant Amanda Price. Together, we are able to ensure nothing gets missed. We ensure an unprecedented attention to detail delivers each and every one of our clients a luxury experience. Luxury doesn't necessarily have to mean price. It doesn't have to mean it's the most expensive. Luxury is simply a component of knowing you're taken care of. That

is the feeling we hope to deliver with everything we do. Real Estate is something that is always evolving, and we love to challenge ourselves by adapting along with it to meet the individual needs of each of our clients. "Many of my clients are repeat clients and I couldn't be happier that they trust me to help them with one of the largest transactions of their lives. I work extremely hard for each and every one of my clients, which is why I know they are receiving a truly unparalleled service."

Trevor Bigg

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Thoughts from Victoria

The weather has been beautiful and has given all of us an extended summer. I hope everyone is staying warm and healthy this winter season.

I would like to congratulate all the candidates that ran in our municipal elections. A special congratulations to all the winners. I know you will all work hard to represent our city and the region through Cariboo Regional District and School District roles. Thank you to all candidates that were not re-elected for your efforts to make our communities a better place and for the countless hours you have all put in over your years in office. A massive congratulations to all the nominated businesses at the 25th Annual Business Excellence awards which I was proud to be your MC for. This is an incredible celebration that obviously focuses on those businesses that have excelled in service. It was an incredible evening! The Williams Lake District Chamber of Commerce has always done an amazing job of hosting this event.



Hats off to all the Nominees. These have been challenging times for small business and it has been amazing to see how businesses have reinvented themselves through Covid along with the return to normalcy. I really take my hat off to you all for your ingenuity and your tenacity to get through. I know the community is thankful for the businesses we have as they continue to struggle through staff shortages and supply chain issues.

Remember to Shop local and support our great small businesses we have right here in our hometown. Tis the season for giving is upon us and there are charities or families that are in need. If you are able to give, please consider donating to a local charity or help a family in need have a great Christmas!

Thank you all for continuing to be the amazing supporters you all are!!

Happy Holidays!

Lorne Doerkson - MLA
Cariboo – Chilcotin
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100 Mile House 250.395.3916



Lorne Doerkson
MLA for Cariboo-Chilcotin

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Williams Lake Youth Soccer Association

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Todd Doherty, Member of Parliament, Cariboo-Prince George

Dear Friends,

With 2022 almost in the books, we can all look forward to a Christmas season filled with family and friends. As the House of Commons winds down I have been reflecting on the past year. 2022 was extremely busy. We've come through the pandemic and life is getting back to normal but there are still many issues affecting us daily.

The cost of living has skyrocketed, and inflation is affecting our every move. Where it really hits home is when I walk into a grocery store. The same pound of butter that used to cost \$3.99 is now \$7.99. New data released by Statistics Canada says food prices are rising at the fastest pace we've seen since 1991. Year over year prices have spiked by almost 10.8 percent!

Households now face the prospect of 15% of their income going to debt servicing alone. Mortgage interest costs for the average family are up 11%. Year over year that is the biggest increase since 1991. If someone renewed their

mortgage today, after having secured it five years ago, they would be paying about \$7,000 more per year for the very same house they lived in last year.

If people think home ownership is expensive, they should be careful about renting. That now costs \$2,000 a month in the average Canadian city. Vancouver has the world's third most inflated housing market. Toronto has the 10th. In fact, Vancouver is more expensive than New York, Singapore, London, England, and countless others of the world's most famous cities where they have more people, more money, and less land.

But there is hope. There is a better way. Government does not have to be so expensive. Our new leader Pierre Poilievre has some amazing new ideas on how we can curb overspending and get Canada back to being the best country in the world.

Why do we not cap government spending and cut waste and bring in a dollar-for-dollar law that requires the government to find a dollar of savings for every new dollar of spending measures? That would force politicians to make the same either-or trade-offs when they're thinking about new government programs.

When a local mechanic decides he is going to spend a little more on advertising, he must spend a little less somewhere else to free up that money. When a family decides they are going to build a new porch, they might decide not to go on vacation or might try to find a bargain on both.

Politicians and bureaucrats do not make those kinds of calculations because they do not have to. There is always more in the pot. They can tax more, borrow more, or print more. I don't believe that we can go on this way. We can't keep borrowing or printing more money and expect things to get better.

We need to get back to spending within our means. We need to start thinking about running government the way small business owners and families run their shops and homes.

Never before have we had a government that has spent so much and achieved so little.

A government that has waged war on small businesses, while giving their Liberal friends



Todd Doherty

Member of Parliament (Cariboo-Prince George)

1520 - 3rd Avenue, Prince George, British Columbia

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Email: Todd.Doherty@parl.gc.ca



FROM PAGE 14 ...

and family connections 100's of millions of your dollars for bogus schemes and programs.

Canadians deserve a government that unites and not divides. That protects our democracy and fights for our freedoms. Not one that continues to make life more unaffordable and punishing on those who chose to live in our rural, remote, and small towns.

A government that puts the safety and security of our communities first, not protect and make life easier on the criminals terrorizing them. A government who puts the rights and lives of victims first. Not out of hate for the criminals, but for our love of the victims.

One that provides more resources to those who protect our borders and communities, institutes stiffer penalties for prolific offenders. This is what I fight for each and every day.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year everyone.

Todd Doherty, MP
Cariboo-Prince George



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BUSINESS OF THE YEAR- Sponsored by Community Futures

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL 2022 NOMINEES!

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*Karena Sokolan
photo provided by Monica Lamb-Yorski Williams Lake tribune*



*Tolko, recipient of Business of The Year award
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*Chamber Gala
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Staff: Talia McKay, Gay Sanders, Kim Abel at Business Excellence Awards



Directors of The Williams Lake & District Chamber of Commerce; Beth Veenkamp, Laurie Walters, Charlene Harrison, Kathy McLean

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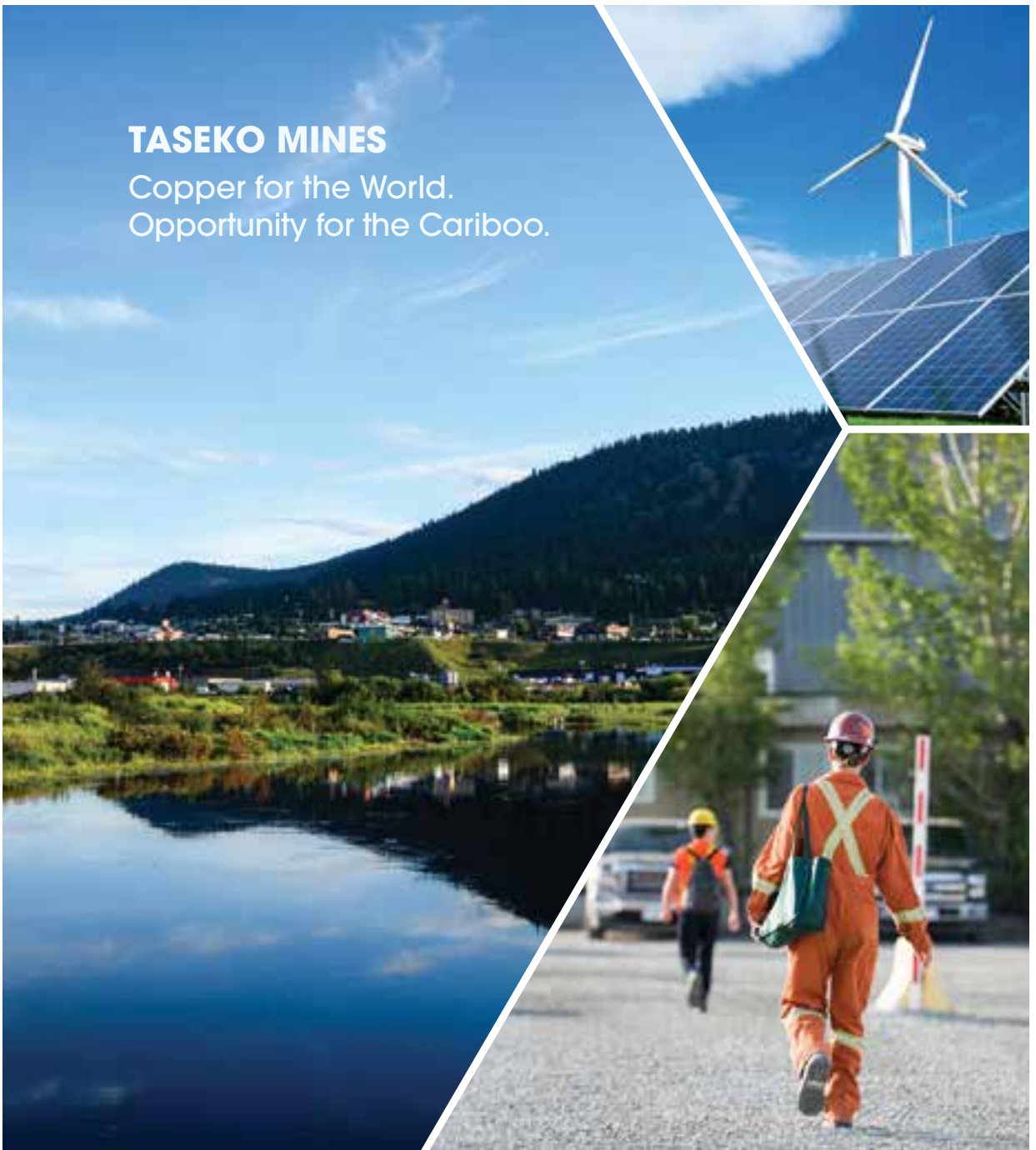
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