

Connections

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September 2009

A Reminder: Canadian Chamber AGM Goes Green

Delegates attending this year's AGM are reminded that the Chamber will not be printing hard copies of the proposed resolution books for delegates and chambers.

Proposed resolutions are on the Chamber's Web site - either as individual resolutions or in "book" format.

Chambers and delegates will be expected to access and download these documents based on their needs - whether paper or electronic format - prior to arriving in Victoria.

Please note: there will be **no** hard copies of the proposed resolution book on site in Victoria.

Finalists Announced in the 2009 Canadian Chambers Competition

This is the sixth year for the popular *Canadian Chambers Competition* where chambers are asked to submit a project (or projects) that they have under the theme of the year. This year, chambers were asked to submit under "*Best Non-Dues Revenue Project*".

Submissions came from across the country and the jury has now made its choices. These finalists will present at the Chamber's AGM in Victoria, where delegates will have the opportunity to vote on a "People's Choice" award winner.

The three finalists are (in alphabetical order):

- *Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce*
- *Spruce Grove & District Chamber of Commerce*
- *St. Thomas & District Chamber of Commerce*

The award presentations will occur during the AGM gala dinner.

Congratulations to all three chambers and thanks to others who took the time and effort to submit their projects to the competition.

All projects will be posted on the Chamber's Web site

following the AGM.

Policy & Advocacy Update

Employment Insurance

Last week, chambers were sent an op-ed piece to use over the Labour Day weekend.

From media reports earlier this week, it would appear that the Liberals have walked away from the discussions. A report from the group is still expected in Parliament by September 28th. Conservatives appear ready to introduce their own reforms to the EI program.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce will continue to push for fundamental reforms to the Employment Insurance program and will keep the chamber network in the loop on activity on this file.

For chambers wishing to continue to work this file with their MPs, a policy brief on EI is still available on the Chamber's Web site.

Also be aware that you (and your members) can reference the Canadian Chamber's EI report, *Reforming Canada's Employment Insurance (EI) Program* on our Web site.

Copyright Reform

Chambers are invited to add their comment to consultations on copyright reform.

We have crafted both a template letter and submission for your (and your members') use. The letter is addressed to Minister of Industry Tony Clement.

It would be useful for you to submit both the letter and the submission and enlist your members' assistance as well; if time does not permit you to do this, please consider submitting the letter.

Please note: The submission can be personalized as is necessary or wished by your chamber but it should be submitted **by September 13th**. (instructions are included in the template submission). The submission is available on our Web site.

Fall Election?

At the time of writing, there is much speculation on whether or not Canadian voters will face a fall election.

Should an election be announced, the Canadian Chamber is prepared to swing into action with templated documents for chambers' use; these documents will help formulate the business position with regards to the election issues and should assist you as you prepare for all-candidate debates and MP and candidate meetings. Stay tuned!

In the meantime, cast your ballot in our weekly poll - www.chamber.ca.

Canadian Chamber Partners on National Biotechnology Week: Get to know Canada's Bio-entrepreneurs

From renewable energy to "green" consumer products and processes, biotechnology today offers viable options for any business.

What is biotechnology? It's not just an esoteric branch of science. Biotechnology technologies and products are a multi-billion dollar business that spans health care, industrial processes and products, commodity businesses like forestry, and even agriculture.

Consider this:

- car seats in the Ford Escape are today made of biotech generated soy-based foam;
- cold water detergent and biodegradable plastic bags are biotech products we use every day.

These and other innovations contributed \$78.3 billion dollars to Canada's GDP in 2008. Take a look at this number in comparison with the automotive sector (\$77.7 billion) and the aerospace industry (\$13.4 billion) (according to the *Journal of Industrial Biotechnology*, 2008) and you'll realize how big sector this is!

For the enterprising business owner, biotechnology offers products, processes and technologies that can enhance day-to-day business operations. This includes providing alternative energy options to power offices, new technologies and products offering value to increasingly green-aware consumers, and sustainable disposal and cleaning options for waste produced by your business.

Join the national network of biotech business entrepreneurs in your region for the sixth annual *National Biotechnology Week*.

This week of activities across Canada offers business leaders

a chance to network with the industry and learn how it is growing in their region. Across Canada, the industry hosts over 4000 Canadians, including students, teachers and government leaders at events in over 60 communities. With the Canadian Chamber as a national partner of week, chamber members are welcome as our VIP guests.

Visit the *National Biotechnology Week events calendar* at www.imaGENEnation.ca to see what is happening in your region or contact Kasia Majewski, (613) 230-5585, x257, kasia.majewski@biotech.ca.

New Chamber Members

This month the Canadian Chamber network has expanded a little farther and we'd like to welcome two new chambers to the chamber network:

Alliston & District Chamber of Commerce (ON),
Crystal Kellard, Office Manager, crystal@adcca.ca.
Fort St. James Chamber of Commerce (BC),
Mindy Thompson, Manager, fsjchamb@fsjames.com.

If you are a new manager or have changes that you would like the network to know about - let Stacey Roy know, sroy@chamber.ca.

Dates to Keep in Mind

September 16 - Webinar, "Restructuring for the Recovery: forging a new class of business winners" - for more information click here.

October 1- 3, 2009 Chamber of Commerce Executives of Canada (CCEC): annual conference *Taking Care of Business: Chamber Success in Challenging Times*, Victoria, BC.

October 3-5, 2009 Canadian Chamber of Commerce annual general meeting, Victoria, BC
National chamber meeting where 2010's policy agenda is set through debate and vote by delegates. Don't miss it! Information online now at www.chamber.ca.

October 21 The Economic Edge, Toronto
The Economic Edge will bring together executive and senior-level professionals to discuss strategies and answers to position Canadian business to succeed in the global arena. Featured keynote luncheon speaker is Steve Ballmer, CEO of Microsoft Corporation.

Information, including programming and registration is available on the Chamber's Web site.

Chamber Development and Services

We're here to help you make the most of your chamber's membership with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

Jennifer Hagen, Director, Chamber Development & Services, 1-800-661-2930, x232, jhagen@chamber.ca

Stacey Roy, Manager, Chamber Development & Services, 1-800-661-2930, x237, sroy@chamber.ca