



Spring, 2010

# The Bulletin

## Alberta Provincial Rural Crime Watch

### The Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held in Sherwood Park on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2010. It was heartening to see so many at the wine and cheese reception on the Friday night, and there were 117 people in attendance at the AGM itself, representing 54 associations. Thanks to everyone who took the time to come and participate. Strathcona County RCW did a terrific job of hosting - the venue, food, speakers, silent auction and Saturday night entertainment seemed to suit everyone just fine. There were a couple of memorable moments; the RCMP presented a posthumous certificate of appreciation to Lynn Roberts (Gerald Kaiser of Hillside RCW will get it to her family) and John Fuga received the Farmers' Advocate Award of Excellence for the Wise Owl Program. All in all, it was a memorable weekend, and one that more people need to participate in. It's worth the effort! REMEMBER, next February it's in Grande Prairie. Start planning now to attend.

### President's Message

Once again we begin a new year with many familiar faces and a few new ones on the Board. We will operate in the direction that you have advised us. The Board is here for the benefit of the membership so if at any time you have concerns or questions on anything to do with "how to" or "what should" ... please call and we will address the situation as it arises. Thanks to suggestions from members at large we are looking into additional ways in which we can fund the continually growing projects that the Board and membership are working on to make all our communities, and this province in general a safe and productive place for us all. After the exhilarating AGM in Sherwood Park, it is hoped that all the participants can take that energy back to their areas and extend it towards crime prevention there. Enjoy the new year and we look forward to seeing everybody next year in Grande Prairie.

*Frank Debogorski*

*Age is a matter of mind; if you don't mind, it doesn't matter...*

**Thank you to the United Farmer's Association for their support of APRCWA – they print and help distribute this newsletter. We couldn't do it without you!**



*Several rural communities south of Calgary are fighting back against crime.*

*"There have been crimes in the area that have made people reluctant, even fearful, about their own safety in their own homes," says Vera Colville, from Alberta Rural Crime Watch.*

*Colville says thieves have been taking advantage of the isolation south of the city and breaking into rural homes during the day.*

*The rise in break and enters has prompted the communities of Priddis, Millarville, and Turner Valley to revived their crime watch programs.*

*In some communities, the resurgence of the traditional safety measure simply means residents are keeping an eye open for suspicious activity and reporting it immediately to police.*

*In other communities, volunteers may be more active and conduct their own nightly community patrols.*

*The RCMP says they appreciate any help they can get. "Essentially, this is the bread and butter of the RCMP. The public is our eyes and ears," says Cst. Brandon Hrdlicka from the Turner Valley RCMP.*

*Police say crime watch is critical in rural areas where homes can be a block apart and surrounded by trees and other obstructions.*

*The new resurgence in rural crime watch programs seems to be paying off. Earlier this year, RCMP laid charges in relation to several break and enters in the area after receiving a tip from the public.*

**CTV Calgary Wed. Mar.17, 2010**

## Farmers told how to foil rural crime

By John Holland  
[jholland@modbee.com](mailto:jholland@modbee.com)

A sheriff's detective urges farmers to get creative when it comes to foiling metal thieves. **Spray-painting** brass pipe fittings in unusual colors can help deputies track them down if they are stolen, rural crime detective Jeff Dirkse said in a talk last week. **Pick** lime green, blaze orange, fuchsia, something like that," he said. "Put a mark on it."

### WHAT TO WATCH FOR

**Law** enforcement agencies offer these tips for rural residents to avoid being crime victims:

**Watch** for people who appear to be casing an area. The signs include slow-moving vehicles, lighting in unusual places and the presence of loading devices on vehicles. **Report** crimes in progress or activities that appear to be developing into crimes. Try to give detailed descriptions of people and vehicles. **Make** sure mailboxes, gates, pesticides and other property are secure.

**Engrave** identification numbers on equipment.

**When** away for several days, make sure mail and newspapers do not accumulate. Ask neighbors to watch the property. **Install** security cameras, if practical. **Shred** papers that show your Social Security number or other information that can be used in identity theft.

**Dirkse** and other rural crime fighters spoke at the annual meeting of Western United Dairymen, held at Modesto Centre Plaza. **Theft** and other crimes have plagued all kinds of farms, in part because their remote location can make them easy targets. **Crooks** have taken walnuts and almonds by the truckload. **They** have swiped tractors and rustled cattle. **They** have vandalized fences and dumped toxic waste from methamphetamine labs.

**Authorities** say many of these people are drug users who steal metal and recycle it for money to support their habits. "**They** are very industrious," Dirkse said. "**If** they worked at a real job as hard as they work at this, they would be very successful." **Metal** theft had dropped with the decline in global metal prices, but it rose again in recent months as China's fast-growing economy increased demand for the material, he said. **Rob** Wyeth, a dairy farmer west of Modesto, has seen his share of crime. "**We** get them stealing gas," he said. "**They** stole some water pumps. **When** the price of metal was high, they were stealing copper wire." **Dirkse** urged farmers to guard against identity thieves. **They** try to get Social Security numbers and other personal information from mailboxes, trash bins or other places, then use the information to make purchases in the victim's name. **They** also can drain bank accounts. **Stanislaus** County has been fighting back. **It** requires recycling companies to get names and

other information from people selling metal.

**Sheriff's** volunteers help residents engrave numbers onto property so it can be identified if found. **Dirkse** said video cameras can be especially useful at catching offenders. **He** said ***rural residents should report all suspicious activity even though their far-flung locations could mean a long response time.*** Deputy District Attorney Jeff Laugero, who prosecutes rural crimes, said ***bits of information could build into cases that put people behind bars, including repeat offenders facing long sentences.*** "**We** are asking for your help to start the ball rolling," he said. "**Even** if you don't think it's a big thing at the time, it could turn out to be."



Will I live to see 80?

Here's something to think about. I recently picked a new primary care doctor. After two visits and exhaustive Lab tests, he said I was doing 'fairly well' for my age. (I just turned sixty-something.) A little concerned about that comment, I couldn't resist asking him, 'Do you think I'll live to be 80?'

He asked, 'Do you smoke tobacco, or drink beer, wine or hard liquor?'

'Oh no,' I replied. 'I'm not doing drugs, either!' Then he asked, 'Do you eat rib-eye steaks and barbecued Ribs?'

'I said, 'Not much... my former doctor said that all red meat is very unhealthy!' 'Do you spend a lot of time in the sun, like playing golf, boating, sailing, hiking, or bicycling?'

'No, I don't,' I said. He asked, 'Do you gamble, drive fast cars, or have lots of sex?' 'No,' I said...

He looked at me and said: 'Then,



Crime watch associations gather  
**Strathcona County recently hosted an annual crime watch association meeting; received a crime watch initiative award**

The Strathcona County Crime Watch Association recently hosted the Alberta Provincial Rural Crime Watch annual general meeting, allowing communities to exchange best practices and pass new resolutions to combat crime.

An estimated 80 delegates from crime watch associations across the province and a handful of politicians turned out for the meeting, which consisted of speakers from the Metro Edmonton Integrated Gang Unit and provincial RCMP.

The Strathcona County Crime Watch Association was also recognized for its rural crime prevention efforts, receiving the Alberta Farmers' Advocate Award for Excellence in Rural Crime Watch Initiatives.

A \$1,000 cheque that came with the award will be used to fund the association's Wise Owl program, which provides information to seniors about identify theft and fraud, said John Fuga, president of the local crime watch association.

In total, there are 1,544 families who are members of the Strathcona County Crime Watch Association, Fuga said. He also noted the local association started the volunteer-oriented Citizens on Patrol effort, which assists RCMP in

spotting criminal activity, that has been picked up by other municipalities across the province.

**Strathcona** County Crime Watch Association also employs a fan-out system that can alert people in certain areas of the county about a crime, or provide suspect information, said Const. Wally Henry, media liaison for the local RCMP.

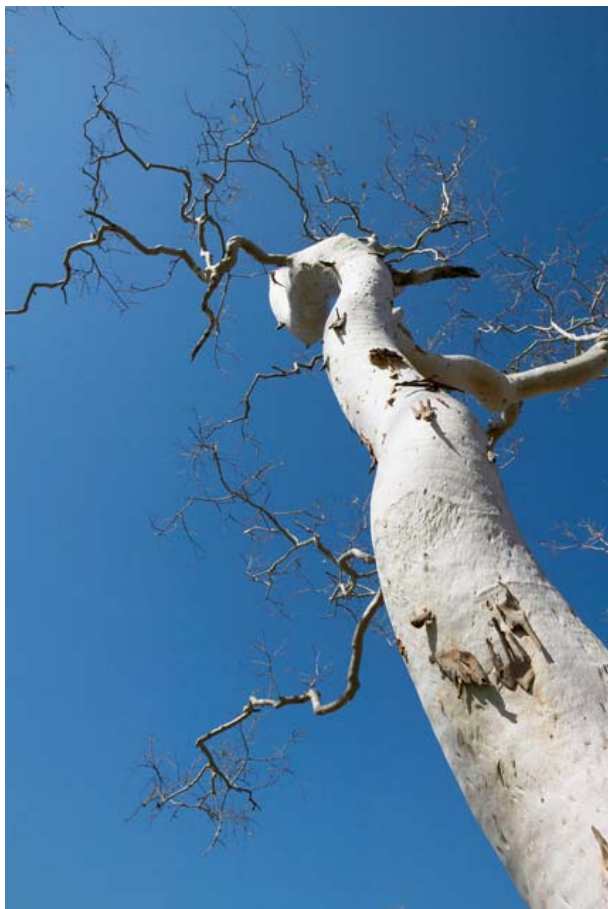
"**Strathcona** County Rural Crime Watch can reach a lot of people in the county within a short period of time," he said.

**During** the conference, Const. Bryce Clark with the Metro Edmonton Integrated Gang Unit spoke to those in attendance about gangs and how to recognize them.

**Resolutions** were also passed at the meeting encouraging further co-operation with law enforcement agencies province-wide.

**Other** considered resolutions involved pushing the province to require strobe lights on school buses to be functioning at all times and encouraging the rights of crime watch members to confine or hold alleged criminals at gun point until a law enforcement officer arrives were tabled for further discussion, Fuga said.

Michael de Massa



## RURAL CRIME WATCH:

At our Home Group assembly on Tuesday, February 23 we were excited to announce that some of our Grade 8 & 9 students were winners of the Rural Crime Watch Poster contest that was held last fall. Congratulations to: Grade 8 students - Ryan Gelderman (1st place), Kris Krikke (2nd place) & David Fountain (3rd place) {missing from picture} Grade 9 students - Rhonda Loewen (1st place) & Alexandra Amsbaugh (2nd place){missing from picture}. Rhonda Loewen also went on to compete at the Provincial level and her poster will be part of the Rural Crime Watch calendar for next year and she received some extra prizes including a cash reward. All the students received some great prizes and certificates. Thanks to the Rural Crime Watch representatives, Ken Porter & Lou Maykut for coming to our school to do the presentations.

From the NPCS Eagle Ex[ress

It also explains why Socrates never found out that Plato was sleeping with his wife.

**Keep this philosophy in mind the next time you hear, or are out to repeat rumor.**

In ancient Greece (469 - 399 BC), Socrates was widely lauded for his wisdom. One day the great philosopher

came upon an acquaintance, who ran up to him excitedly and said, "Socrates, do you know what I just heard about one of your students...?"

"Wait a moment," Socrates replied. "Before you tell me, I'd like you to pass a little test. It's called the Test of Three."

"Test of Three?"

"That's correct," Socrates continued.

"Before you talk to me about my student let's take a moment to test what you're going to say. The first test is Truth. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?"

"No," the man replied, "actually I just heard about it."

"All right," said Socrates. "So you don't really know if it's true or not. Now let's try the second test, the test of Goodness. Is what you are about to tell me

about my student something good?"

"No, on the contrary..."

"So," Socrates continued, "you want to tell me something bad about him even though you're not certain it's true?"

The man shrugged, a little embarrassed.

Socrates continued, "You may still pass though because there is a third test - the filter of Usefulness. Is what you want to tell me about my student going to be useful to me?"

"No, not really..."

"Well," concluded Socrates, "if what you want to tell me is neither True nor Good nor even Useful, why tell it to me at all?"

The man was defeated and ashamed and said no more.

This is the reason Socrates was a great philosopher and held in such high esteem.

February 10, 2010

**Premier fulfills commitment to add 300 police officers**

**Final wave of 100 officers to hit the streets in 2010-11**

Edmonton... Premier Stelmach has made good on his promise to increase police ranks in Alberta by adding 300 officers over three years as he announced the distribution of the final 100 frontline police.

"Albertans want to see police officers in their communities. Adding 300 police puts officers on the street where they can make a difference and reduce crime," said Premier Stelmach. "Fulfilling this commitment is another way this government is supporting safe and secure communities".

In order to qualify for additional police positions, police agencies had to demonstrate where and how the new officers will be used and that all its frontline police positions were filled.

"These new frontline police officers will further strengthen Alberta's law enforcement network," said Frank Oberle, Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security. "Police agencies and Albertans told us they wanted more police in their communities. We are delivering those resources and making it harder for criminals to operate in this province."

A total of \$30 million over three years is being provided by the Safe Communities Secretariat to fund these positions.

The Government of Alberta has a clear plan for a strong economic recovery. *The Way Forward* will bring Alberta back into a surplus position in three years by trimming government spending; using cash reserves to protect key programs; continuing to invest in public infrastructure; and ensuring that our province's industries are competitive and continue to attract investment to provide jobs and prosperity.

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February 8, 2010

**Sheriffs join forces with RCMP to improve safety on Alberta's highways**  
***New model integrates resources for traffic enforcement***

Edmonton... RCMP and traffic sheriffs are combining forces to improve traffic safety in Alberta. The new traffic units will be integrated in 19 locations throughout the province.

“Our goal is to create the safest roads possible for Albertans and our sheriffs have been a valued component of our traffic safety efforts,” said Frank Oberle, Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security. “We tested four pilot projects last year and each had elements of success, and provided valuable information. We are using the best model for moving forward.”

“The RCMP is always looking for ways to improve our service to Albertans,” said RCMP Deputy Commissioner Rod Knecht. “We are confident that working more closely with the Alberta Sheriffs will help us reduce serious injuries and deaths on Alberta’s roadways.”

The new model is based on four pilot projects conducted on highways near Whitecourt, Airdrie, Wetaskiwin and Olds. The pilots took place over six months in 2009. The evaluation of the pilots showed the best way to improve safety on our highway is to integrate the Sheriffs Highway Patrol with RCMP. The integration process will be phased in and completed within two years.

**Media inquiries may be directed to:**

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**HAPPY SPRING!**

Upcoming dates of importance:

**Easter:** Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April – Monday 5<sup>th</sup> April

**Victoria Day:** Monday, May 24<sup>th</sup>

**Contact the APRCWA Office**

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Disclaimer: Editorial opinions, reports and articles published herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion



<b>2010 POSTER CONTEST</b>			
<b>STUDENT NAME</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>School/Community</b>	<b>Contest Winner placement</b>
Autumn Dowhaluk	1	Grassland School (Boyle)	Second place
Miranda Bell	1	Big Rock School (Okotoks)	Third place
<b>Tanya Stahl</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Smoky Lake Colony</b>	<b>First place</b>
<b>Jeanie Yoo</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Boyle School</b>	<b>First place</b>
Brogun Granger	2	Camilla School (Sturgeon)	Second place
Cassidy Dion	2	Vilna School (Good Fish Lake) Smoky Lk	Third place
<b>Emma Sachko</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Boyle School</b>	<b>First place</b>
Samantha Simott	3	Blueberry School	Third place
Haley O'Connor	3	Benalto School	Second place
<b>Jared Perepeletza</b>	<b>1-3 SN</b>	<b>Andrew School</b>	<b>First place</b>
<b>Trinity Martin-Keith</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Big Rock School (Okotoks)</b>	<b>First place</b>
Shaelene Sundlie	4	Keephills School (Stony Plain)	Second place
Paige Tarasuk	4	Graminia Comm. School (East Parkland)	Third place
<b>Hannah Stewart</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Vermilion Elementary School</b>	<b>First place</b>
Tristan Warrelow	5	Andrew School	Second place
Luke Schafers	5	Seba Beach School (Yellowhead)	Third place
<b>Kaitlyn Wilbee</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Graminia Comm. School (East Parkland)</b>	<b>First place</b>
Brittany Rainville	6	Onoway Elementary School (NE Lac StA)	Third Place
Georgena Senetza	6	H.A. Kostash School (Smoky Lake)	Second place
Chelsea Babbage	4-6 SN	Dunstable School (Barrhead)	<b><u>Second place</u></b>
<b>Sam Holowaychuk</b>	<b>4-6 SN</b>	<b>H.A. Kostash School (Smoky Lake)</b>	<b>First place</b>
<b>Andreas Johnson</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Blueberry School</b>	<b>First place</b>
Dakota Kanarek	7	Wandering River School (Boyle)	Third place
Alyson Black	7	Pouce Coupe Elementary	Second place
Jaici Hebert	8	Wandering River School (Boyle)	Third place
<b>Cassie St. Germain</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Blueberry School</b>	<b>First place</b>
Jared Stahl	8	Smoky Lake Colony School	Second place
Taylor Walker	9	Grassland Community School (Boyle)	Second place
<b>Rhonda Loewen</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Nerrlandia Public Christian School (Barhd)</b>	<b>First place</b>
<b>Zackery Zwingli</b>	<b>7-9SN</b>	<b>H.A. Kostash School (Smoky Lake)</b>	<b>First place</b>

## Economic Development: A Pillar of Community Development

Economic development is one of the key elements in community development. Traditionally this meant looking outside the community to attract big business and industry. However, the links big business has to a community are tenuous and they can leave as easily as they came. And while no one denies the role that national or international corporations play in the economy, when it comes to developing community, encouraging local entrepreneurship has more stable results over the long term.



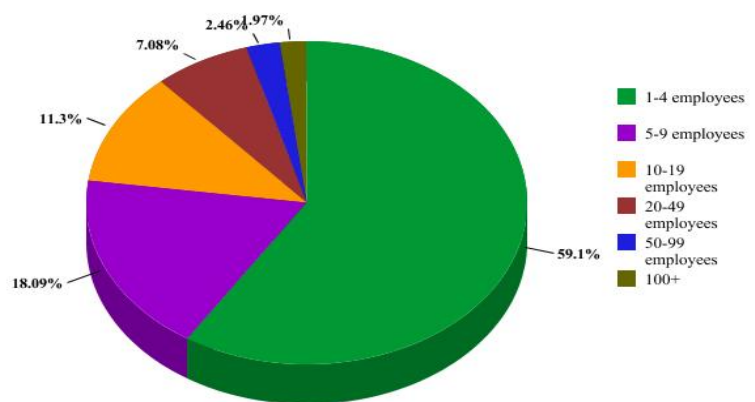
*"This is our mainstreet showing the importance of an active business community in keeping the community going" (in response to the question "what represents sustainability in your town?")*

### Why is entrepreneurship important?

#### *Direct Effects of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*

There is a powerful link between entrepreneurship and economic performance. Excluding self-employed entrepreneurs, in 2008 there were just over 1 million small businesses in Canada (those that have fewer than 100 employees). Those businesses employed nearly half of the total labour force in the private sector.<sup>1</sup> In Alberta, according to 2008 data, 98% of businesses were small business.<sup>2</sup>

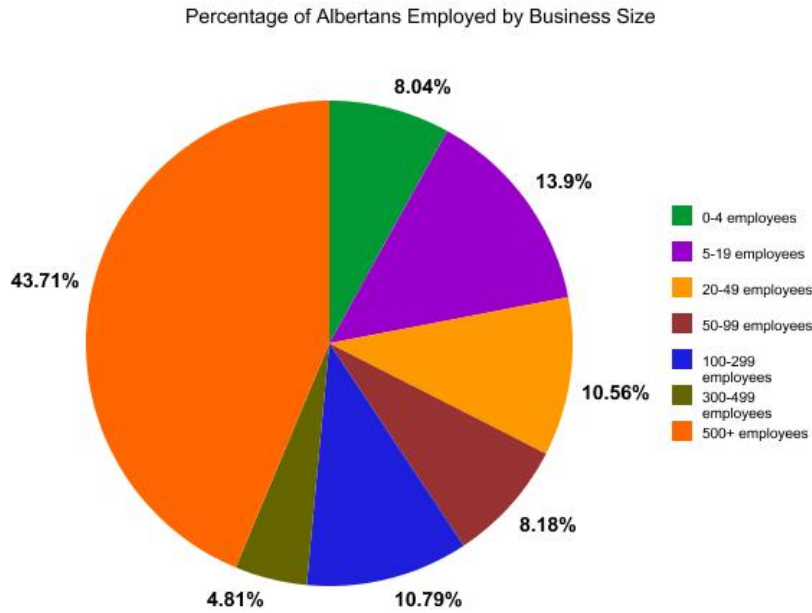
Number of Alberta Businesses by Size of Business (Number of Employees)



<sup>1</sup> Industry Canada. July 2009. Key Small Business Statistics. [http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/sbrp-rppe.nsf/eng/h\\_rd02395.html](http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/sbrp-rppe.nsf/eng/h_rd02395.html) Accessed March 17, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Industry Canada. August 2009. Business Establishments. Small Business Quarterly 11(2). <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/sbrp-rppe.nsf/eng/rd02421.html> Accessed March 18, 2010.

Microbusinesses (those with fewer than 10 employees) are the foundation of the rural economy. An Oklahoma study found that one in every six households owns and operates such a business.<sup>3</sup> Micro businesses employ local citizens and are an economic engine that causes cash to move through the community's economy. 2008 data show that 22% of employed Albertans worked in businesses with zero to 19 employees.<sup>4</sup> In Saskatchewan, a greater proportion (between 56 and 82%) of rural home based business owners employed at least one person than did urban home based businesses (36%).<sup>5</sup> Small and micro business clearly contributes to rural sustainability.



***Indirect Effects of Entrepreneurship and Small Business***

Communities characterized by progressive entrepreneurship are more likely to attract industry. Furthermore local business owners are likely to have a stronger sense of community than outside industry, and

will remain in place, generating opportunities for both in-migration and further entrepreneurial development.

Rural home-based business (HBB) has a notable impact on rural economies as they are more likely than urban to have both customers and suppliers in other rural areas. Between 2-3 times more rural than urban home based business bought supplies from other rural areas, while up to 87% of rural HBBs had customers in neighboring rural communities.<sup>6</sup> Local sales and purchases results in some cash staying in the local economy, where it recirculates to provide further

<sup>3</sup> Muske, G., M. Woods, J. Swinney, C. L. Khoo. 2007. Small businesses and the community: their role and importance within a state's economy. *Journal of Extension* 45(1).

<http://www.joe.org/joe/2007february/rb4.php>

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada. 2009. Employment, by enterprise size, by province and territory (Alberta).

<http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/101/cst01/labr83j-eng.htm> . Accessed March 18, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> Ofosuhene, M. 2005. Urban connections with rural areas in home-based business: implications for sustainable rural development in Saskatchewan. Unpublished PhD. Thesis. Department of Geography University of Saskatchewan: Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

<sup>6</sup> Ofosuhene.

opportunities for generating business opportunities, employment and income. Even where customers are from outside, there can be impact beyond direct expenditure in the HBB. Spending can spill over to other local businesses - an effect that has also been found with farmers' markets -<sup>7</sup> and visitors can end up moving to the area and make social, as well as economic, contributions to the community.<sup>8</sup> The amount of impact a consumer or business can have in the local economy depends upon a number of factors, including the sector under consideration and the level of local/regional integration (i.e. where resources and products are sourced). None-the-less, the more the local business can capture customer dollars and re-invest those dollars in local employees, suppliers, and other inputs, the greater the positive effect on a community's economy.

### ***Opportunities for Small Business Development***

Between 2004 and 2007 there was an 11% increase in small business owners over the age of 50.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, within the next 10 to 15 years over half of Canadian small businesses will need to be transitioned to new ownership or alternatively, closed down. A 2006 research found that two thirds of independent business owners were planning on exiting ownership or transferring control of their business by 2016.<sup>10</sup> Building a local economy will be as much about developing and transitioning existing businesses as it will creating new ones. Looking to the future, one segment of small business entrepreneurs will be baby boomers who have retired from a job are looking for something else to keep them busy and support themselves and who can see small business as a way to follow a passion.<sup>11</sup> With rural Alberta having been the place many of these folks grew up, now is a good time to actively invite them back.

Entrepreneurship development requires a systems approach – a collaborative, regional approach of “connecting the dots” among resource providers within the public, private and non-profit sectors, between communities and schools, and from practitioners to policy makers. Encouraging, educating and supporting youth, as well as retirees, to take on entrepreneurial roles will have wide-ranging benefit for both individuals and communities.

### ***Resources for Community Economic Development***

The Canadian Centre for Community Renewal. The Canadian Centre for Community Renewal is a source of expertise and resources in starting and strengthening Community Economic

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<sup>7</sup> Guthrie, J, A. Guthrie, R. Lawson and Alan Cameron. 2006. Farmers' markets: the small business counter-revolution in food production and retailing. *British Food Journal* 108(7): 560-573. This study found that six shops within 100m of the market added hours to coincide with the Saturday morning market, identifying that such a move was worthwhile because of additional custom generated by market-goers.

<sup>8</sup>Ofosuhene.

<sup>9</sup> Industry Canada. February 2010. The state of Entrepreneurship in Canada. [http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/sbrp-rppe.nsf/eng/h\\_rd01200.html](http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/sbrp-rppe.nsf/eng/h_rd01200.html) Accessed March 17, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> Bruce, D. October 2006. SME Succession: Update. <http://www.cfib-fcei.ca/cfib-documents/succession-2006.pdf> Accessed March 17, 2010.

<sup>11</sup> Campbell, A. 2007, January 25. Small Businesses of the Future. <http://smallbiztrends.com/2007/01/small-businesses-of-the-future.html> Accessed March 19, 2010

Development (CED) organizations, revitalizing communities, developing community-minded businesses, CED curriculum design and delivery <http://www.cedworks.com/index.html>.

A tool that embeds economic development in community development more broadly, is the Community Capitals Framework. Communities have seven capitals to work with. Innovative approaches to entrepreneurship development are built on identification and recognition of the local form of those capitals, and the development of a system that makes best use of them. Community Development Practice has developed a worksheet for planning and developing community using existing capitals. The worksheet, with detailed explanation of the capitals, is available from <http://www.comm-dev.org/commdev/collection/2006%2013.pdf>

- **Natural capital** refers to resources, amenities, and natural beauty. Natural capital might include parks, farm land, and features of the landscape or of nature.
- **Cultural capital** includes what heritages are valued, collaboration across races, ethnicities, and generations, etc. Cultural capital influences what voices are heard and listened to; which voices have influence in what areas; and how creativity, innovation, and influence emerge and are nurtured.
- **Human capital** includes the skills and abilities of people.
- **Social capital** reflects the connections between people and organizations or the social glue that make things happen.
- **Political capital** reflects access to power and power brokers, such as access to a local office of an MLA or MP, access to local or tribal government officials, or leverage with a regional company.
- **Financial capital** refers to the financial resources available to invest in community capacity building, to underwrite businesses development, to support civic and social entrepreneurship, and to accumulate wealth for future community development.

Adapted from: Emery, M., S. Fey and C. Flora. 2006. Using Community Capitals to Develop Assets for Positive Community Change. *CD Practice*. Issue 13. <http://www.comm-dev.org/commdev/collection/2006%2013.pdf> Accessed March 18, 2010

The Centre for Innovative and Entrepreneurial Leadership (CIEL) is one organization that strengthens communities by helping them enhance leadership, community involvement and become more business-friendly. CIEL is a non-profit organization located in Nelson, British Columbia, a region where many communities are in transition as the global economy changes.

One of the practical community development tools developed by CIEL is the Business Vitality

Communities that have business vitality tend to possess the following characteristics:

1. Successful businesses want to **remain** in the community.
2. The education and business communities **work together** to provide convenient training.
3. The governing body is **committed to help existing** businesses or creating new businesses through **policy and action**.
4. There is a **vibrant, active downtown** area or community core.
5. There is an **up-to-date community vision** or plan which reflects the community's values and attitudes.
6. Entrepreneurial ventures and business creation are **encouraged and supported** by local governments.
7. The community has a distinctive or **unique brand** or marketing image.
8. Business **mentors and/or role models** are available in the community.
9. There is an **entrepreneurial development program** for elementary and secondary school students (K-12).
10. Businesses in the community /region **market** their products and services as a group.
11. **Quality rental space** is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation.
12. Groups with similar interests can form **alliances** and cooperate to achieve goals.
13. Local officials make it **easy/reasonable** for businesses to start or expand.
14. There is a recognized organization or individual **available to assist** people identify, assess, expand and/or create business opportunities
15. There are adequate **opportunities** (informal and formal) where business people and entrepreneurs can **network** with each other.

*From: Stolte, M. 2008. Is your community business friendly? Tools to build entrepreneurial and vital communities. The Centre for Innovative and Entrepreneurial Leadership. Presentation to the Rural Matters Conference, July 2008, Edmonton, Alberta.*

Initiative (BVI). The (BVI) measures a participant community's business-friendliness, compares the results to other communities, and helps the participant community come up with strategies and actions for improvement.

Visit their website to see more about the BVI and other tools.

<http://www.theciel.com/index.php>

See how Alberta communities of Hanna and Vulcan are working on economic development in their communities.

Go to [www.rural.alberta.ca](http://www.rural.alberta.ca) and click on the embedded video link.

Submitted by Patricia Macklin, Rural Development