



# The Pelican

Your Best Source for Local Business News and Information | May 2020

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The Pelican is a community initiative made possible with funding and support from Community Futures Lac La Biche. Please forward comments, suggestions, or story ideas to [contact@cfllb.com](mailto:contact@cfllb.com)



Gene Wesley, General Manager, Community Futures Lac La Biche

I hope by now you have had a chance to read an edition or two of our newsletter, The Pelican, since it was first published in August 2019. We continue to keep a focus on the local business community as much as possible. Most recently, The Pelican has been made available on the LLB Region Mobile App (available for iPhone and Android) under the "News" icon. Last year 4126 issues were distributed by email, with 42% of our audience reading/opening it. That's a high conversion rate, especially at these early stages. Building on this success, **we would like to invite your business or organization to participate by contributing an article to future issues every once in a while, or on a regular basis.** Articles should be between 400-600 words in length and include a photo when possible. Any topic related to your business or organization and aimed at the business community in general is suitable. If you need assistance with writing or would like to be interviewed by phone rather than



writing the article yourself, we are happy to arrange for that as well at no cost. Your effort need not be a difficult task and can be as simple as sharing your latest initiative. We hope that with your collaboration, we can demonstrate the value and resiliency of the business community in the Lac La Biche region. Working together is more important now than it ever has been.

For those of you who have participated in the newsletter and other initiatives in the past, thank you for being part of our "Rural Business Support Network." For those of you who haven't had a chance to collaborate just yet, we need you! Only by working together can we continue to grow and become even more effective. If you would like to participate in the next issue of The Pelican or have any other ideas for our Business Support Network, please contact me by email ([manager@cfllb.com](mailto:manager@cfllb.com)) or by phone at 780-623-2662. ■

## Inside this issue



**ROABA FRONTS DONATION DRIVE TO FORT MAC**  
Page 2



**LOCAL STUDENT TAKES ADVANTAGE OF LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES** Page 3



**WEBINAR TO MANAGE VOLUNTEERS IN THE NEW NORMAL** Page 3



**THE BEST ETIQUETTE FOR VIDEO MEETINGS**  
Page 4

# ROABA LEADS DONATION DRIVE TO HELP FT. MAC

The Lac La Biche region continues to be there when others need help. Last week, the Resource One Aboriginal Business Association (ROABA) led an effort to collect a trailer load of supplies for flood-stricken Fort McMurray. ROABA president, Shawn McDonald offered the following: “Back in 2016, I reached out to our ROABA members, Lac La Biche, and our surrounding communities to help distribute fuel to our stranded neighbours to the north during the wildfire that devastated their homes and well-being. Now, almost four years to the day, I once again reached out to our communities for help when the disastrous flood hit Ft. McMurray. To no one’s surprise, they all stepped up again. I am so proud of our members, our communities, and how Albertans always come together to support one another in times of need. My heart goes out to all those affected by this disaster, and once again, our welcome mats are out for them.” ■



Shawn McDonald



## HOW CAN WE RE-OPEN OUR BUSINESSES RESPONSIBLY?

In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will need to get back to business at some point in the near future. Needless to say, things will be different and responsible businesses will put controls in place to protect their employees and the public. Here are a few things to consider:

### Engineering controls

1. Installing clear plastic barriers at points of worker or customer contact
2. Consider the feasibility of installing drive-through or cub-side pick-up for your clients
3. Improving the air filtering and ventilation systems within your facilities.

### Administrative controls

1. Ensure that workers who need PPE or other protective clothing are trained to wear it properly
2. Alternate or stagger shifts to reduce the number of employees on your site at any given time.
3. Keep your workers updated about COVID-19 risk factors
4. Ask sick workers to stay home. ■

## FUNNY Things You Hear...

Two co-workers are talking. The first worker says, “I can make the boss give me the day off.” The second worker replies, “And how would you do that?” The first worker says, “Just wait and see,” and then proceeds to hang upside down from the ceiling. The boss comes in and says, “What are you doing?” The upside down worker replies, “I’m a light bulb.” The boss then says, “You’ve been working so much that you’ve gone crazy. I think you need to take the day off.” The second worker starts to leave as well and the boss says, “Where are you going?” The second worker responds “I’m going home, too. I can’t work in the dark.” ■



# Local Student Makes the Most of Local Opportunities

Tianna Skyrpan grew up on a farm in Lac La Biche County. Her upbringing instilled a love of the outdoors and problem-solving. It also provided this young woman with a strong work ethic and a good deal of ambition.

Over the past few years, Tianna has been able to work part-time under the umbrella of a family company to provide landscape services in the region. Although this arrangement makes good sense while attending school, Tianna connected with Community Futures in Lac La Biche to find out how to make this summer-time occupation a full-time business of her own when she is ready.

After speaking with advisors at Community Futures, Tianna proved to be a great candidate for the Alberta Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program (AEDP).

The program supports entrepreneurs with self-declared disabilities in rural Alberta who wish to start or expand a business. In Tianna's case, she has struggled to overcome the learning barriers of dyslexia. Her ability to meet this challenge, coupled with her enthusiasm for starting a new business, qualified her for financial assistance for training from AEDP. The program enabled Tianna to complete business courses as part of her university program at Kings College.

The support offered by AEDP and Community Futures, along with a solid business plan and client base has put Tianna on the road to becoming a successful entrepreneur in her home community. For more information on the Alberta Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program visit: <http://albertacf.com/entrepreneurs-with-disabilities>



Tianna Skyrpan



## Volunteer Management and COVID-19

Volunteer engagement within this context raises many questions as organizations assess, adapt and respond to the evolving risks and needs in our communities. Presented by Volunteer Canada, this webinar will explore the following questions in an open and engaging discussion:

- How do we ensure the safety of volunteers while supporting vulnerable people?
- How can we transition to more virtual volunteer roles?
- How can we keep volunteers engaged while programs and services are suspended?

- How can we address the social isolation felt by many individuals in this time of physical distancing?

Date: Thursday, May 14 at 1pm ET / 10am PT (webinar is one hour in length)  
Audience: Nonprofit leaders and professionals, managers of volunteers, and boards of directors.

**Cost: Free – Register Now:**  
<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/933249382346055693>

Registration is limited to the first 1,000 people to sign onto the live session.

## Didja KNOW?

Our Lac La Biche Mission has been featured in books and a few TV and YouTube productions, focusing on the supernatural. If you are interested in the paranormal and a bit of local history, visit:

### Paranormal Explorers

<https://bit.ly/35KdnvH>

### Fascinating Stories About Haunted Houses

<https://bit.ly/3fAC7eg>



# ETIQUETTE AND THE VIRTUAL MEETING

More of us have been using video technology like Zoom, GoogleMeet, or Skype to facilitate meetings with staff and clients. Not only have these tools become a necessity due to the pandemic and more of us working at home, it also a very cost efficient way to connect with others who would otherwise incur time away from their workspace, along with associated travel expenses. Given the growth of this technology, here are a few tips to help you get the most out of your video meetings.

## Make sure you have an agenda

Meetings without an agenda are frustrating at the best of times, and even more so when using video technology. It's always best to let meeting participants know what the meeting is about ahead of time. **Let everyone know what you will and won't be talking about.**

## Set Limits

Make sure that you have a specific start and end time scheduled, so that participants are less likely to wander in and out of the meeting. Ensure that everyone knows their role, and when opportunities for feedback will be provided. It's important that the meeting organizer quickly establish themselves as the meeting facilitator and minimize small talk. **Provide everyone with an opportunity for meaningful input.**

## Communicate your availability

Tell meeting organizers if you are going to be late or absent from the meeting. This will allow them to proceed without you rather than waiting to see if you will log-in. Participants waiting for a meeting to start while sitting at their computer will inevitably start working on something else. **It is important to start the meeting on time.**

## Distribute documents early

If you are a meeting facilitator and the meeting includes a discussion about particular documents, make sure that they are distributed early enough so that everyone has a chance to review them prior to the meeting. If you are a meeting participant and have received documents for review prior to the meeting, ensure that you have done just that before you log in. **Good video conference etiquette means that you are prepared in advance.**

## Test your equipment

Whether you are using a smartphone or desktop system, make sure that you understand the operation of the video confer-



encing app well in advance. Be sure you know how to use any chat tools, turn on and off the video, and are familiar with the mute button. Some web video conferencing tools require you to download extensions to your browser before you are able to use the software. **Make sure you know how your technology works.**

## Choose the appropriate location

(or optimize the one you have)

For those of us who are not lucky enough to have a quiet office at home, finding a quiet location to participate in a video conference can be a challenge. As many of us might need to work from a kitchen table or other make-shift work station, it is important to try to keep children and pets otherwise occupied during the call. **Make sure that you keep your microphone on mute when you are not speaking.**

## Identify yourself

Even though you think everyone knows you, this might not be the case for everyone attending your virtual meeting. It is helpful to identify yourself before speaking, especially if some participants are connected with audio-only. If the conferencing software permits, upload a profile picture that can be used when you are not using the camera; however, it is always preferable to keep your camera is on whenever possible. **Clearly identifying yourself in a virtual meeting is important.**

## Don't sneak away

If you are planning to leave a meeting early, tell the meeting facilitator in advance, and remind them at the time of your exit. If you must leave the meeting unexpectedly, let the facilitator know this as well. It might seem like it would be better to sign-off quietly, without disturbing anyone. Ironically the exact opposite is more often true, especially if you are asked a question or called upon to make a comment. **Making your presence and departure known is a foundation of virtual meeting etiquette. ■**



Put your business on the map and be part of the App by registering it on the Lac La Biche Region Business Directory at: [www.llbbusiness.com](http://www.llbbusiness.com)  
Download the phone App on iTunes or Google Play.  
Search "Lac La Biche Region."

Telephone contact: 780-623-2662

E-mail: [contact@cfllb.com](mailto:contact@cfllb.com)

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