

Your Issues

REPRESENTED IN VICTORIA

Barry Penner's MLA Report — Summer 2007



Leading the way in Green initiatives

The Throne Speech, presented in February, boldly put forward our government's commitment to environmental leadership.

As Minister of Environment, I vigorously support efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote alternate fuels and encourage more green energy projects, such as the Ashlu Creek small hydro power project near Squamish.

I believe BC can lead the fight against global warming by working closely with our allies, including California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

We're making progress. Even as our economy grew by 3.7 per cent between 2004 and 2005, greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia fell by about 2.4 per cent, which is a reduction of 1.6 million tonnes.

Still there is much more work ahead. The BC Government intends to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 33 per cent below current levels by 2020. That target will place

emissions 10 per cent under 1990 levels.

Some of BC's other key initiatives to tackle the challenge of global warming include:

- Make B.C. Government operations carbon neutral by 2010.
- A new \$25-million Innovative Clean Energy Fund will be established to encourage the commercialization of alternative energy solutions such as bioenergy, geothermal energy, tidal, run-of-the river, solar, and wind power.
- All electricity produced in B.C. will be required to have net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2016.
- The energy plan will require that 90 per cent of B.C.'s electricity be generated from clean, renewable sources.
- B.C. has now become the first jurisdiction in the world, to require 100 per cent carbon sequestration for any coal-fired electricity project.



Governor Schwarzenegger welcomed Premier Campbell and Barry to his California office in March.

BC lowers taxes and creates more jobs

The BC Government's 2007/08 budget cuts personal income taxes by a further 10 per cent.

Since 2001, these taxes have been reduced by at least 30 per cent in BC, with people earning less than \$20,000 per year seeing a reduction of almost 70 per cent.

Single wage earners who earn less than \$15,500 now pay no BC

income tax at all.

This means for people earning \$100,000 per year or less, BC has the lowest personal income taxes in Canada.

This has helped BC's economy grow, with new investment and job growth. Unemployment in our area has dropped to its lowest level in over 20 years.

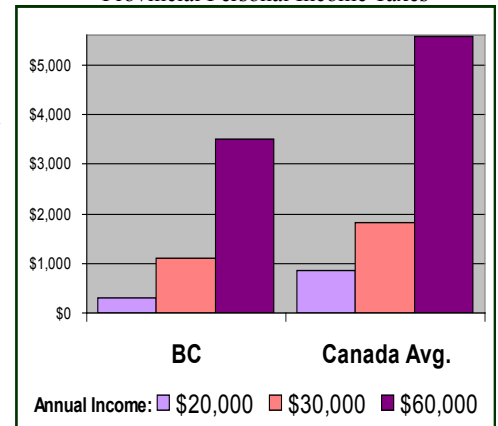
About 32,700 new jobs were created in the Low-

land / southwest last year.

Prior to 2001, the unemployment rate in Chilliwack was 10.4 per cent, but now it's just 5.9 per cent!

We also made a \$1 billion pay down on BC's debt this year. Since 2004, taxpayer-supported debt has dropped by \$4.1 billion, or almost 14 per cent.

Provincial Personal Income Taxes



Source: BC Budget 2007

How to reach Barry Penner, MLA for Chilliwack-Kent

e-mail: localmla@uniserve.com

Website: www.barrypenner.com

TOLL FREE

#101 - 7388 Vedder Road, Chilliwack, BC V2R 4E4 • Phone: 604-858-6202 • Fax: 604-858-6254 • 1-866-553-5537

Highway barrier installed

Motorists are better protected thanks to the new wire cable barrier that was recently installed along 3km of Highway 1 east of Young Road. The new barrier along the median of Highway 1 has already helped minimize the impact of two accidents since its installation. On July 5, a car travelling westbound on the highway east of Prest Road was prevented from crossing over into oncoming traffic thanks to the new barrier. A similar event transpired on June 28th. Without the cable barrier, head-on collisions with grievous injuries could well have resulted.

The three-kilometre-long stretch of Highway 1 was selected because it has a history of cross-over crashes, and a traditional concrete barrier would have required site

modifications, such as drainage improvements and widening the pavement area.

The cable barrier system consists of tensioned wire ropes supported by collapsible posts with anchors. The kinetic energy of the impacting vehicle is absorbed by the wire ropes and posts, reducing injury to the vehicle occupants and reducing damage to the vehicle. The open design minimizes the visual obstruction that other barriers can present, and reduces the accumulation of drifting snow.

This innovative technology has been used in several other countries and studies have concluded that the number of fatal crashes is significantly reduced on roadways with wire cable barriers. That is why BC is opening the door to this technology, which has also been used in nations such as the U.S., the U.K.,



Artist's Conception

The new Highway 1 cable barrier extends for three kilometers mostly between Young Road and Prest Road. The barrier is the first of its kind on BC's highways and has already proven itself by preventing vehicles from crossing the median on two separate occasions.

Australia and New Zealand.

The project's cost was \$364,000, with the Ministry of Transportation funding \$334,000, and ICBC funding \$30,000.

Thanks for your kind thoughts

As many of you already know, I had a tumour removed from my chest in early May. At the time, doctors believed it was benign.

Further testing indicated that it was actually a relatively rare form of cancer -- leiomyosarcoma -- and that additional surgery was required.

That additional surgery took place on May 24 in Chilliwack General Hospital.

I expect to be on the job throughout my treatment and recovery, although due to medical appointments and tests, I may not be able to attend every meeting scheduled right now.

I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation and thanks to everyone who has contacted my office to offer their best wishes.

Your cards, emails and prayers have strengthened my resolve to overcome this illness as quickly as possible.

Harrison Mills swing bridge upgrade completed



The Harrison River Bridge, a vital transportation link in our region, is safer for motorists thanks to an \$8.1 million deck rehabilitation project.

The two-lane, 314 metre bridge, located between Harrison Mills and the District of Kent, was designed in 1955 with construction completed in 1956. Until now, there has

been no significant rehabilitation of the bridge deck.

As a swing bridge, Harrison River Bridge plays an important role for marine traffic, too. The bridge allows water traffic on the Harrison River to pass through to the Fraser River.

The BC Government is also investing \$3.1 million to replace the Highway 7 Pump

House Bridge. The current bridge, which is near the end of its service life, will be replaced with a new steel plate girder bridge. It is designed to meet the latest flood standards and will ensure reliable and safe passage for the travelling public.

Construction is scheduled to begin in July and be completed in November.

Province invests in UCFV campus

The BC Government is investing more than \$29 million to purchase 34 hectares of land to support a trades and technology centre for the University College of the Fraser Valley. This new Chilliwack campus is part of B.C.'s first full-service education park, at the former CFB Chilliwack lands.

The Honourable John Les, MLA for Chilliwack-Sumas, and I joined Premier Gordon Campbell at the building site on January 16 to announce this eagerly anticipated project, which will help us meet the demand for highly trained, skilled workers in a variety of areas.

UCFV's new trades centre will offer a range of training, including heavy duty commercial transport, automotive services, electronics, architectural drafting, cooking, carpentry, welding, joinery and electrical.

The centre is scheduled to open this fall with new classrooms, labs and shops, and 690 training spaces. UCFV expects to have 1,800 students on the campus by the end of the decade.

The BC Government is also funding 1,700 new student spaces at UCFV, as part of our province-wide post-secondary 25,000-seat expansion plan.

HEAD OF THE CLASS



Julie Brewer/Photo

Barry and the Honourable Shirley Bond, Minister of Education, visited Kent Elementary in April as part of Minister Bond's tour of schools throughout BC.

State-of-the-art school opens

G.W. Graham helps open the Sardis school named in his honour

Hundreds of local students are now enjoying the state-of-the-art G.W. Graham Middle-Secondary School, which opened its doors last September.

The \$28.7 million dollar school, located on Thomas Road, exemplifies the government's commitment to provide our students with outstanding learning environments and resources.

The Chilliwack School District used a design-build method for the school to ensure construction stayed on target and was completed as efficiently and cost effectively as possible.

G.W. Graham features an energy-saving geothermal heating system, a full-sized 350-seat auditorium, a multi-purpose area, two gymnasiums and an art gallery. It can accommodate more than 800 students and teachers.

The school was officially opened with great enthusiasm last November. I was especially pleased the school's namesake, Mr. Wilf Graham, was present to cut the ribbon. Mr. Graham, a highly respected educator and



Daris LaPointe/Photo

Barry joined Wilf Graham and other local dignitaries for November's ribbon-cutting event that officially opened the G.W. Graham Middle-Secondary School in Sardis. Barry also helped Mr. Graham celebrate his 100th birthday earlier this year (pictured).

former Chilliwack principal, celebrated his 100th birthday this year!

Since 2001, the BC Government has spent over \$1 billion to complete 26 new schools, 32 replacements, 140 additions and 22 renovation projects across British Columbia.

Penner



Poll

WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR GOVERNMENT TO DO?

1 Do you support the BC Government's plan to reduce greenhouse emissions by 33 % by 2020?

YES NO

2 Do you believe that lower taxes are good for the economy?

YES NO

Name.....

Address.....

Postal Code.....

Phone.....

Fax.....

email

Comments

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Please return survey to:
 Barry Penner MLA,
 #101 - 7388 Vedder Rd.,
 Chilliwack, BC, V2R 4E4,
 or fax it to (604) 858-6254
www.barrypenner.com

To sign up for my FREE
 email news updates,
 contact me at:
localmla@uniserve.com

NEW CT SCANNER FOR CGH



Julie Brewer/Photo

Barry familiarizes himself with a new 64-slice CT Scanner, Chilliwack General Hospital's latest piece of diagnostic equipment. The \$1.35 million scanner, was funded by the BC Government and has been operating since January. About 6,000 CT scans are performed annually at CGH. BC's health care budget is up by \$4.6 billion since 2000/01, or 54 %. To date, the BC Government has invested more than \$500 million in capital projects in the Fraser Valley, and that amount will reach about \$1 billion by 2010. The Fraser Health Authority has received a 7.1 per cent budget increase this year -- the second highest of any health authority in BC.

We're open for business at our new location!

It's an honour to represent the constituency of Chilliwack-Kent, and I am always proud to call this beautiful part of the province my home.

More people are discovering our many economic and recreation opportunities and are choosing to relocate here.

After almost 11 years in the same place, my local office has moved to a new location at #101-7388 Vedder Road, Chilliwack V2R 4E4.

My staff and I are happy to continue helping you with any questions or concerns you may have about provincial government agencies and services.

Our office is open Mon., Tues., Thurs., and Fri., 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. The office is closed on Wednesdays.

New BC parks protect our natural assets

In British Columbia, we pride ourselves on having beautiful and diverse provincial parks.

With this in mind, I introduced legislation in April that establishes 41 new conservancies and three new Class A parks. Bill 24 also makes additions to 16 existing parks and three conservancies. This will further the implementation of last year's historic land-use decision to protect some of the most significant, spectacular and ecologically diverse landscapes and coastal areas in the entire world.

Across the province, BC Parks offers more



Barry at Kokanee Glacier Park, with the new lodge in the background.

than 11,000 campsites and 6,000 kilometres of trails in more than 800 parks and protected areas.

In addition, daily parking fees have been reduced and are now based on an hourly rate of \$1 to a maximum of \$3 per day in the 40 parks with parking fees, down from a maximum of \$5 per day in some parks. The cost of an annual pass has been cut in half to \$25.

Revenue from parking fees continues to be invested directly into the parks system and pays for maintaining trails, day-use and picnic areas, playgrounds and park buildings.