

# What's the Scoop?

Your Best Source for Local Business News and Information | July 2019

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## What's the Scoop?

is published by Community Futures Lac la Biche. Please forward any comments, suggestions or story ideas by e-mail to [contact@cfllb.com](mailto:contact@cfllb.com) or call 780-623-2662.



The Lac La Biche Region has an undeniable entrepreneurial nature. Between June 1, 2014 and March 31 2019, Community Futures Lac La Biche lent \$14 Million to local clients. This amount has been distributed almost entirely to businesses that have diversified our local economy and would not be possible without the visionary people behind those loans, operating those businesses.

For many years our area has had more loans per person than any other region in Alberta. These investments in money, blood, sweat, and tears have added many untold spin-offs to our local economy. I can't imagine where we would be without them. Although Lac La Biche was and remains one of the hardest hit regions of the economic downturn, we are pleased to work with our local entrepreneurs to be the agents of change.

In response to the economic crash, our Lac La Biche office has focused our efforts on Community Economic Development in our back-yard, regionally and provincially. These efforts include providing targeted business training and coordinating our Rural Business Support Network and Open Farm Days 2019 locally, working throughout the Alberta Hub region on the Alberta Agri-food Network Project, and provincially by continuing to be part of the Hemp Alberta Northern Advantage (HANA) Steering Committee. Some of these projects will extend over several years, but our efforts are having positive effects right now.

The Power Up North Conference will be held once again in October 2019 and our efforts have been updated to make this a regional initiative. By working together and promoting our corner of Alberta all will benefit because we will raise the tide and float everyone up together. ■

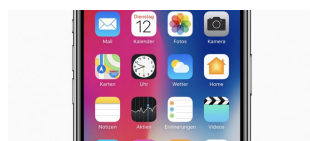


Gene Wesley, General Manager, Community Futures Lac La Biche

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# A1 Fitness and Wellness & A1 Meal Solutions - Targets Growing Niche Market

Gerry Webster received funding from Community Futures to set up his health supplement store, A1 Fitness and Wellness, in Lac La Biche. After a couple of years growth he received additional support to expand his business to include A1 Meal Solutions - a healthy alternative to purchasing meals.

Webster says it is important for entrepreneurs to ask themselves, "Am I mentally tough enough and willing to do whatever it takes to make my business a success?" He suggests that this question is crucial part of knowing whether or not you are ready to start a business. "You will be put to work like nothing you have done before, and you need to be strong and resilient in order to push through difficult times."



Webster says that besides providing start-up dollars, Community Futures ensured that his business plan made sense. "There are certain things you miss when you are new to starting

a business; things you never really think about. Sometimes things look good on paper but are they actually going to work?" Webster says that Community Futures provided him with the necessary structure for his venture and offered a sense of business viability prior to taking a risk. A1 employs a staff of four, and a client list that is growing consistently.

He sees no limit to the growth potential of his company and envisions that he will be providing 500 meals a week at some point in the future. ■

## OPEN FARM DAYS IS COMING TO LAC LA BICHE

Alberta Open Farm Days is about farmers and ranchers inviting their urban and rural neighbors to stop in for a visit to share stories, see demonstrations, and learn more about the farmers. As well, some of Alberta's most talented chefs and rural communities will be hosting a memorable series of farm to table culinary events that will be held around the province using Alberta farm products.

This year Community Futures is taking on the role of Regional Coordinator for Alberta Open Farm Days (OFD) 2019. This is a province-wide, rural Open House that takes place the weekend of August 17th and 18th.

The main goal of the event is to increase Agro-Tourism and introduce urban to rural. In our community we have 3 participants: A Bee Apiary, Animal Farm, and the Lac La Biche Agricultural Society. The Agricultural Society will be hosting 2 events: A Pre-OFD locally-sourced, multicultural Culinary Event in the Agricom during the Farmers Market, followed on Sunday by a showcase of local farms that are interesting in being hosts for Open Farm Days. The event will include live music, animals, local food trucks, and participation from local agricultural organizations. Those who are interested in attending can plan their trip on [www.AlbertaFarmDays.ca](http://www.AlbertaFarmDays.ca) ■

## GoForth Program Gives New Entrepreneurs a Head-Start

### Researching Your Customers

Gathering market research data is a crucial step in the business planning process. Market research is used to determine consumer opinions, industry trends and competitor stats. It is used to gauge consumer interest in new products and service offerings and to establish a list of prospective customers. There are a number of ways to go about collecting this data, and GoForth can introduce you to one key method that all start-up ventures should make use of - the Statistics Canada website <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/>

### Statistics Canada

Statistics Canada has key socioeconomic information for Canada and will help you find out average household spending per year on products and services like the one you'll be offering.

Step 1: Go to the Statistics Canada website.

Step 2: Enter the search terms for the data you're looking to find.

Step 3: Table descriptions can help you find the most appropriate data. For example, if you're interested in starting a travel agency, the table called "Tourism demand in Canada" will show you that travel agency services haven't really been growing over the past few quarters - have your customers spoken?

Step 4: You can tailor the data further by choosing the Add/remove reference period or Add/remove data links above the table. You can also choose Related information for further reading.

Need some help building small business skills? Most entrepreneurs don't have business skills when they start their business, and most fail. Don't be one of them. Sign up for training today. (from the GoForth website [www.goforthinstitute.com](http://www.goforthinstitute.com)) ■



The GoForth Institute is Canada's leading online small business training program for entrepreneurs. Through a subscription service, GoForth offers unlimited access and expert instruction on a variety of training modules that include, marketing, team building, and operations management to name a few.

GoForth is supported by Community Futures, Startup Canada, Economic Developers Association of Canada, Ontario's Starter Company Plus and ATB. ■



# Phone App will be All About the Lac La Biche Region

Survey after survey shows that the Lac La Biche Region is known for its incredible lakes and friendly people. As our official tag line says, we are "Welcoming by Nature." This also means that our residents are great hosts and quick to support anyone in need (think Fort MacMurray fires). Because of this, we have a large number of events supported by groups and committees that meet regularly. How can we keep track of all that?

Our Community Events Calendar on the **All about Lac La Biche Region APP** will be the best place to find everything that's happening in our community and more! You will see committee meetings, public events, and experiences for tourists all in one place.

Are you thinking about visiting the Lac La Biche region or are you here right now and want to find something fun to do? Are you planning something in our region next year? Keep a close eye on our APP to see what is going on.

Many entrepreneurs in our region have diversified their business to offer products and services that you may not know about. Because of this, the APP will include the first and only keyword searchable **LLB Business Directory** so that customers can easily find everything they need.

Need to do some shopping and want to get a great deal? Check our APP for **shop-local discounts and promotions**.

The **All about Lac La Biche Region APP** will be the "go to" place for community for initiatives such as "Customer Service," the "Experience Lac La Biche" initiatives and eventually include our Business Newsletter. Keep watch for these developments.

The **All About Lac La Biche App** will be released in the coming weeks. Stay tuned!

## mark your CALENDAR



### Secret to Success

Thurs. July 18 at Mo's Billiards  
10117-102 Ave. 5:30 PM  
(give your business a head start)



### Business Leaders Breakfast 2.0

July 11, 2019 7:30 AM **Lucky 15 Restaurant**  
(across from Home Hardware). Breakfast available for purchase.



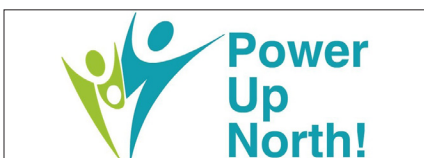
### Open Farm Days

August 17-18, 2019 (Culinary Event August 16th)



### World Archery 3D Championships

Sept 2-6, 2019



### Power Up North Conference

Oct. 8 & 9, 2019  
Portage College LLB Campus

# Community Futures Elects New Board Chair

Community Futures Lac La Biche is pleased to announce that Mr. Dave Phillips was elected Chair of the Community Futures Board at the annual general meeting held on June 19th, 2019. His community involvement, passion for the region, and business experience bring a unique set of qualities to this new role.



In addition to Community Futures, Mr. Phillips serves as a director with the Lac La Biche & District Chamber of Commerce, is vice chair of LLB Disabilities Services, board chair of the LLB Regional Attraction and Retention Society, and is an avid volunteer with countless other organizations in the region. He is a former Lac La Biche County Councillor and past president of the Lac La Biche Pow Wow and Fish Derby Association.

## Grant Writing Workshop Builds Regional Capacity

Attendees from Lac La Biche and surrounding communities participated in a grant writing workshop at the Community Futures office on June 11. Facilitator Brad Hestbak provided an overview of the grant writing process and encouraged all that attended to develop a grant writing toolbox to prepare them for the next grant opportunity. If you missed this session, be sure to take part in our next workshop taking place in the Fall.

Give your business a head start

# The Secret To Success



Small Business Success Package

## Secret to Success - Small Business Success Package

Community Futures is pleased to announce the launch of the "Secrets of Success – Small Business Success Package." This program is available to those already in business, new entrepreneurs, and those just thinking about starting a business.

For \$195, the program includes:

- 1 year of unlimited access to a the GoForth Institute small business video training library <https://www.goforthinstitute.com/>
- One-on-one business advice
- Office and meeting room space
- Business mentorship
- Monthly networking meetings
- Access to:
  - Marketing support
  - Referrals
  - And a variety of business resources offered by Community Futures

To Find out more, drop by **Mo's Billiards 10117-102 Ave.** on **Thursday, July 18, 2019 at 5:30.** Give your business a head start. ■

## Customer Services is Key to Your Success

Whether you are serving customers in a store or working in an office; whether you are just starting out in your career or you are the boss; whether you are selling a product, providing a services, or just offering advice to clients, visitors, or people you work with; customers who have a positive experience will increase business revenue, and enhance your reputation. ■

## Didja know?

There are nearly one million self-employed women that make up nearly on-third of Canada's self-employed entrepreneurs. Women are sole owners of 14% of Canadian small businesses. According to a 2005 study sponsored by CIBC, while 70% of businesses are started by men, start-ups led by women stay in business longer. ■