

What's the Scoop?

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We're on the right track

We've all heard it said that meetings "are a waste of time" or "nothing ever gets accomplished", but in reality, this couldn't be further from the truth. This was proven at our last Business Breakfast 2.0 meeting held at Portage College.



Gene Wesley, General Manager, Community Futures Lac La Biche

On March 14th, approximately 40 people attended the most recent Business Breakfast 2.0! Even our Member of Parliament David Yurdiga was in there, as everyone networked and had another great meal catered by head Chef Bruce of Portage College. George L'Hereueux and Shawn McDonald of ROABA shared their vision about working with industry and local entrepreneur Jason King made it clear that he is serious about spurring the local economy, and agree to take a bold step to make some land available for industry. Just a hint: both hemp and vertical growing were discussed!

The only downside of this fantastic event is that we outgrew another room! But have no fear. Portage is upgrading us to a larger venue. We hope you will join us the next Business Breakfast on May 2nd. Watch your e-mail, follow Community Futures on Facebook or check-out Eventbrite to register your spot before that room sells out! ■



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Shawn McDonald



Shawn McDonald President of ROABA,
Owner of Black Scorpion Contracting Ltd.



Shawn McDonald's sincere passion for the Lac La Biche region and his work comes to the surface anytime he has an opportunity to speak.

Born and raised in Lac La Biche, Shawn became involved in the oil and gas industry immediately after finishing school. Beginning his career as a pipeline and construction labourer, he then went on to heavy equipment, and eventually plant operations.

In 1996, Shawn started his own company, Black Scorpion Contracting Ltd., and has employed more than 12 workers during peak times. Servicing the oil sands and oil and gas projects across the province, Black Scorpion offers winch and lowbed services, gravel trucks equipped for regular aggregate hauling, transportation of contaminated soil products, snow removal, and water truck services for dust control and winter freezing construction projects.

However, Shawn's leadership is more than that of being a successful business owner. This year will mark his 3rd year as president of the Region One Aboriginal Business Association (ROABA).

As one of ROABA's founding members, the organization now boasts more than 50 participants. Shawn's goal is to grow the membership of the organization beyond those involved in the

oil and gas sector, and suggests that ROABA could have 150 members someday. Shawn quickly points out that ROABA is open to everyone in the community as either a full or associate member. "ROABA has done some great work in the oil and gas sector, but like the rest of Alberta's economy, we need to diversify".

This past February, Shawn was instrumental in assembling the first and only Indigenous-led rally for energy resources. Despite the minus 38-degree temperature, the community showed up to demonstrate their support for pipelines and the oil and gas sector. It was McDonald's goal to show that the vast majority of Indigenous communities' support the industry, even if the few that don't sometimes get more media coverage. In that regard, his initiative proved to be more than successful, with provincial, national, and international media coverage; even the BBC called for an interview.

When asked about what the future might hold, what Shawn has to say is pretty straight forward. "We have an abundance of resources right here in our own backyard. Everyone in the region that is willing to work hard should be able to benefit from that." ■

LEMONADE DAY COMES TO THE COUNTY



Taking place on June 22, right across Northern Alberta, Lemonade Day is a fun, free, learning program that shows youth how to start and operate their own business. With the use of a lemonade stand, you are encouraged to become business leaders and productive members of the community. Each child participant receives a backpack with a workbook that demonstrates the creation of

a budget, setting business goals, customer service, repaying investors, and giving back to the community. In addition those participating will learn problem solving skills that will help to set them in the right direction for future success.

Adults play a critical role in the success of the program by becoming a volunteer mentor or partner. For more information about Lemonade Day or to register as either a participant or volunteer, please visit the website: <https://lemonadeday.org/northern-alberta/> or contact Community Futures Lac La Biche at 780-623-2662. ■

4Board Agreement to Promote Tourism and Economic Development

submitted by media release

What started as an opportunity to brainstorm and work together has turned into a true partnership to drive community growth. Lac La Biche County Council, Lac La Biche & District Chamber of Commerce, Region One Aboriginal Business Association and Community Futures Lac La Biche – who began meeting as “4Boards” in 2018 – are unified in the direction moving forward.

4Boards will be repurposed to support Lac La Biche County’s strategic goals in the form of an Economic and Tourism Development Advisory Committee. While not formalized yet, the committee is expected to include representatives from each of the four groups as well as other regional partners. The committee structure will be outlined in terms of reference, to be approved by County Council.

Up to this point, the role of 4Boards has been

to identify issues and barriers to growth, areas of excellence and improvement, and opportunities to collaborate. The Economic and Tourism Development Advisory Committee will continue this work, making official recommendations for Council as a whole to consider.

One of the committee’s first exercises will be to review the County’s existing Economic Development Strategy and update it for use as a guide to future decision-making. ■



OPEN FARM DAYS August 17th and 18th, 2019

Alberta Open Farm Days is about farms and ranches inviting their urban and rural neighbors to stop in for a visit to share stories, see demonstrations, and learn more about the farmers who grow their food. Community Futures has partnered with the Lac La Biche Agricultural Society and others to be a Regional Coordinator to encourage local participation in this amazing opportunity. You can also look forward to a local Culinary Event! If you are interested in being a host farm, partnering or participating in any way contact Community Futures Lac La Biche or visit: <https://albertafarmdays.ca/host-registration/> Workshops, resources and information will be provided. ■

NORTHEAST ALBERTA TO ESTABLISH AGRI-FOOD NETWORK

Community Futures offices across northeastern Alberta along with the support of Alberta HUB and Portage College have partnered to connect agri-food businesses and build up the resources available for existing and potential agri-food entrepreneurs in the Alberta Hub Region. The group was the recent recipient of a \$36,000 CARES grant from the province to assist with this initiative. The initiative will focus on the updating and completing the database at www.nafma.ca, development of tools such as an agri-food web portal, the creation of a stakeholder-driven strategic plan; facilitate networking among participants; and develop common goals while promoting the economic efficiencies of working together. For more information about this initiative, please contact Gene Wesley at Community Futures. ■

mark your CALENDAR



Start-up Drop-in

April 18, 2019 at Community Futures, 5:30 PM
(transforming ideas into business)



Business Breakfast 2.0

May 2, 2019 at Portage College
(sponsored by Community Futures)



6th Annual ROABA Golf Tournament

May 30, 2019



The Future Belongs to Youth Business Bazaar and Symposium

May 25, 2019 Bold Centre



Power Up North Conference

Oct. 23 & 24 2019

Community Futures And County Partner To Receive Community Capacity Generation Grant

As a successful recipient of the province's Community Generation Capacity Building grant, Community Futures Lac La Biche and Lac La Biche County will offer a series of community generation capacity workshops throughout the region. The Community Generation Capacity Building (CGCB) Program provides funding to community organizations for capacity building activities related to the development of Community Generation projects as defined by the Small-Scale Generation Regulation (SSGR). The program is delivered in partnership between Energy Efficiency Alberta and the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre. Community Futures and the County will

offer full-day workshops will provide a general overview of developing community generation capacity using wind, solar and biomass sources to supplement traditional energy distribution. The workshops will provide information and direction for attendees wishing to pursue a generation project. Target audiences will include small business, agri-business, regional government, and property owners. The workshops will also be marketed to Indigenous communities in the region. Watch for workshop details in the coming weeks. ■



YOUTH CONFERENCE TO TAKE PLACE AT BOLD CENTRE

May 25, 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM

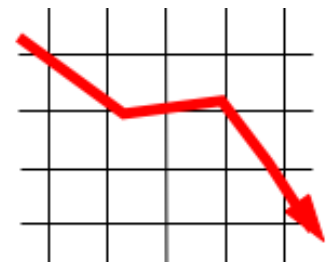
Plans are well underway for the inaugural youth conference at the Bold Centre on May 25, 2019. The Future Belongs to Youth Business Bazaar & Summit will feature a full day of activities, including morning keynotes and breakout sessions for registered youth, and a trade show open to the public in the afternoon featuring youth led businesses and local youth focussed organizations. Organizer Najiah Moghrabi from Community Futures is confident that the event will appeal to anyone between the ages of 17 and 30. Organizing partners, including Lac La Biche County, Portage College, and Conseil de Développement Économique de l'Alberta (CDÉA) as well as Community Futures Lac La Biche are designing this event to encourage more youth participating in business



throughout the region and to assist local young entrepreneurs already in business to grow and diversify. The event is free to attend, but youth attending the morning conference sessions will be required to register through Eventbrite. For more information, please contact Najiah Moghrabi at 780-623-2662 or e-mail her at cfprojects@cfllb.ca ■

Did you know...

In 2009 there were more than 520 businesses in the Lac La Biche region



In 2017 there were less than 380.

Source: Statistics Canada



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