Wham, it Hit Me! The Many Forms of Professional Development

Submitted by Tracy Houser, Strategic Human Resources Assistant Director

Did you see the email about the ministry Workforce Environment Survey (WES) results? I saw it, skimmed it, and was about to file it when…wham, it hit me! This one felt different: I saw a commitment to professional development! My mind immediately went to the place of possibilities.

I am a lifelong learner. I am one of those people who never outgrew that “why?” question that two year olds repeat incessantly. I love to explore by jumping in and trying something new. I like to figure things out by tackling a challenge. I take courses, I find mentors, I read and I learn a lot by teaching others too. Sometimes I take a thoughtful, planned approach and sometimes it feels like “trial by fire.”

However, I realize that there are many learning preferences out there, and I thought it would be helpful to ask for other people’s perspectives.

And so I started conversations with my colleagues around the province. I had a million questions swirling around: “What are all the ways you have learned over this past year?” “What do you consider professional development?” “What is the difference between career development and professional development?” “How do you learn best?” “What do you perceive as the roadblocks to your learning and development?”

And what do you know… there was no single answer! I searched for definitions and discovered some helpful ideas from online dictionaries (see sidebar) – however it was employee perspectives that were most important to me.

I learned that some people value the opportunity to take a temporary assignment, some want online learning modules they can take when they fit into their schedules; others prefer face-to-face workshops and discussion. I heard about success with mentors, job shadows, lunch and learns, stretch assignments (a project or assignment that is outside your comfort zone), volunteer committee work and conference attendance.

If you have a professional designation, your professional development requirements to maintain that credential are often specific; if you are mid-career you may be looking to specialize, grow or change paths; if you are early in your career you may be looking for broader...
This edition of Road Runner, with its focus on professional development, falls into step with spring. Think new beginnings, new growth. There's an abundance of articles that I hope you find helpful in making choices which expand your knowledge, skills and experience. There are reviews of three courses and programs, written by people who have found the learnings beneficial, to provide you with information beyond that in course descriptions. Hear how the many forms of professional development enhance the lives of an assortment of employees. And, join Christina Klatt on her month in the West Kootenay District, as she finds that going away to learn, is a way to learn, which offers multiple rewards.

As public servants, most of us believe our work contributes positively to the lives of British Columbians. In this issue, there's a compelling, personal story by an employee who relied on ice bridges and ferries to travel from her childhood home. Linda-Lee Schell's article illustrates the dramatic difference that a ministry-built bridge has made for a community west of Prince George.

Interestingly, the story is accompanied by a photo of Linda-Lee, age 13, wearing an outfit that’s flecked with diamond shapes. While the photo is black and white, Linda-Lee recalls that her clothing, which she sewed herself, was orange and black.

Hmmm, diamond shapes…orange and black… An early sign that Linda-Lee was destined to work at the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure one day?

Nancy McLeod, Editor

### The RoadRunner is an employee newsletter, published four times a year, on the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure Internet site.

We welcome your story submissions. Email your article as a Word document (approx. 500 words maximum) and your high-resolution photographs as JPEGs to: RoadRunner@gov.bc.ca.

In the email for your story, please attach the Word document and graphics (photos, charts, etc.) separately. Please DO NOT embed graphics in the article — this compromises reproduction quality and the images may not be useable by our graphic artist. Photos supplied should be one megabyte.

For contributor guidelines, writing tips and upcoming deadlines, see Road Runner on TRAnnet.

Check out the Employee Advisory Forum website for regular updates: wwww.th.gov.bc.ca/EAF/home_intra.asp.

For @Work – the Public Service Community Website, visit: wwww.gov.bc.ca/

**Graphic design for Road Runner is provided by Kathy Macovichuk.**
Bringing Learning to Life: Employees Live the Corporate Learning Strategy
Submitted by Strategic Human Resources Team

Did You Know?
There is a corporate learning strategy called Developing the Best. There is some great information included about how learning is evolving and what we’re doing to meet the changing needs of our business and our people. Let’s have a look at a few key highlights from that document, and then how these principles are showing up here in our ministry.

Corporate Strategy
Learning, whether face-to-face, online or through informal means, plays a significant role in building your skills and capacity. In recent years, a number of factors have combined to change why and how we need to approach learning and development differently:

- smaller budgets
- reduced ability to travel to traditional classroom style courses
- increased operational obligations across many lines of business
- emerging workforce/demographic and workplace trends
- increasingly varied public service learning needs
- the need for greater flexibility and 24/7 access to learning
- ongoing business transformation
- new technology and social collaboration tools

As BC Public Service employees, how we learn, what we learn and why we learn are changing. A “one size fits all” approach just won’t work.

We believe there are seven key factors that support the development of a culture of learning:

1. Strong support from Executive.
2. Supervisors who empower their staff and promote learning.
3. Recognition that some of our most significant learning comes from careful risk taking and failure.
4. Employees who are personally motivated to learn in all types of settings – formal and informal.
5. Ongoing and strategic investment in resources training and tools.
6. Opportunities to take what you’ve learned and apply it.
7. Continuous feedback and coaching when needed.

What are we trying to do?
A Keep pace with the incredible amount of change
B Respond to the learning needs of employees in ways that go beyond traditional approaches
C Continue offering and building on new and existing learning opportunities
D Create and support a culture of learning that:
   - Recognizes and embraces a more dynamic and flexible approach
   - Integrates more informal learning, coaching, mentoring, job shadowing
   - Ensures access to communities of practice and subject matter collaboration
   - Offers timely, effective performance feedback

What’s Happening at Our Ministry?

Russel Lolacher is taking a multi-faceted approach to learning.

Who: Russel Lolacher, Director, Web and Social Media Group

What: Rotates a monthly learning focus

Nuggets to Share: I believe learning is not something that ends the minute you graduate. My own real thirst for knowledge developed in the last five years, leading me to be director of something that I never went to school for but have real world experience in. To keep current, I read books such as Youtility by Jay Baer and blogs like Social Media Examiner, take online courses (www.lynda.com), and enroll in university classes (e.g. screen writing at University of Victoria).

I have come to the point where there are so many things I want to learn, that I dedicate a month to one thing at a time, because otherwise it can be too overwhelming. Last month was intro to Internet coding (HTML and CSS), this month is InDesign, next month is photography and after that is German. I am flexible in that my monthly learning may bleed over into the next month, or I might decide I love something so much that it stays in the learning rotation.

More on Page 4…

Wham, it Hit Me!
The Many Forms of Professional Development

… Continued from Page 1

exposure; if you are late in your career you may be most interested in sharing your knowledge.

As the conversations unfold, my understanding of professional/career development is growing. Learning is so much more than just attending training or a course – it’s multifaceted and increasingly informal as much as formal, and it occurs on a daily basis.

“One’s mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.”

Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr.

Our curiosity will lead to new skills and understanding, expand our awareness and offer us new insights into the business we do and the people we work with – and this enables us to serve the citizens of B.C. with excellence.

So, now that we’ve explored types and benefits of professional development, and looked at peoples’ preferences, the next thing to do is learn what’s possible (see Learning What’s Possible, Page 5).
Mike Lorimer is seeking coaching to support his development.

Who: Mike Lorimer, Regional Director, Southern Interior Region

What: Engaging an executive coach

Nuggets to Share: I realize that professional development is different for everyone. Some people need structured models and theory. Personally, I am not a big fan of courses. I learn by doing and watching – but that’s just me.

My next step in my own professional development is asking for a 360 feedback assessment and engaging an executive coach.

Nick Nixon is building knowledge in a community of practice.

Who: Nick Nixon, HR Planner Internal Communications and Engagement

What: Participation in a community of practice

Nuggets to Share: I recently helped organize a government-wide conference for internal communications. We did a mix of virtual and face-to-face sessions. We had almost 100 attendees, lots of great feedback and all on a zero budget. There was what I took away from the conference sessions plus my experiences with organizing and coordinating the event – what a learning opportunity!

Kevin Baskin is expanding his approach to feedback.

Who: Kevin Baskin, Chief Bridge Engineer

What: Participated in EIT Mentoring Matters Day

Nuggets to Share: As an engineer, my career has been primarily focused on learning and development of “technical skills”. However, in recent years, I have had the opportunity to attend sessions related to leadership, supervision, mentoring and coaching. These have provided me with effective techniques and valuable insights that I have used, and that I have very much appreciated, in helping me to develop my “soft skills.” I have also picked up little tidbits along the way. A simple saying like “seek first to understand” is something that I use regularly when challenging issues arise. “Communication, communication, communication” is another one.

I recently participated in a mentoring session that was part of our ministry’s annual general meeting for engineers in training (aka EITs). There, I picked up on three simple coaching questions:

1. What’s working?
2. What’s tricky?
3. What would you do differently going forward?

I am finding this an effective way to approach a conversation, to explore an issue and to give feedback. This can either confirm what my employees and I already know or identify something that had not been considered before. It can provide other options to address challenges moving forward.

Professional development recharges my batteries; it keeps me energized and leaves me feeling renewed and refreshed. I am a huge advocate for professional development and will continue to be. People are always learning, it’s a part of who we are; I would hate to think what life would be like if it wasn’t that way.

Nancy Bain
Assistant Deputy Minister
Finance and Management Services Department

Kristin Vanderkuip
Registrar & Director
Passenger Transportation Branch
Transportation Policy and Programs Department

Claire Ingram
Project Analyst
Pacific Gateway Branch, Partnerships Department

Bringing Learning to Life: Employees Live the Corporate Learning Strategy... Continued from Page 3
Learning What’s Possible
Submitted by Tracy Houser, Strategic Human Resources Assistant Director

Right now, you may be pondering important questions like, “When is spring weather coming?” Or “Who will win the Stanley Cup?”

Here’s one more you might want to mull around a little: “My learning and development – it’s mine, and I would like something different… What’s possible?”

What inspires you? What do you need to feel supported to pursue learning through diverse formats, methods and streams? Are you looking for something that is personalized? Then here is your opportunity to consider what you need, weigh the options, make a case for it and make it happen – in other words, personalize your learning and development to make it work for you. You are the expert on you, so this means you are the most qualified person to make it happen. Don’t wait for someone else to step in – be your own hero.

So what is possible?

In having conversations with ministry colleagues, I discovered there are a few puzzlers out there – things that stump people when it comes to thinking about professional development. Here are a few of the questions they asked me…

• How do I find out what I need to develop my skills?
  – Having MyPerformance conversations with your supervisor is a valuable way to find out what you need to develop your skills.

• I heard that we can’t take training. Who do I ask to get permission? What else is there besides classroom courses? And is a complicated approval process required?
  – Read on, then talk to your supervisor.

• How can I find training that is available to me? Is there a website?
  – There are a number of ways to find the training that’s right for you; one way is through the Learning Centre.

• I don’t want to move up so why would I want professional development?

• There may be benefits to you and your work unit that don’t involve a promotion. Look at some of the quotes that appear throughout this edition, then have a conversation with your supervisor.

A Great Place to Start

A great place to start is asking yourself, and then your supervisor, a few questions. What are your strengths? What would you like to be doing more of? If you focused to develop yourself in one area, what would make the biggest difference? Consider both your immediate work and your long-term vision for your career.

Once you identify some areas for development, for example project management, then you can research what’s available. You might take a Learning Centre course, or ask experts to mentor you (Laura Silva is the Corporate Payment Systems guru and Dave Gaddes knows his way around Microsoft Project). You could take on a stretch assignment – a project or task beyond your comfort zone. (If you have ever put together a set of RFP documents, your first experience was likely a stretch).

Not sure what all the options are? Talk to your colleagues to find out what they have done, consider your own previous experience and how you learn best, and check in with your supervisor. Learning is not just in a classroom; it takes place everywhere. Have a look at the options below to see if any of these approaches might fit with your learning style.

So dream big, impactful learning. Think beyond the traditional methods. Join a community of practice, seek out a mentor (formally or informally), get yourself a coach, put your hand up to volunteer, or ask for an assignment that will stretch your skills and experience.

Flexible Delivery

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<tr>
<th>Learning Opportunity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch and Learn</td>
<td>A learn at lunch program is a training or information event, scheduled during the noon hour. It is usually less formal and less structured, offering employees the option to bring (and eat) their mid-day meal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Webinar</td>
<td>Short for web-based seminar, it is a presentation, lecture, workshop or seminar that is transmitted over the Internet using video conferencing software. A key feature of a webinar is the interactive elements – the ability to give, receive and discuss information.</td>
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Finding the Right Person

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<th>Learning Opportunity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mentorship</td>
<td>Mentorship is a personal developmental relationship in which a more experienced/knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced/knowledgeable person. However, true mentoring is more than just answering occasional questions or providing ad hoc help. It is about an ongoing relationship of learning, dialogue and challenge.</td>
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Learning What’s Possible … Continued from Page 5

Coaching

A coach can help you clarify what’s holding you back and implement your plan to move forward. Coaching is an active partnership that supports you in identifying and obtaining clarity on your goals and the supports you need to be successful at work. Coaching is available to all BC Public Service employees at every level. Coaching sessions are strictly confidential and can be held in person, over the phone or by webcam.

Job Shadowing

Job shadowing is a popular on-the-job learning, career development and leadership development opportunity. Job shadowing involves working with another employee who might have a different job, might have something to teach, or can help the person shadowing him or her to learn new aspects related to the job, organization, behaviours or competencies.

Put Your Hand Up

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<tr>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td>Volunteering to get involved with ministry or corporate activities can further develop communication, job and interpersonal skills (e.g. motivating others). It exposes you to a broader understanding of the ministry and improves job opportunities.</td>
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<td>Committee Work</td>
<td>Participating on a committee (a person or group of persons elected or appointed to perform some service or function) can expand your network or introduce you to new concepts and ways of strategic thinking – particularly when the committee work is outside your circle of daily interaction.</td>
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You May Not Know About

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<th>Learning Opportunity</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stretch Assignment</td>
<td>A stretch assignment is a project or task given to employees which is beyond their current knowledge or skills level, in order to “stretch” them developmentally.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community of Practice</td>
<td>A community of practice is a group of people who share an interest or concern about a common topic, and deepen their knowledge in this area through ongoing interaction and relationship-building in their group.</td>
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More Traditional Approach

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<th>Learning Opportunity</th>
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<td>Learning Centre</td>
<td>The Learning Centre is your one-stop shop for training and development in the BC Public Service. Learning, whether face-to-face or online, plays a significant role in building your skills and the capacity of the BC Public Service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>A conference is a meeting of people who “confer” about a topic. The benefits of attending professional conferences include: – New tools, technologies and processes – Best practices from the industry/field – Making new contacts – Training (on-site workshops) – Opportunities to share success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Appointment</td>
<td>A temporary appointment can be used to: • Fill a vacant position temporarily • Complete a project that has a set end date • Cover seasonal or relief work • Cover a new position that has been created in response to changing business requirements • Provide an opportunity for staff to gain new skills and experience</td>
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For more ideas on professional development check out the Employee Driving Engagement Guide

Back to the Joy of Learning

Kimberly Newton, Strategic Human Resources A/Manager

Does the idea of learning something new make you feel like a kid again?

My 18-month-old son Jeremy came to visit me at work one day in April, after a busy morning transitioning to a new daycare. He headed straight for my chair to get some work done – though he needed a little help climbing up. His typing speed was impressive and so was his joy in taking on a new challenge.

If I ever need a reminder that learning something new can be a wonderful adventure, he is it!

I don’t think Jeremy is quite up to writing the next workforce plan though, so I guess I’ll be doing that. Maybe when he’s finished preschool? 

Jeremy Newton is excited with the opportunity for learning.

Get Face(book) to Face(book) with us.

LIKE our ministry page at www.facebook.com/tranbc
Notes from My Learning – Building Strategic Alliances
Submitted by Nancy Newland, Manager of Property Acquisition

I love working as the Manager of Property Acquisition, in the Properties and Land Management Branch, because it’s a trusting team – we problem solve together every day.

Together, we provide expertise for the ministry’s property acquisition activity and its land inventory, which includes highway tenure. I’m a big proponent of teamwork and how important it is to share knowledge within teams.

When I learned that the Building Strategic Alliances workshop explored the topics of trust, teamwork and negotiations (also extremely helpful when dealing with other organizations or stakeholders) I knew it was something I’d be interested in. I had also heard that this workshop helps you recognize and inspire innovation, solve operational problems and improve communications.

So, together with branch director Svein Haugen, I enrolled in the two-day Building Strategic Alliances workshop, through the Learning Centre.

The workshop began with a discussion about trust – something everyone found extremely difficult to define, and yet so important within organizations. We shared our perspectives on the pace of change since 1970 and the level of trust during the same time period. We each spoke on the topic, then plotted our thoughts on a graph and compared them. We discovered that we all had similar ways of thinking when it comes to trust. Basically, the speed of change, and the complexity of that change, can have a dramatic impact on trust, and negatively affect our perceptions of and relationships with people and the organization. We had all felt these experiences before.

This really started the course with a bang. Back at work, Svein and I had an enlightened conversation about how we might help maintain the trust within our branch during times of change, by focussing on communicating more openly and frequently.

The facilitator had studied innovation within ancient civilizations and modern day organizations, and he provided compelling anecdotal stories and terrific examples throughout the workshop. In particular, I was drawn to the “Ladder of Cooperation.” It’s a diagram that illustrates the steps from the deepest levels of distrust to the strongest bonds of trust. It starts with combat, and goes upward through conflict, competition, compromise (neutral territory), cooperation, coordination and collaboration, to reach co-creation.

I believe that most of us have experienced interactions at every level on this ladder. Understanding the ladder helps us aim for the highest level – co-creation, where visions and values align and every organization wants to be. This resonated deeply with me, and has stuck with me since.

Other excellent information was provided, like how to create breakthrough value propositions. These are similar to mission statements, but include measureable components like quantity, quality and time. Such an exercise can help align your operational fit and values with the strategic direction, and enable your organization to be more successful. It was a major insight for me.

If you’re a senior leader or if you are in any way involved with strategic plans, strategic decision making or negotiations, I recommend looking into this incredibly beneficial workshop.

I believe it’s important to engage in professional development and continual learning and I can’t wait for my next opportunity with the Learning Centre – Fierce Conversations. It’s another course highly recommended to me by a colleague.

Submit your stories and photos to RoadRunner
If you want to submit articles, send your Word files and photos to: RoadRunner@gov.bc.ca.

To ensure the best quality possible, please email your photos as JPEGs and do not embed them in your article.

Please limit your article to 500 words or less.
Notes from My Learning – Supervisor Development Program

Submitted by Doreen McAllister, Supervisor-Commercial Transport Enforcement Officer

In my position, I carry out the commercial vehicle inspection work of a Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement (CVSE) officer, plus the administration and leadership aspects of being a supervisor.

I’ve been in CVSE for 15 years; as an inspector at the Golden inspection station for seven years, then becoming a supervisor in Fort Nelson for another seven years, before heading “south” to Fort St. John, last May. I like to think that I have a true open-door policy – I ripped up the tape from my Les Nessman-style work space and threw it in the garbage some time ago. (Les, a character on the 1970s television comedy, WKRP in Cincinnati, put masking tape on the floor around his desk to indicate where walls would be if he had an office, and required co-workers who approached him to knock on an imaginary door.)

While I have a supervisor role, I had never received any specific supervisor or leadership training at CVSE. I was involved as a district commissioner and camp advisor with Girl Guides Canada, which gave me a lot of supervisory experience, but I still had never had at-work or direct training. That’s why I sought out the Supervisor Development Certificate Program; I wanted to hone my supervisory skills and make sure I was leading in a productive and inspiring way – I don’t believe in guessing as an option.

Some of the courses and workshops within the Supervisor Development Certificate Program will definitely stretch and push your limits in terms of what you’re currently comfortable with. For example, I used to dread giving and receiving feedback. The program armed me with enough tools and resources to increase my comfort level and taught me to appreciate and admire the feedback process. You’re required to go through a 360 review (receiving feedback from colleagues at all levels) at the start of the program, and another at its conclusion. Last month, I completed my final 360 review with my performance coach.

I can’t stress how much I would recommend this program to all supervisors. From labour relations units that delve in-depth into responsibilities and fundamental components of employee relations, to performance management courses that cover planning, evaluation and reporting, I guarantee that you will find the learning to be beneficial, and you will have your own “aha!” moments.

Doreen McAllister re-enacts removing the “Les Nessman walls” from around her open work space.

Professional development matters to me because I can learn and grow to become more of a contributor to my business group, therefore to my region and overall to the ministry. It allows me opportunities to see and learn from others.

Deanna Ramsey
Regional Financial Officer
Northern Region
Highways Department

Supervisor Development Certificate Program

- A combination of face-to-face and online courses
- Must be completed over two years.
- About one to two hours weekly, needed to complete course work and informal learning activities, over two years.
- Performance coaching support is provided.
- Next intake deadlines are June 30 and Oct. 31.
Is School in Your Future? A Pacific Leaders Scholarship Might Be Too!
Submitted by Kimberly Newton, Strategic Human Resources A/Manager

Michelle Hilton is furthering her education and career.

Is there a certificate, diploma, degree or professional designation you’ve been considering? Maybe it’s not needed for your current job, but you can see how you would use it in your future career with the BC Public Service?

Well, you might be eligible for a Pacific Leaders Scholarship.

Michelle Hilton, currently an administrative assistant with the Transportation Policy and Programs Department and Strategic Human Resources Branch, is studying business administration at Camosun College with funding from Pacific Leaders. “I first heard of it from a co-worker, and then I researched it on MyHR,” explains Michelle. “It was easy to apply, though it does take some time and effort. It’s a bit like a job application.”

The Pacific Leaders Scholarships for Public Servants Program is designed to support the education and growth of BC Public Service employees. This scholarship helps talented and motivated BC Public servants advance their career goals by pursuing a formal program of study in areas related to the government’s priorities. Some examples of programs that have been funded through Pacific Leaders in this ministry include executive coaching, business administration, civil engineering, justice and geographic information systems.

“My education will open doors for me in the future, and allow me to further my career within the BC Public Service,” Michelle adds. “It will also provide applicable skills that I can use on a daily basis.”

What you need to know

- Although the applications are considered by the BC Public Service Agency, the scholarships are paid for by the ministry. That’s one of the reasons you need your supervisor’s or director’s approval to apply.
- If you receive scholarship funding, you commit to a “return of service.” For every 12-month period of scholarship funding, you agree to continue working in the BC Public Service for a specified time period in return.
- The scholarship runs for one 12-month period. After that, you need to reapply for further funding.
- If approved, you will pay for your tuition and books, then submit detailed receipts to the ministry for reimbursement up to the allowable maximum.

The next application deadline is May 31. Find out more by visiting Pacific Leaders Scholarships.

Notes from My Learning – Coaching Approach to Conversations
Submitted by Kirk Rockerbie, Road/Rail Policy Manager and Rail Registrar

The Coaching Approach to Conversations course goes through the basics of the coaching approach, in supervision and in life. It supports conversations that help enhance engagement with employees and, in turn, improve performance.

I took this course as part of the Supervisor Development Certificate program, and coaching is something I support in theory and in practice.

I’ve been in government for 30 years (five years in Saskatchewan and 25 in B.C.), and have come to learn something about being a manager; you will always have two job descriptions. One job description goes through your daily duties and accountabilities that you are expected to perform. But there is a second job description – an implicit one that involves the in-depth elements of leading people. Taking courses like Coaching Approach to Conversations really helps me fill my toolbox, to be successful with that second job description.

What resonated for me about this course was the topic of asking challenging questions. I believe that asking important questions is critical to properly understanding people, especially those that you supervise. I don’t want to presume that I know how to lead each different and unique person; asking those questions can help with that. People are not “one size fits all.”

The course had a role-playing component where one person acted as a supervisor and the other as an employee. This learning technique enabled me to sit down in a structured environment and learn through doing (and by watching others).

I also acquired more techniques for speaking in a supportive and non-confrontational way. A lot of it is how you approach a situation; taking that supportive approach can really open up dialogue and contribute to a respectful environment.

My advice to others about professional development?

If anything that I’ve said resonates with you, take this course. Even if it didn’t, take a look at the number of learning opportunities that you have available to you.

Commit to learning, it’s worth it.

I want to continue to learn, to grow and develop, so that I can continually provide better service. If I stop learning, I become mush – you have to keep pushing yourself to learn.

Greg Gilks
A/Assistant Deputy Minister
Transportation Policy and Programs Department

Coaching skills are valuable, because people are not “one size fits all,” says Kirk Rockerbie.
Adapting to a New Act: 10 Years of Passenger Transportation Legislation
Submitted by Jan Broocke, Passenger Transportation Board Director

Imagine...you leave your office on Friday night and come back on Monday to the same office, same friendly faces but an entirely new name, legislation and mandate. That is exactly what happened to folks at the Passenger Transportation Board (PT Board) and Passenger Transportation Branch (PT Branch) 10 years ago.

On June 24, 2004, we left work as part of either the Motor Carrier Commission or Motor Carrier Branch and on June 27, 2004, returned as members of the PT Board or PT Branch. A curtain went down on our "old" work life and arose on our "new" work life.

And our "old" life was really old – the Motor Carrier Act dated back to 1939! The Motor Carrier Commission had been around since 1973. It was a surreal experience 10 years ago, when all our business practices changed. The PT Branch and the PT Board had new responsibilities and legislation, and these were our guides for establishing a new understanding for our employees, licensees and the public. Everything had to be recreated or be developed from scratch – policies and procedures, templates, database systems, licences, websites, stationary...the list seemed never-ending!

A key to the successful transition from one act (motor carrier) to another (passenger transportation) was the cooperation and professionalism of PT Board and PT Branch staff. Ten years later – jointly or separately – we are still responding to legislation that keeps us on our toes.

PT Board and PT Branch – Together for Passenger Services and Safety

Nowadays, commercial passenger vehicles are licensed and regulated in the province under the B.C. Passenger Transportation Act and Passenger Transportation Regulation and the Motor Vehicle Transport Act, 1987 (Canada). The PT Branch and the PT Board are separate entities with distinct responsibilities. However, we work closely and distinguish ourselves as the PT Board and PT Branch to eliminate confusion – otherwise, we would both have the acronym PTB!

The PT Board and PT Branch were featured in the social media world, last year, in a blog posted on TranBC. What we do is spelled out here tranc.ca/2013/07/03/a-closer-look-at-commercial-passenger-transportation-licensing/

A decade after the big change in name and legislation, it’s a good time to look back and celebrate the achievements of the PT Board, and let our ministry colleagues know more about what we do.

Next issue of Road Runner will feature the PT Branch staff and highlight their role in ensuring larger buses, plus the vehicles approved for licensing by the PT Board, are safe for people who hop aboard for a ride or tour anywhere in B.C.

Passenger Transportation Board

What is the PT Board? In short, it’s an independent tribunal that makes decisions on applications from taxi, limousine, small shuttle and inter-city bus companies, to provide services to the public. Board decisions affect people’s daily lives. Many people rely on taxi service to get them to doctor’s appointments, the grocery store or home from a party. Inter-city bus service allows people to travel from one city to another, in or outside of B.C. However, you’ve ordered a limousine for a special occasion? If it seats 11 passengers or less, the board has approved that company.

There are five board members (including the chair) who are appointed by Cabinet and work part time. The current chair is Don Zurowski. Bill Bell, Brenda Brown, Spencer Mikituk and Roger Leclerc are board members. Board bios are available at: www.ptboard.bc.ca/members.htm

The board is supported by four staff – Director Jan Broocke; Manager, Communications and Policy Michael McGee; Appeal and Operations Coordinator David Watling; and Research and Administrative Coordinator Kathy Mitten. We work in Victoria in the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure’s headquarters building; however, we’re on the second floor to maintain a sense of tribunal independence.

The PT Board is a small, productive organization. We process between 150-200 applications a year. Applicants must submit information that demonstrates to the board that there is a public need for the transportation service they want to provide, that they are “fit and proper and capable” of providing the service and that approval of the application will “promote sound economic conditions” in the transportation industry in B.C. (This is known as “economic regulation”.) Board members review the materials provided and write decisions. Most decisions are based on written...
In addition to making decisions, the board undertakes a number of policy projects. In our “formative” years, we concentrated on policies and procedures for our new responsibilities as well as “converting” almost 500 motor carrier licences into passenger transportation licences. That was a busy time!

Peak Period Taxis an Innovation

Board decisions can result in innovative service changes. For example, in Victoria and Vancouver, there are now peak period taxis to address increased service demands on weekends and holidays. Limousines in the Lower Mainland and the Greater Victoria area now can set their own rates within a minimum/maximum rate band, rather than having to apply for every single rate change.

In 2009, our focus was on transportation services during the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. The board relaxed boundaries for taxi operators so that people could move freely within the Greater Vancouver Regional District during the winter Olympics.

In 2012, the board published a report on Wheelchair Accessible Transportation by Taxi and Inter-city Bus in British Columbia. Since the report was published, taxi associations in the Lower Mainland have worked with disability groups to establish training programs for their drivers.

The Justice Institute of B.C. is in the process of changing its TaxiHost program to enhance the sections on transporting people with disabilities. This is great because while doing the report, we heard that driver training was a concern to many users of accessible taxis.

Putting it into Plain Language

In 2012, we also changed our website and application materials. The changes make it easier for applicants to get information they need for the type of application they are making. We adopted a plain-language approach to our written work.

On April 16, the board published a Taxi Standards Project Report. This document was compiled after consultations with taxi companies as well as some dispatch systems companies. The report encourages companies to enhance data collection about their services and fleet utilization (e.g. number of trips per vehicle per day; number of vehicles on per shift). Keeping this information will help companies to provide the board with relevant and reliable data, when they are applying for more taxis, and assist them in their business operations.

The PT Board and PT Branch have accomplished a lot in the last 10 years and we are sure we will see significant changes in the next 10 years. What could these be? Taxis dispatched through mobile apps? This is happening. More accessible transportation services? Yes, our population is aging. Demand for more fuel efficient vehicles? Definitely, if gas prices continue to rise…

Exciting times are ahead. As always, we are ready for new plot twists in our play!!

Adapting to a New Act: 10 Years of Passenger Transportation Legislation

… Continued from Page 10

The PT Branch and the PT Board work together for safety and service in B.C.’s commercial passenger transportation sector. See the upcoming August 2014 Road Runner for more about the PT Branch’s role.
DID YOU KNOW?

Facts About Pay and Benefits – Career Counselling
Submitted by Tracy Everitt, EAF Member

Ready to take your career to the next level but not sure what that might look like? Working with a career counsellor can help you identify and articulate your skills, aptitudes, values, personality traits and interests as they relate to a career choice, and undertake career planning that fits your goals.

This service is available to everyone, including all auxiliary employees. Dependant family members who normally live with an employee may also use this service.

The service includes a needs assessment conducted by a professional who will determine the number of sessions you may receive — there is no maximum limit assigned.

I accessed this service to help me recognize my skills and develop a learning plan. Professional and career development is very important to me, and I wanted to excel in my position as a business application administrator, but I needed direction on how to advance. This was a great way to get started that provided me with personal insights, tools and resources.

Here are some questions that may help identify if you might benefit from career counselling:

* Dealing with career-related problems or conflicts?
* Concerned about starting a new job?
* Struggling to manage your time effectively?
* Want to advance your career?
* Do you have career questions that you just can’t find an answer to?

If you answered yes to any of those questions, then career counselling may be just what you’re looking for.

For more information, about career counselling, e-courses, retirement planning or other topics, call 1-800-655-5004 or check out Career Matters on MyHR.

Career counselling helped Tracy Everitt develop a learning plan to advance her career.

Learning by Doing – Presenting to Executive
Submitted by Lyndsay Molcan, EAF Vice Chair

One of my biggest fears is public speaking. I don’t think I stand alone here. When I was asked to take on the role of the Employee Advisory Forum (EAF) vice chair, all I could think of was, “This means public speaking!” Once I got past that, I realized the position was the perfect opportunity to challenge myself and develop new skills.

The EAF leadership team meets with Executive annually to update them on new developments, show them what we have accomplished, and canvass input on areas of focus for the next year.

This time around, Michael Dinney, Leanne Helkenberg and I were tasked with pulling together a presentation that would not only cover the usual updates, but also provide Executive with an overview of the new EAF structure.

We had a lot of material to cover and only one and a half hours (including time for questions). This meant that we had to be very strategic about our presentation. Utilizing a series of PowerPoint slides, we divided up the content so we could each be well-versed in a few areas of focus. We conducted a dry run and provided each other with constructive feedback. Not only did this experience instill confidence, but it helped us to improve our messaging and practice answering questions.

After we delivered our presentation to Executive, we took the time to reflect on how we could improve next time around. Here are some of our lessons learned:

* Visuals are critical. PowerPoint and Prezi are great tools for organizing your presentations. Keep text to a minimum and include lots of visuals to get your point across.
* Prepare speaking points ahead of time.
* Conduct a dry run at least a day ahead of time. I recommend doing this with people that are unfamiliar with your topic, so you can practice answering questions.
* Remember your audience. In our case, we had to assume that Executive would be asking strategic questions, probing for concrete examples of improvement.
* Remember to leave time for questions.
* Wait until the end of your presentation to provide printouts. This way your audience isn’t distracted, and reading ahead.
* Keep a water bottle close by.
* Dress professionally. (No, that’s not the three-piece suit you wore to your brother’s wedding!) Think business casual.
* Speak slowly and don’t forget to breathe.

By the end of our presentation to Executive, we could confidently say that we touched upon all pertinent points and collected constructive feedback that would help us moving forward. Taking the time to reflect on the outcome of our presentation was a big enhancement to my own personal career development. I can positively say that I am more confident about public speaking today than I was before having this opportunity to go before Executive.

Lyndsay Molcan puts her public speaking skills on display.
Beverly van Druten-Blais – Graphics Specialist
Submitted by Corinne Ellermann, EAF Member

For the last 12 years, Beverly van Druten-Blais has been making us all look good.

As a graphics specialist working out of HQ in Victoria, Beverly manages the graphics studio and provides graphic design services to any and all ministry business units. This includes designing and formatting reports, manuals, signage, maps, presentations, video and photography, web design and forms. She enjoys the daily challenges of a variety of projects, while meeting and working with many different people. Her ultimate reward: the satisfaction of completing a timely, efficient and successful project and the appreciation of the many clients she helps.

Beverly is a career graphic designer, getting her start in various print shops and design studios after completing the Kootenay School of Art’s Commercial Arts Program (with honours). This is the career path she always wanted to take, and one of the positive decisions she made career-wise was moving from the private to public sector in 2002. She has found that the management and her clients at our ministry are very gracious, appreciative and supportive; more so than she experienced in the private sector.

Her penchant for detailed analysis, strong organizational skills and love of creativity are what first drew her to this line of work. To those who may be considering pursuing a career as a graphics specialist, she recommends attending a reputable art school, education and training in professional graphic design software, as well as practical experience. Skills and expertise in basic design, project management and typography are a must for hopeful applicants. She credits starting out in a print shop in the pre-computer age with developing an understanding of the processes and techniques of the industry.

The graphic design industry is ever evolving, and staying on top of the current design trends, software and technology is required to be successful in this position. Other professional development skill sets Beverly has gained to advance her career include videography and photography. She believes in a holistic approach to professional development and likes expanding her skills through any means at her disposal. Beverly enjoys conversing and learning from others, and credits much of her knowledge and industry success from taking opportunities to do so.

Carl Lutz – District Manager
Submitted by Nando Di Lorenzo, EAF Member

Carl Lutz is the district manager of the Bulkley-Stikine District. He joined the ministry after working for more than a decade in the private sector. Carl was offered a terrific opportunity to start his career in the ministry as a bridge area manager assistant, in the Lower Mainland. After several years, Carl had the chance to act as an operations manager in the Bulkley-Stikine District.

Carl feels that his current position is incredibly rewarding, because he gets to solve problems and consistently develops new skills. When asked what three actions Carl took, that helped him move into his current position, he answered:

1) The decision to move to a new area of the province
2) His willingness to take on new challenges
3) His desire to build and create new relationships

For those wishing to pursue a similar role to Carl’s, he recommends taking advantage of professional development options within the ministry where they are available. That can mean taking on temporary positions, additional assignments or different roles. Make those changes and set some goals for yourself, and you may find that incredibly valuable, he says. New opportunities not only provide you with tangible learnings, they give you a better sense of the overall direction and objectives of the ministry, by enabling you to see and experience things from other perspectives.

Carl truly enjoys working in a team environment and is a huge advocate for ongoing learning. In fact, you can frequently find him encouraging staff to pursue mentoring and other professional development paths. He believes that ongoing learning is crucial to advancement and opening new doors.

Working for the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, in his current role as a district manager, is extremely satisfying to Carl. The positive difference we make every day in this ministry is something he is very proud of.
Ernie Krause – Area Vehicle Inspector
Submitted by David Retzer, EAF Member

Ernie Krause started with the ministry in 2005, after a long career as a mechanic in the automotive industry. He brought 19 years of expertise to his current position at Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement (CVSE), 17 of which were gained at General Motors in the Lower Mainland.

For the first two years of his career in the ministry, he worked at the inspection station in Golden. This was a fast-paced position and Ernie spent his days working with commercial vehicles primarily headed to and from Alberta. In 2007, he became an area vehicle inspector (AVI) in Golden, and in 2009, Ernie moved to Cranbrook to continue his career as an AVI, the position he holds to this day.

Ernie began his ministry journey unexpectedly when he met a CVSE employee at a social event. He was enticed by this line of work, and subsequently applied and won a posting at the Golden Station. He didn’t see himself in this current line of work while in his previous career, but is thankful for the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of British Columbians.

During his time as an AVI, Ernie has enjoyed the flexibility and variety of his work. He sees evidence that he is making a positive impact on the travelling public, by ensuring the safe operation of commercial vehicles. He has always believed in staying true to his values and being open to change. These personal values are evident in Ernie’s commitment to stay up to date on legislation and advancements in commercial vehicle technology. This enables him to make informed decisions on enforcement as it relates to public safety.

Ernie Krause stays on top of legislative and technological developments related to his work.

Leeah Tappert – District Operations Technician
Submitted by Svein Haugen, EAF Member

Leeah Tappert has been at the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure for three years and is keen about career opportunities in our organization.

Her current position, district operations technician, is her first-full time employment after completing her education at Simon Fraser University, in 2011. She joined the ministry through the Technical Entry Level Program.

Leeah, originally from the Lower Mainland, was assigned to the Cariboo District office in Williams Lake. A move was required, but she was incredibly happy about the assignment as Leeah has relatives in the community and is familiar with the area.

Leeah obtained her bachelor of arts in geography while in university. The program involved multiple co-op terms which allowed her to develop the skills she uses in her current role.

The professional growth and career opportunities she sees in this ministry are extremely exciting for Leeah. During school, she had no idea what she would end up doing and where; her career path was never pointing in the exact direction of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, yet she is incredibly thankful she ended up here. She views her coworkers as an extended family and enjoys interacting with them every day.

Leeah Tappert is known for soaking up new knowledge and experiences.

Leeah believes strongly in the power of mentorship. And, even though her time at the ministry has been fairly short, she already finds herself taking opportunities to mentor colleagues around the office. With retirements and other personnel movements in the district occurring, staff are helping each other out and recognizing the importance of professional development more than ever. An opportunity to fill in as the roads area manager for the last three months of 2013 provided Leeah with terrific experience and professional learning.

Leeah believes that learning is an exceptionally important aspect to personal and professional development. She recommends that people volunteer for new challenges and seek information wherever possible to broaden their horizons and expand their learning. With Leeah’s thirst for knowledge and experience, it’s no wonder her colleagues have nicknamed her “the sponge.”

Ongoing professional development is integral to maintaining cutting-edge knowledge. But professional development isn’t all about enhancing the technical side, there are softer skills that we all need to grow and advance.

Norm Parkes
Executive Director
Highways Department

Click here for more information about the Learning Centre
Renee Mounteney – District Manager
Submitted by Tracy Houser, Strategic Human Resources A/Assistant Director

Renee Mounteney, district manager of the Vancouver Island District and EAF chair, has had an adventurous career path with lots of interesting journeys and learning opportunities along the way.

Renee’s career has progressed from office assistant, to financial clerk, human resources technician, office manager, district services manager, manager of financial services, operations manager, executive director, and now to district manager.

She has worked in both the Highways Department and the Infrastructure Department. Locations have included Kamloops, Nelson, Dawson Creek/Fort St. John and Victoria (among other places). Renee has worked for regional offices, district offices and in HQ. However, she hasn’t always been with Transportation and Infrastructure; her work experience also includes the Ministry of Forests, BC Parks and Ministry of Children and Families.

As district manager in the Vancouver Island District, working out of offices in Nanaimo, Courtney and Saanich, Renee travels anywhere within Vancouver Island that requires her attention, and loves the varied work and interesting situations her job presents. From formulating strategic vision and leading her team on work and stakeholders to address concerns, to the instant gratification she gets from resolving issues, Renee finds value in improving our transportation network. She (and others from within and outside the ministry) describes our organization as a “can-do” ministry and, she understands how those words effectively describe the culture and operations here.

This is not the career path Renee expected. “I started off as a computer programmer...way back when,” she says. However, she feels that once she took control of her development, there were three steps that turned out to be the most important to her career so far:

1. Sought career counselling
2. Completed her master’s degree in business administration (at Athabasca University)
3. Made herself available to live anywhere in the province in pursuit of her goals.

She recommends demonstrating a commitment to continuous learning. Although she is not currently working on advancing her education, she is always open to learning opportunities.

Rianne Sarginson – Permit Centre Clerk
Submitted by Susan Kwan, EAF member

Rianne Sarginson is a permit centre clerk at the Provincial Permit Centre, in Dawson Creek.

While growing up in Dawson Creek, Rianne had a general idea of the direction she wanted for her career path and knew that it had to include job security, and diverse responsibilities to keep things interesting and provide her with learning opportunities. As a result, she applied for the permit centre clerk position as it presents a number of professional development prospects and enables her to have a solid work/life balance.

Rianne has her high school diploma and has attended college courses. She is currently taking a number of BC Public Service-offered supervisor and leadership courses, and in the future, would like to utilize the Pacific Leaders Scholarship program to enrol in a business administration program. Rianne strongly believes in ongoing learning and professional development – especially mentoring. She thinks that taking supervisor and leadership courses, and mentoring and training new employees have been huge steps to developing herself and her career.

Achieving success at the Provincial Permit Centre requires excellent customer service and conflict resolution skills, Rianne says.

Rianne recommends training and education to acquire high-level customer service and conflict resolution skills, if you want to enter into a position similar to her current one. Having call centre experience is also an asset, as the permit centre receives a high volume of calls. Basic computer skills and typing proficiency would be a huge benefit. Most importantly, you have to be a problem solver who enjoys helping and interacting with other people – the parts of her job that Rianne loves.
Susan Kwan – Senior Revenue Officer
Submitted by Rianne Sarginson, EAF Member

Job shadowing and ongoing learning have helped Susan Kwan succeed in finance.

As a senior revenue officer with the Finance and Management Services Department, Susan Kwan oversees and administers credit accounts for commercial transport clients who obtain overweight and oversize vehicle permits. She also ensures that client information is up to date in other program databases and record systems that are used by the Provincial Permit Centre, Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement and ICBC.

A recent graduate from the commerce program at the University of Victoria, Susan began her career in the BC Public Service by joining the Financial Management Branch, in January of 2011, as an accounts payable clerk. In February 2012, she applied for the posting and won. Soon after, the position was reclassified to senior revenue officer. The role captivated her interest because of its direct relevance to her education and because it offers opportunities for advancement and delivers a diverse range of responsibilities.

Susan says that dealing with internal and external stakeholders is a rewarding and challenging aspect of her job. She also greatly enjoys testing new systems, like the online payment service that was announced in January, and offering advice to enhance customer service and system usability.

Her position has a number of major impacts on business delivery. She finds that the trust that her co-workers and external parties have in her, to keep the database and systems up to date and answer questions about the Inspection Station credit accounts, is incredibly satisfying and impactful.

Susan believes strongly in the power of learning – both formally and informally. She identifies studying in the commerce program at UVic and ongoing learning as the most important steps in her career. Currently, she is studying accounting at Camosun College, in order to obtain a chartered professional accountant designation.

For those interested in pursuing a role similar to Susan’s, she recommends developing excellent people skills and harnessing a solid basic understanding of finance. Susan takes any opportunity to volunteer (as proven by being a proud EAF member), network and job shadow that she can, and recommends the same for others. Susan often job shadows her colleagues to help her map out the next steps in her career and plan for her future.

Tracy Houser – Strategic Human Resources Assistant Director
Submitted by Tracy Everitt, EAF Member

“The possibilities are endless,” is a favourite work-related expression and words to live by for Tracy Houser, assistant director of the Strategic Human Resources Branch.

Tracy has an incredibly diverse and interesting background, culminating in her current position here at the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. Prior to joining the BC Public Service in 2007, she was a consultant, worked for both private industry and non-profit organizations, and was involved in education including university teaching, curriculum design, program development and adult learning. Tracy began her ministry career in the project management stream. She then seized the opportunity to facilitate during a supervisor conference and soon after that carried her project management, business development, communications and people skills into strategic human resources.

On the surface, her current position may not appear to align with her initial career path, which was contemporary dance-theatre performance and choreography. However, she can easily look back and connect the dots. While in the arts field and beyond, she expanded her journey to include advanced education, grant writing and business proposals, project and program management (including productions), leadership development, marketing and communications, stakeholder engagement, human resources, mentoring and coaching.

She realizes that her place today is a culmination of the entire sum of her experiences. Speaking at the World Education Market in Portugal, performing on stage in Toronto, publishing articles, facilitating bilingual dialogue and building a three-tiered leadership program have all been important building blocks.

Tracy is passionate about her current role with our ministry. The variety of projects she works on, the opportunity to interact with a number of people across the ministry and government, the strategic approach to new programming, and having the ability to be creative, collaborative and take a coaching approach to everything she does, are just some of the reasons why she loves her job. She says her role gives her the ability to inspire other people – something she finds extremely rewarding.

More on Page 17…

Where could your skills take you? Tracy Houser keeps adding to her skill set and it takes her to new places.
Tracy Houser – Strategic Human Resources Assistant Director

… Continued from Page 16

Tracy has a master of fine arts degree, a graduate certificate in executive coaching, a certificate in mentoring and has pursued management and project management training. Recently she completed her level one and two certification for the Strength Deployment Inventory, a program to help people at all organizational levels enhance their relationships and manage conflict.

Tracy believes in four keys to career development:

1. Transfer your skills – your title or position does not define you
2. Face your fear – have the courage to try new things
3. See the possibilities – a positive attitude goes a long way
4. Learn, learn, learn – grow your skills in a way that works for you (Tracy’s master’s degree in fine arts taught her research, communication and leadership skills).

Tracy has mentored others and has been mentored, and volunteers to get involved with committees or in projects which expand her understanding of the “bigger picture.” She says that this provides great opportunities to see how other areas of the ministry impact and influence what she does in her role.

When thinking about your career path, consider Tracy’s perspective that “the possibilities are endless” and then ask yourself, “What is it time for?”

Team Don’t Rain on Our Parade: LEANing Special Events Permitting

Submitted by Megan Cullinane and and Desiree Lantenhammer, Development Approvals Technicians

From parades to film sets, cattle drives to long-distance bike rides, special events permitting is as diverse as one could imagine.

So when the LEAN team met in Victoria to dissect our special events permitting process, the challenge was more than any of us had anticipated. With an ever-increasing demand to hold events on our highways (416 applications were received in 2013, resulting in 380 events approved), the team knew the task at hand was critical to continue providing consistent service to applicants while upholding a safe and efficient transportation network for the travelling public.

What is a special event? Any temporary activity, other than the usual vehicular movements, taking place within or near provincial road rights of way that may affect motorists or pedestrians, may be called a special event. This can be as simple as a single person walking across B.C. to raise money for a cause, or as complex as an international bike race involving thousands of cyclists and extensive road closures. Sometimes there are movie sets, fast cars, pyrotechnics and hundreds of logistical details. And sometimes, there are cows.

The first order of business for our group was to decide on a team name. Team “Don’t Rain on Our Parade” was an easy fit, as it perfectly embodied both the task at hand and the cheery attitudes of the team members.

The biggest challenge the team faced was outlining a single process, to handle the diverse applications we receive.

We decided to use the scenario of a large-scale athletic event which would capture a “worst case scenario” timeline and require extensive work. Through the exhaustive course of dissecting, analyzing, brainstorming, and attacking the scenario from every angle, the team came out the other side with a few extra grey hairs and an extensive list of tasks and ideas to improve the process.

The most prominent deficiency in our current process seems to be the lack of consistency and province-wide guidelines (i.e. traffic management plans, insurance, etc.). Although a GranFondo cycling event from Vancouver to Whistler is very different from a parade in Falkland, the process of approval and permitting should be the same – minus a few steps, of course for smaller scale events. With standardized guidelines, everyone throughout the province will know exactly what insurance is required and where events need to be advertised, and have a common understanding of requirements and accountabilities in the process. (Just to address a few of the current uncertainties.)

Team “Don’t Rain on Our Parade” has committed to working through our action items and communicating with the broader development approvals team, with clear process direction and improved training materials, over the coming months.

“Don’t Rain on Our Parade” is developing a permitting process to cover a wide range of special event applications: Lean Facilitator Maneesh Chandan (Fujitsu Canada) with ministry employees Josh Rossiter, Jason Pallan, Colin Coulter, Desiree Lantenhammer, Holly Adems and Megan Cullinane.
From Coop to Castle – New CVSE Digs
Submitted by Kristen Spearman, Project Management Technician and Greg Kinnear, Road Area Manager

Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement (CVSE) and Rocky Mountain and West Kootenay District staff came together on Feb. 11, to celebrate the grand opening of the new Castlegar vehicle inspection station. The previous building, lovingly referred to as “the chicken coop,” is off to greener pastures while the new building, the “Castle of Castlegar,” was placed into service on Dec. 15.

The replacement building was brought over from the now-retired Port Mann West scale and is a welcome upgrade for the CVSE staffers in the Kootenays. This station sees a significant amount of truck traffic, as it is the main weigh scale between Castlegar and Yahk, in the West Kootenay District.

During a typical blitz, as many as six officers can be on site at one time. Not only does the new facility provide enough space for CVSE inspectors, but it improves their ability to see all the axles on trucks as they move onto the scale. The new field office will allow them to carry out effective road safety programs, provide excellent customer service and support high quality enforcement activities.

The successful replacement of the Castlegar weigh scale building is the result of cooperation and partnership between facilities at HQ, CVSE, West Kootenay District, Rocky Mountain District and the Southern Interior Regional staff.

For more information on how your safety is enhanced by our CVSE officers, visit www.cvse.ca.

Peace Checks Out Transports of Dangerous Goods
Submitted by Darren Anderson, Commercial Transport Inspector

A road check focused on commercial vehicles hauling dangerous goods was held in the Peace District by Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement, Jan. 21 to 23. This part of the province has a large number of trucks that transport dangerous goods and hazardous waste on our highways, so we believed it was important to focus on these types of vehicles.

For this we brought in one of our officers from the Lower Mainland, Rick Philbrick, who specializes in dangerous goods and tank inspections. As well, we had a dangerous goods inspector from Transport Canada’s Pacific Region, Dean McCann.

The first day, the road check was located at Sikanni brake check, 160 kilometres north of Fort St John. The second day, the check took place at the Fort St John Inspection Station. The last day of the check was at Taylor brake check, about 20 kilometres south of Fort St John.

More than 100 vehicles were checked, and about $9,000 in violation tickets were issued.

Professional development allows me to grow with my job, keeps me current with new practices and technology, enhances my skills and potential for career progression, and rejuvenates me with new ideas and better ways to do my job.

Mike Hallas
Manager, Project Management Support Services
Planning and Programming Branch, Infrastructure Department
A Way to Learn: Time with District Staff
Submitted By Christina Klatt, Maintenance Contracts Procurement Manager

I have worked in the Rehabilitation and Maintenance Branch of the ministry’s Victoria headquarters, for two and a half years, and my duties are focused on all of the maintenance agreements – highway (formerly road and bridge), electrical and pavement marking.

This is my first position with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and, as you can imagine, learning about the work our contractors do, from this location, has its challenges. At times I felt very unfamiliar and even disconnected from the work I was trying to facilitate. So, when I was offered the opportunity to spend some time in the field seeing what work these agreements enable us to do, I jumped at the chance!

At the end of January, I set off to spend a month in the West Kootenay District Office, nestled amongst the mountains in Nelson. The days before my arrival were filled with excitement and anticipation as I prepared to be exposed to work that I had heard so much about.

The excitement was also mixed with a bit of anxiety about being a burden to the district staff because they would have to spend a great deal of time with me. But, upon my arrival the first day, I couldn’t have felt more welcome. I was greeted by friendly faces and shown to my work space, complete with welcome banner and balloons! After some introductions, I was invited to sit in on a meeting about addressing some concerns expressed by local stakeholders. Within an hour, my reservations about being burdensome vanished as I was made to feel like a member of the team.

The month flew by in the blink of an eye, as each day I was doing something different. Most days were filled with road trips to each of the areas within the district, to view completed and ongoing projects. And, along the way, I was able to experience winter on ministry roads. I learned a great deal about the challenges of winter on roads and bridges and how our maintenance contractors tackle sanding, salting and ploughing. I also had the opportunity to ride in a plough truck, and received a firsthand account of how sand is applied and the strategies for effective and efficient ploughing.

Not only was I exposed to the type of work that relates directly to my job, I also was exposed to other district areas of responsibility. For instance, I spent a day at an inspection station learning about the responsibilities of Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement staff, and another day on the Kootenay Pass learning about the area’s avalanche program which is needed to keep the travelling public safe. I was even lucky enough to ride in a loader to clear avalanche debris.

When my month in the West Kootenay District came to an end, I couldn’t believe the ground I had covered (both literally and figuratively) in such a short time. The things that I learned gave context and a greater depth of understanding to the work I do every day, which in turn, gave me greater drive. I cannot speak highly enough about this experience and my hope is that you are encouraged to participate in something similar. The rewards, both personally and professionally, far outweigh the drawbacks of time away.

Christina Klatt aboard a loader that was clearing avalanche debris in Kootenay Pass.
From Kwantlen Communications Practicum to Permanent Employee
Submitted by Parm Gill, Regional Transportation Management Centre Operator

The Regional Transportation Management Centre (RTMC) has been closely involved for the past few years with Kwantlen’s Public Safety Communications Program. Currently, there are three graduates of the program working at the RTMC, including Parm Gill who shares her story.

The Public Safety Communications program at Kwantlen Polytechnic University provides theory and hands-on experience to train people for work in emergency response call centres. The instructors – who have real life experience working for police, fire and ambulance services – lead realistic training simulations where students handle a variety of telephone calls in the mock emergency response centre, enter data into a training database, and transmit radio calls from dispatch consoles and portables.

Within the program, there are many opportunities to grow, and to express your interest in a variety of agencies, including choosing the place for your practicum. Looking at the list my instructor Tally Wade provided, I immediately noticed the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. I had frequently driven by the ministry's new state-of-the-art facility in Coquitlam, and had always wondered what happened in the building…

So, I emailed RTMC Operations Manager Pooyan Khorsandi (who I came to know as PK), to ask about doing my six-hour practicum there. He kindly allowed me to come in to observe and learn, and provided me with information on the roles of each and every individual, as well as all the technology involved at the centre. While there, I got to experience the call volumes and how important it is to know where the avalanche technicians are at all times. Additionally, I witnessed how the evening counter flow is implemented at the George Massey Tunnel.

The staff at the RTMC had remarkable expertise in the field, and were willing to share more of what they do with me. All the information I took away from my visit intensified my interest in being a part of the RTMC team. Shortly after, I contacted PK to express my interest in joining his workplace as an employee.

It was then, that I realized why the Kwantlen instructors stressed that we keep an open mind while participating in the program. If I hadn’t, I would not have been able to see how much I enjoyed the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and come to know that I wanted to become part of the team.

It has now been four months now, since I became an auxiliary employee, and I am feeling more confident and my geographic knowledge has expanded. All my co-workers are very helpful and understanding. They welcomed me and together we share the knowledge we each have from our different experiences and backgrounds.

At Kwantlen, I learned how an incident command system works – a crucial component of emergency response centres. I also learned how to confidently speak over the radio, using standardized and appropriate radio language.

Kwantlen’s Public Safety Communications Program prepared me well for my work at the RTMC, and what I have learned at the university and now at the RTMC, will stay with me throughout my career. ✿

My Road to Understanding – Job Shadowing
Submitted by Naomi Findlay, Aboriginal Youth Intern

In May of 2013, I applied to be part of the Aboriginal Youth Internship Program. When I first heard I was accepted, I was beyond ecstatic. Next, I received the email that said I was going to be placed with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, in Prince George. The location was ideal because it was where I wanted to be. Having grown up in Prince George, I was looking forward to going home.

My project was to create a partnership with other levels of government, educational institutions and First Nations associations to examine work experience for First Nations youth at the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's Northern Regional office. The main motivator behind this project was that the ministry’s northern offices struggle with staff recruitment and retention. Once staff gain experience, they often migrate south unless they have ties to the North.

First Nations people are often thought of as one of the most underutilized human resources in B.C., and due to their connection to their home communities, those hired from the North may tend to stay at work in the North. Hiring local aboriginal youth would not only help provide sustainable employment for First Nations; it would strengthen and expand the ministry’s existing relationships and build new ones.

Three graduates from Kwantlen’s Public Safety Communications Program now work at the RTMC: Shelly Theaker, Brad Campbell and Parm Gill.

More on Page 21…
Life Before the Hansard Bridge
Submitted by Linda-Lee Schell, Regional Administrative Clerk

It’s amazing how our ministry has dramatically changed life for folks who live on the east side of the Fraser River, in the Upper Fraser Valley, east of Prince George.

I was born at my parents’ home on Nov. 26, 1949, in the small logging community of Sinclair Mills, around 2 a.m. The community is situated on the east side of the Fraser River, across the water from the road to Prince George, and at the time there was no bridge. My mother’s labour didn’t align with the train’s scheduled run to Prince George and the ferry was out of service at that time of year, hence my home delivery.

When I was a child, Sinclair Mills had two blacksmith shops, and a sawmill, post office, grocery store, first aid shack with a bed and medical supplies, bunkhouse for single sawmill workers or sawmill workers living apart from their families, cookhouse with a dining hall, community hall, and a two-roomed school with a small duplex for two teachers. Travel to and from this isolated community was less than convenient, and at times took courage.

Travelling by Train to PG

There was a passenger train to Prince George on weekdays, leaving Sinclair Mills at 4 a.m. On Saturday, there was the extra option of catching the CN train, also known as the local, at 10:30 a.m. The return home was on the CN train that departed the city at 11 p.m., arriving in Sinclair Mills at 1 a.m. There was no train on Sunday, so if you missed the train on Saturday night you wouldn’t get home until the early hours of Tuesday morning.

The CN local was mostly made up of freight and coal cars and would have two extra passenger coaches for people. The 4 a.m. passenger train was the daily train that came from Jasper (and points beyond) and was mostly passenger cars with two extra cars for luggage, mail and bigger parcels.

Paying the Ferry Man

If you didn’t want to be restricted to the train’s schedule and your family or friends had a motor vehicle, in spring, fall or summer, you could take the Hansard reaction ferry. You could drive the 11 miles from Sinclair Mills to the edge of the Fraser River, blow your vehicle horn and wait for the ferryman to come from his little home. He would fire up the generator to power the lights, set the reaction ferry in motion and take you across the river in 20 to 30 minutes.

My Road to Understanding – Job Shadowing

To figure out what opportunities existed in the ministry and connect with other organizations, I needed first to expand my understanding of the ministry’s work. Job shadowing within the Northern Regional Office and the District of Fort George was the way to do this.

As part of the job shadowing, I spent half a day to a full day with the various work units within the ministry. The sessions allowed time for discussions about what employees’ jobs entailed, as well as site visits. The work units included project management, engineering, operations, properties/planning and business services.

Each job shadowing opportunity brought a different experience and a new perspective. Each session revealed how work units interact and how they are all part of a larger team. It also became apparent how much the ministry connects with different levels of local government.

In addition, I interacted with other staff within the ministry and established connections.

I realized that this ministry is so diverse that you don’t need a specific background to be a part of it. Everyone comes from different backgrounds – personal and academic – and is truly passionate about their job, love what they do and come together to form a great team. From the job shadowing sessions, I had gained a whole new appreciation for the ministry and the employees I worked with.

The job shadowing broadened my knowledge and perspective, enabling me to convey the variety of ministry opportunities to the First Nations organizations, educational institutions and agencies that I worked with.
Life Before the Hansard Bridge... Continued from Page 21

Depending on how high the waters were (using the power of the river’s current). When returning to your home via motor vehicle, you would drive from Prince George for 45 miles along the Upper Fraser Road, until you came to the Fraser River and the Hansard ferry landing once again. You would have to sit and blow your vehicle horn to call the ferryman and he would again have to set the reaction ferry in motion and come across the river to pick you up.

At night, sometimes it would take several minutes of blowing your car horn to wake him at his home on the other side of the river and when he came out, he would signal with his big light and then the lights on the ferry would come on and across he would come to get you. We always gave him some money for picking us up and taking us across.

When winter approached, the reaction ferry was taken out of the water as the ice would freeze the river over. It would take many weeks of freezing temperatures to freeze the ice solid and thick enough to allow people to drive across the river.

Crossing the Ice Bridge – A Chilling Trip

Now, one would think that they could drive down onto the ice and drive straight across the river to the other side during winter. This was not to be, as the density of the ice would vary depending on the river currents and the depth to the riverbed. So the ice bridge would start at one shoreline and work its way along, until it would eventually reach the other side. Sometimes the route would be travelling in an upstream direction or it would head upstream then swing back and travel in a downstream direction.

I remember as a child, being a passenger in a vehicle driving across the ice bridge to travel to Prince George, and this had to be the most terrifying ride of a little person’s life. There was always the fear that the vehicle was going to go through the ice and sink. You could hear the terrifying cracking of the ice as you made your way across on the ice bridge and I always felt like I was holding my breath until the vehicle reached the other side.

Once in a while, a new route would have to be mapped out because a big truck or large piece of machinery had gone through the ice, sometimes never to be seen again. I have no idea who was responsible for testing the density of the ice but I was one very happy and thankful person when this transportation route eventually became obsolete. I also do not know who built the ice bridges or who maintained them.

Cycling to the Show

For us kids from Sinclair Mills, the movie theatre at Upper Fraser (on the other side of the river) was a big attraction. We would ride our bikes to the railway bridge, push them across the bridge, and then ride three more miles to see a show. This crossing was terrifying, as you could see the river below through the spacing of the railroad ties. Coming back home in the dark was really scary, as you didn’t know if a train was coming and you had to be extra careful and still push your bike across.

Planks on the Railway Bridge

In March 1965, an agreement was reached between the Ministry of Transportation and the CN Rail Company to plank the bridge and install traffic control lights, so that the public could drive across the railway bridge. Planks were nailed to the railroad ties, between the rails and on either side of the rails, leaving room for the train. Vehicles crossed the bridge by straddling one rail or the other.

The planked bridge opened to traffic on June 26, 1969. This eliminated the need for the reaction ferry and it ceased transporting the public across the Fraser River.

When you arrived at the bridge and if the lights were red with the gate down, this meant there was a train coming and you had to wait for it to clear. Once the lights turned green and the gate went up, you could proceed. These lights were controlled by a man sitting in a little hut at the end of the bridge.

These modes of travel across the Fraser River continued for many years, until the Ministry of Transportation decided that it would be more convenient and a cost saving to build its own bridge across the Fraser River.

At Last – A Bridge to Sinclair Mills

Plans and designs were put into place, and a 404-metre long single-lane bridge, with steel pipe piles and six concrete piers and abutments, steel girders and precast concrete deck with steel bridge rails, was built. Construction of the new Hansard Bridge took place from April to November 2004.

Travel for all the people who still live at Sinclair Mills is now safer and much more convenient.

I have driven across the new bridge myself, and it was very exciting to know that there would never again be anyone crossing the Fraser River by taking the reaction ferry, driving the ever-scary ice bridge, stepping from railway tie to railway tie high above the water or using the planked and signalled bridge.

While on the Hansard Bridge, I stopped and got out of the vehicle I was travelling in, looked down into the deep muddy waters of the Fraser River and said, “Never again will I have to be that afraid to cross the Fraser River.”

Thank you Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure!
What’s the Buzz? WES Conversations that Matter
Submitted by Tracy Houser, Strategic Human Resources Assistant Director

We took the Work Environment Survey…now what do we do with the results?

Employees here at the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure are using the Work Environment Survey (WES) results to take the opportunity to start great conversations—that’s what. There are a number of WES reports available, including at the ministry level, the department level and at the work unit level (for those work units with a minimum of 20 employees). The best news is that people are discovering that regardless of the size of your team, there are ways to open the dialogue to understand each other’s perspectives, celebrate success and discover what and how you want to do things differently.

So what’s the buzz?

This year, it seems that conversations are everywhere. There are online polls on @Work, there are region-to-region engagement sessions across the province, and our own Executive team is focusing on two areas (professional development and Executive communications). The curiosity and courage to hold honest respectful conversations is being demonstrated by employees at all levels.

Let’s hear from two employees who seized the opportunity to have the discussion and then shared the buzz of what’s happening from their perspectives…

Kyla Kelch – Administrative Assistant, Business Management Service Branch (HQ)

In March, Samantha Eburne, Lindsay Stringer, Lyndsay Molcan and I got together to discuss our branch’s WES results. Rather than having the discussion in Samantha’s office we decided to take the meeting offsite to a local coffee shop. The WES report guided us through an open and candid conversation about the different examples that lead us to these results. It was the first time in a while that the four of us from the business services team within our branch, had been able to get together and have this kind of discussion. It proved to be a valuable meeting for our team. Since then we have had another follow-up meeting to discuss ways in which we can improve our team, and have committed to having more informal discussions like this one in the future.

Nicole Folk – Regional Manager, Corporate and Operational Services

I used a modified Dotmocracy exercise with the Corporate and Operational Services team to record levels of agreement among our group. The dots that participants put on the sheets provide a good visual representation of the group’s collective opinion. I liked that this process got people up and moving. I wrote down all of the questions from the Driving Engagement Compass for each WES driver and left spaces for people to write down their own questions. We then all took our “dots” and placed a dot next to the question that we liked best and wanted to discuss at the meeting.

We’ll be breaking into teams to move forward on actions we want to take for the WES drivers we selected. We will use this initial discussion, our WES results and Driving Engagement Tools (see Page 22) to determine what we want to do. Each small team will present their proposed action plan for that driver to our entire group.

I’m sure others who give the Dotmocracy technique a try will have a happy dotting experience.◆

Lyndsay Molcan, Lindsay Stringer and Kyla Kelch together in the Business Management Services Branch.
Guide Empowers Employees to Engage with Workplace
Submitted by Kimberly Newton, Strategic Human Resources A/Manager

Have you ever wondered how to take control of your own engagement and your own professional development? Are you tired of waiting for someone else to take action?

Well, here’s a start to being your own hero…

In January, the Employee Advisory Forum and the Strategic Human Resources Branch introduced the Employee Driving Engagement Guide. It’s full of tried and true ideas that any employee can use to make a positive change, and there are ideas that link to every element measured by the Work Environment Survey.

For example…

- Do you feel like you could be happier at work, but you’re not sure how to make it happen? We’ve got it covered! [www.th.gov.bc.ca/hr/Content/EmployeeEngagement/empowerment.aspx](http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/hr/Content/EmployeeEngagement/empowerment.aspx)

- Are you unsure about the behavioural competencies that are assessed during job interviews in the BC Public Service? The guide can help! [www.th.gov.bc.ca/hr/Content/EmployeeEngagement/professional-dev.aspx](http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/hr/Content/EmployeeEngagement/professional-dev.aspx)

- Need some ideas for connecting with your team? Try these! [www.th.gov.bc.ca/hr/Content/EmployeeEngagement/teamwork.aspx](http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/hr/Content/EmployeeEngagement/teamwork.aspx)

- Not sure how your work connects with the vision, mission and goals of the ministry? Connect the dots! [www.th.gov.bc.ca/hr/Content/EmployeeEngagement/vision.aspx](http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/hr/Content/EmployeeEngagement/vision.aspx)

Have you done something lately that worked well, that you think other employees should try? Let us know. We’re always looking for new ideas to include in the guide. Contact Kimberly Newton with any questions or suggestions.

Sayward Traffic Control Folks Rock
Submitted by Valerie Fabick, Senior Project Manager, R.F. Binnie and Associates Ltd.

Anyone who works in the road construction business knows the importance of traffic control personnel. They are the unsung heroes in an often thankless job. They literally put themselves between cars and people every day to ensure our crews and the public are safe.

The unfortunate reality of road construction is that sometimes it is necessary to delay traffic, which no one, including the project team, likes. In a world where everyone is rushing to get from point A to point B no one wants to sit around in traffic, even for a short time. The result is that much of the feedback we receive is more negative than positive. As a project manager (in the past with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and now with Binnie and Associates) my dream is to have no traffic issues and to leave everyone happy.

Well thanks to the wonderful traffic management folks – Heather Joesbury and Marlee Closson of Jacob Brother’s Construction – working at the recently completed Highway 17/Sayward safety mitigation project in Saanich, I got to live that dream.

On this project, almost all of the feedback was positive, and motorists spoke highly of the extremely professional and organized way that the traffic people worked. One member of the public wrote to the ministry’s Vancouver Island district office, and called them “amazing” – and I couldn’t agree more.

Traffic control on this busy corridor was a big concern to the project team, and thanks to the excellent work of Heather and Marlee it went off without a ripple. Not only were these two people efficient, they were always smiling and accommodating, making it a pleasure to work with them.

I would like to send out a big thanks to Heather and Marlee, and all the traffic control folks out there, without whom project managers (working as ministry employees or contractors) couldn’t do our jobs.
Tour de Valley Supports Cancer Research
Submitted by Randy Fullerton, Commercial Transport Enforcement Officer

I am participating in the Cops for Cancer Tour de Valley to support the Canadian Cancer Society in its fight against cancer. This will be my first ride and I am so honoured to be part of such a great cause. My mother lost her fight with cancer in December 2011, and I know we all have been affected by cancer one way or another. Joining this team inspires me to live healthier and to be proactive to help raise awareness and funds for pediatric cancer.

Cops for Cancer are a dedicated group of people from various law enforcement agencies. The cycling route is more than 850 kilometres, from Surrey to Boston Bar, and back again. In September, more than 100 committed law enforcement and emergency services personnel will make the ride, taking up to two weeks. They will be welcomed by more 60 communities who organize Cops for Cancer fundraising events and activities.

Each rider commits to raise a minimum of $5,000. The money from this event helps fund leading-edge research that is improving cancer treatments, preventing cancer and saving lives; provide reliable and up-to-date information on cancer, risk reduction and treatment; offer vital community-based support services for people living with cancer and their families; and advocate for healthy public policies.

Check out [my website](#) to learn more, or if you like to make a donation. Online pledging is secure and it saves the Canadian Cancer Society money by reducing administrative costs.

Thanks for your support! ✨

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International Women’s Day March 8 – Inspiring Change
Submitted by Jackie Chambers, Area Development and Operations Technician

Since its birth in 1911, International Women’s Day has grown to become a global day of recognition to celebrate the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future. In some countries, it’s an official holiday, comparable to Mother’s Day.

For the South Coast Region, it’s a great reason to get together for coffee and treats and to socialize with the great women of transportation! Thanks to Loretta Carlson, Louise Swan, Dawn Major, Nicole Lobo and Jackie Chambers for baking.

Professional development matters to me because I enjoy challenging myself by learning and developing new skills. It keeps work interesting and opens new pathways for personal growth within the organization.

Leanne Jones
Policy Analyst, Policy Branch
Transportation Policy and Programs Department
Nowruz Celebrated at Lower Mainland District
Submitted by Maziar Kazemi, A/District Services Manager

The Persian New Year (Nowruz), a time of renewal and rebirth linked with the first day of spring, was celebrated March 20, in the Lower Mainland District.

The occasion’s name, Nowruz, is a combination of two Persian words: “now,” which means new, and “ruz,” which means day. It is a time for family and friends to gather and celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of the next. Children have a 14-day vacation from school, and most adults do not work during the Nowruz festivities.

One of the most important activities of Nowruz is making the “haft-seen” table. “Haft” is the Persian word for the number seven and “seen” is the Persian word for the letter S. Literally, the haft-seen table means a “table of seven things that start with the letter S.”

Here are some items that may be found on the haft-seen and what they symbolize:

- Sumac (crushed spice of berries): the sunrise and the spice of life
- Senjed (sweet dry fruit of the lotus tree): love and affection
- Serkeh (vinegar): patience and age
- Seeb (apples): health and beauty
- Sir (garlic): good health
- Samanu (wheat pudding): fertility and the sweetness of life
- Sabzeh (sprouted wheat grass): rebirth and renewal of nature

Staff from the district got to see a haft-seen table first hand, while enjoying tasty traditional Persian sweets.

Northern Region Pulls on Pink Shirts
Submitted by Linda-Lee Schell, Regional Administrative Clerk

As part of the Northern Region’s fundraising for the 2013 Provincial Employees Community Services Fund campaign, we sold pink t-shirts with an anti-bullying message on them.

Canada has named the last Wednesday in each February as Anti-Bullying Day, so when Feb. 26 rolled around, the Northern Region staff pulled on their previously purchased pink shirts. Additional pink-shirted people participated and some hair accessories added to the “pink flash”.

A lot of the shirts that were purchased for the fundraiser were for our children to wear to school for Anti-Bullying Day.

Aren’t we a cute looking bunch of Northern Regional employees?

The anti-bullying shirts worn here did double duty as a fundraiser.
In a blast from the past, the “Evolution of Man” photo sequence (below), featuring Art Barry, ran in a regional employee publication entitled Paths and People, in 1993. It shows Art before his career with our ministry, then in 1992 and 1993 after he had joined us.

Inquiring minds of the day were promised that upon Mr. Barry’s retirement, all would be revealed to those wondering, “What is the story behind that man and his evolution?”

Well, the time has come for Art to say goodbye to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and for the story to be told. Thanks go to Michelle Evans for providing the facts about Art’s recent 35 years with our ministry. Read on and be amazed by Art’s long, glorious history and his appearance in photos past…

Chapter I – The Iron Years

Art Barry, born Arthur Herbert Fonzarelli (later changing his surname to Barry because it’s easier to spell) grew up as any young boy of royalty did in the 1860s, in bustling Winnipeg – dining on truffles, cloaked in velvet and dreaming of making his way out west to work on the railway.

Leaving the nest as a young man, Art landed a job making five cents a day as a general labourer for the railway. Art single-handedly placed more than one million railway ties from Calgary to Golden in 1884, a world record that stands to this day. As Art’s legend grew, he moved up the ranks of the railway and met a fellow opera enthusiast, Donald “Duck” Smith. Together, they became key catalysts in connecting Eastern Canada with the West. On a cold November day in Craigellachie, in 1885, they completed the link and got their photos taken for posterity.

Driven by his growing love of the iron horse, Art moved to Paris in the spring of 1895, looking for an opportunity to drive a locomotive for the famed Paris Express. Using his fluency in French, one of six languages Art would master over his lifetime, Art rapidly surpassed his fellow train engineer trainees and by October that year, was awarded engineer first-class and issued Engine #721. Upon returning to the station on his maiden voyage, Art became distracted by an admiring Sarah Bernhard who was blowing kisses at him (the newest railway sensation). Art under estimated the approach and his train engineering days were over as soon as they began.

(In the process, Art had inadvertently created the first drive-thru, a concept he would sell to an American, Jordan Martin, some 35 years later.)

Chapter II – Hello 20th Century!

Excited to see the vast expansion occurring in the West upon his return to Canada, Art realized a growing need to move goods and people safely and efficiently across B.C. Immediately, he opened Canada’s first modern automobile taxi-cab business, in 1907, where he went on to bank his first million dollars, by 1922. Art would later lose that million in a foiled 1926 bid to purchase the Brooklyn Bridge from his poker partner, George Parker.

During the Second World War, while Art was working on transportation and strategic manoeuvres for both the British and Canadian governments, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill insisted to U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt that Art walk away from his railroad dream. Gare Montparnasse, Paris 1895

Art walking away from his railroad dream. Gare Montparnasse, Paris 1895

Art, Donald Smith and a bunch of guys standing around at Craigellachie, B.C., in 1885.

More on Page 28...
Roosevelt that Art work alongside the U.S., to reclaim the Pacific. Art and General Douglas McArthur became close friends during that time, in spite of Art constantly beating McArthur in chess. Often those games ended with “Dougie” hurling the board and pieces off the table, much to Art’s delight. Another little known fact of the time, was Art’s insistence to Winston to get rid of his poodle, Fluffy, and get a real dog.

Chapter III – Modern Life
During the summer of 1969, while organizing a free outdoor music festival in Woodstock, New York, Art had a vision of taking a trip to the moon. Art obtained his PhD in electrical physics at Cambridge in six months, setting a university record that stands today. Upon graduation, NASA immediately offered Art entry into the space program, and in 1970 Art became an astronaut-in-training. In an ironic twist of fate, Art was forced off the Apollo 13 mission due to contracting alien-hand syndrome. This resulted in a cursed space mission, because as electrical technician, Art would not have missed the wiring deficiency in the oxygen tank. Upon full recovery, Art was assigned to the Apollo 15 mission – which went without a hitch, thanks to Art.

By February 1989, Art changed roles and became the area manager in the bustling town of Rock Creek. For that first month, Art’s office was the passenger seat on a Chevrolet pick-up truck that included a radio and two manuals. While the lack of sanitation facilities in Art’s work space meant bathroom breaks were not allowed, Art was the envy of his graduating class.

In the summer of 1990, Art shaved, bought his first tie and took the position of regional operations technician in Kamloops. He was responsible for the radio room and the landscape crew. During Art’s Midnight Moves radio show he would serenade the ministry faithful spinning the classic vinyl tracks from acts such as Pink Floyd and Deep Purple. For the next decade, he was also responsible for the electrical crews and the communications technicians.

Between May and November of 1996, Art took on an acting role in the 100 Mile House District, as the district highways manager. This was a transition time for the district, with the amalgamation of the 100 Mile and Williams Lake Districts. Art recalls that at least his office was bigger than his old Chevrolet pick-up and that bathroom breaks were allowed.

Between 1995 and 2004, Art had many temporary appointments in the position of regional manager, operations. Art was involved in all the renewals of the road and bridge maintenance contracts between 1993 and 2003/4. He took a lead role in the Southern Interior Region for the privatization of electrical services. In December 2004, he earned the position of manager, electrical services by winning an arm wrestling contest.

Art was involved with the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) from 1995 to 2005. He took the role of either operations chief or alternate director in all of the flood and fire events in those years. Art
**“Transportation Joe” Heads Down the Highway**
Submitted by Lynda Lochhead, District Development Technician

On March 14, friends, family and co-workers gathered to roast and toast Joe Peterson, district development technician with the Penticton office of the Okanagan Shuswap District. After 40 years of public service, “Transportation Joe” is moving on!

Joe’s nickname evolved from his phone greeting. He would answer his phone “Transportation, Joe speaking” and over time it got shortened to “Transportation, Joe.” He’s clearly earned the title as his entire four-decade career with the provincial government has been with our ministry. Grant Lachmuth, himself a retired ministry employee, hosted Joe’s goodbye soiree and read several emails from past co-workers and friends, who could not attend but dearly wanted to relay their best wishes and congratulations.

Several presentations were made recognizing Joe’s contributions to the ministry throughout his career. Robyn Clifford, senior district development technician, presented Joe with the infamous plexiglass “iceberg” given to retiring employees (along with a story or two from their survey days in the Prince George area).

Ron Domanko, area bridge manager, presented Joe with a boxed brass dumpy level with an engraved plaque that read, “Congratulations on your retirement Transportation Joe.” This was a gift from his co-workers with thanks for his friendship.

Murray Tekano, Okanagan-Shuswap district manager, presented Joe with a meritorious scroll recognizing his years of public service.

Lynda Lochhead, district development technician, presented Joe with a t-shirt that had a picture of Joe titled, “Transportation Joe – it’s tea time!” (Joe was known for always having his cup of tea at coffee break.)

We all wish Transportation Joe the best of the best in his retirement years – good health, safe travels, happy memories and lots of laughter!

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**The Evolution of Arthur D. Barry** … Continued from Page 28

Art was the alternate director of the Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre for the major Salmon Arm (1987) and Kelowna (2003) wildfires. Of his experiences with PEP, Art would say, “Free food, good company and no one got hurt!”

Art named PEP after his favorite mid-day treat, that little round peppermint fondant patty coated in milk chocolate with the shiny green and silver foil wrapper.

As the manager of electrical services, Art was single-handedly responsible for more than 64 per cent of the regional operations, education and knowledge base. Daily, Art would scribe intricacies of the universe on his 12”x16” white board and hang it in his office window. For example, “You are more likely to be killed by a champagne cork than a poisonous spider.” (An important fact when you are enjoying New Year’s Eve in the Australian outback.)

On May 1, Art retired from the ministry after 35 years, completing his evolution (thus far). Art’s experience and knowledge will be sorely missed. So will his sense of humour.

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**Professional development matters to me because it shows a commitment to learning. And I believe with greater learning, comes greater understanding, higher performance and bigger achievements.**

Hugh Eberle
District Manager, West Kootenay District
Southern Interior Region, Highways Department

**What it comes down to, is the organization changes. So you need to be ahead of that in your own development so that you can meet the needs of the organization – so you can be ready for what happens next.**

Michelle Evans
Manager Rehabilitation and Maintenance
Southern Interior Region, Highways Department