MEET JIM MIHALY 49TH PRESIDENT OF THE SURREY BOARD OF TRADE

In the early 70’s my parents started a newspaper in Northern Alberta, which over a few years grew to four newspapers. Our whole family, there’s seven of us, all worked in various capacities. For me it was an opportunity to be in service on the writing side, administration side and ultimately as a publisher, running the whole operation. We got to learn the whole business.

In the early nineties, my brother Tom and I, formed MacKenzie Report Inc. We ran it, along with my wife, Suzanne who until 1999, when we sold our shares to my brother who continues to operate the family newspapers in northern Alberta, just as successfully.

In the thirty years that I’ve been in the newspaper business full time, I’ve been on a Chamber or Board of Trade for 28 years. This will be my fourth time as a president for an organization which I believe in 100%. I’ve also served as a director for many years. At one time I served on two different chambers as a director at the same time, in communities we were operated newspapers. It has been a great experience.

On a personal side, I am married to Susanne works at the Peace Arch News. Our daughter is going to SFU next year. My son will soon graduate from Red Deer College, finishing his apprenticeship as an electrician.

The Surrey Board of Trade Industry Tour aims to showcase the strength of Surrey’s economy, the development of business and various industries within the city.

With running commentary by staff from Colliers International, the tours followed three different itineraries, eventually coming together at Kwantlen Polytechnic University’s Trades and Technology campus in Cloverdale for lunch. From keynote speaker Jim Cox, of the Surrey City Development Corporation, guests heard about the ever-expanding development taking place in the city. Surrey is seeing exponential growth as it accommodates nearly 50 percent of Metro Vancouver’s available industrial land, making it a very attractive place to do business.

The next Industry Tour is already set so make it a point to join us on Friday, May 3, 2013!
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Meet Your Board of Directors for 2012/13

Jeff devoted more than 45 years of his life to different aspects of criminal justice. He worked in various administrative capacities as a civilian executive with the London Metropolitan police at New Scotland Yard (11 years) and following immigration to Canada joined the Vancouver Police Department serving more than 30 years, his latter assignment being a detective in the Financial Crime Section. Upon retirement he worked for the British Columbia Crime Prevention Association (7 years) specializing in fraud prevention education. He was a valued contributor on the Crime & Justice Team at the Surrey Board of Trade. Jeff died Monday May 21, 2012. We will miss him.

IN MEMORIUM:

JEFF BURTON

The ASPECT Targeted Skills Shortage Program (TSSP) provides funding to Employers to train their low skilled employees with funded training to improve their performance in the work place. The funding is maximum of $1500 per employee and maximum of $7500 per employer.

Benefits of TSSP:
1. Knowledgeable Employees make fewer mistakes, increasing productivity.
2. Training increases employee's ability to adopt new technologies.
3. Skilled employees inspire customer's confidence in your business.
4. Training contributes to better staff morale, building a motivated and loyal team.
5. Trained employees can grow within your business, reducing turnover and
6. Training creates a pool of qualified replacements for employees who do leave.

To qualify, employers must:
1. Have less than 100 employees.
2. Have an eligible employee (s) who either: Does not have a high school diploma; or, Has a High School Diploma but does not have a recognized certification.

For more information please contact Ms. Ritu Biswas at 604 598 3555 or 778 549 3466

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Dianne Watts
Mayor - Surrey Honourary Director

Linda Hepner
Surrey Councillor Mayor’s Alternate

Targeted Skills Shortage Program (TSSP) – helping Employers train their low skilled employees with funded training provided by Canada- British Columbia Labor Market Agreement.
Thanks for the Opportunity!

When I was sworn in as President of the Surrey Board of Trade last June, I spoke and wrote about the challenges that we would face this year. I called it a year of "uncertainty." At that time we had just had a federal election that ended with a majority, we were facing a vote on the PST, an election on the horizon and we were still casting nervous glances at the economic situation in Europe.

One year later, we have the return of the PST, a new Premier, a Provincial election on the horizon and we are still casting nervous glances at Europe. I can say safely that we are now looking forward to another year of uncertainty. People in business in Surrey, and all over the world, are facing times of change that are unprecedented in our lifetime. The continuing evolution of a global market place and supply chain, political uncertainty, the advancement of technology, and financial wariness; these factors all combine to make doing business a complex, dynamic and often frustrating task.

Combine these global perspectives with our local issues like transportation, infrastructure, education, human capital recruitment and our multicultural community, you will see that complexity and uncertainty will likely always be a part of doing business in Surrey. Luckily we are strong resilient people, and, luckily, we have the Surrey Board of Trade to work as strong advocates for the business community.

So what has the Surrey Board of Trade accomplished this year? Under the very effective leadership of our CEO, Anita Huberman, and her team of committed staff, the Board of Trade has had a very busy and productive year. We have continued to focus on the advocacy accomplishments which directly benefit all businesses in Surrey. I'd also like to thank Mary Jane Watts, who has led the way on all these issues, and we have been pleased to support her and add our voice to hers.

1. Transportation and Infrastructure. The Surrey Board of Trade hosted a dialogue on the future of the Pattullo Bridge with the New Westminster Chamber of Commerce, and Anita Huberman has regularly been a strong advocate for the transportation needs of the South Fraser in the press and on CKNW. Our message is that we cannot allow ourselves to be isolated by tolls and by a lack of public transportation; other alternatives, like road pricing, must be explored.

2. Education. In 2010, the Surrey Board of Trade released a position paper that spoke to the chronic underfunding of the K-12 system and the two universities in Surrey. After an aggressive advocacy effort by the School District and the Board of Trade, among others, the K-12 system has had some positive changes and announcements of funding. Simon Fraser and Kwantlen Universities, however, continue to be funded for fewer than half the number of seats per capita in the rest of the Province, and Kwantlen's funding per student is the lowest of any university in the Province. The Board continues to advocate for parity with the rest of the Province so that we, too, can enjoy the benefits of an educated work force that stays in their community.

3. Families First. Based on the 2011 Child Care Gap Assessment by the Children's Partnership of Surrey-White Rock, Surrey has only nine licensed child care spaces for every 100 children aged 0 – 6. Surrey and Langley have the lowest ratio of spaces to children (compared to West Vancouver with 25 spaces for every 100 children and the lowest ratio of spaces to children (compared to West Vancouver with 55 spaces for every 100 children and Vancouver with 18 spaces for every 100 children. More than 41% of all refugees to BC reside in Surrey. In April, 2012, the Surrey Board of Trade released its Business and Families Position Paper, asking provincial and federal governments for a New Deal for Families. This is the first time that any Board of Trade or Chamber of Commerce has taken this approach in Canada, and we do so to promote a strong economy, and a healthy, safe society that ensures Surrey remains a great place to raise a family.

4. International Trade Centre. Perhaps the most exciting development this year has been the beginnings of our International Trade Centre. Nigel Watkinson and Alan Aubert, our immediate past president and one of our esteemed Governors, have put an incredible amount of volunteer time into developing this concept into something solid and achievable. When operational, this Trade Centre will link our members with other businesses all over the world through the International Chamber of Commerce, and will be a "one stop shop" for all your import and export needs. Bernie Magnan, formerly of the Vancouver Board of Trade, will be heading up this project under Anita's guidance. The future is global and Surrey is uniquely positioned to be a global business player.

As a colleague of mine once said about Surrey and, indeed, the entire South Fraser Region, "we just want our fair share." We are the only area in the province that is growing in population, we have a growing school age population and our business community is growing. Our future lives here. We want our children to have good care, a good education system and access to post-secondary; we want to be able to utilize reliable public transportation AND get across a bridge, if we need to, without being penalized. We want to attract people to come to Surrey to invest, work, live and play and be part of our future.

This is the future that the Surrey Board of Trade believes in and one that we will continue to advocate for. It's a great future, and I thank you most sincerely for the opportunity to serve. 

Mary Jane Stenberg is the Executive Director for External Relations for Kwantlen Polytechnic University.
I am an excited and honored to have the opportunity to lead the Surrey Board of Trade in 2012-2013, and to build on the great work Mary Jane Stenberg and the 2011-2012 board as a whole. I congratulate MJ on a fine year, the board for their dedication along with Anita and her hardworking team.

I first joined a Chamber of Commerce when I was 20 years old back in Alberta when I worked in my family’s newspaper business. At that time the Chamber was struggling with revenue and lacked a voice in the business community. Within two years, through hard work and encouraging businesses to get involved, the Chamber became a force in advocacy issues, and more importantly gained the respect and confidence in the business community. I believe so adamantly in the need for the business community to have a strong voice that I’ve involved myself with Chambers of Commerce for 28 years.

In order for the Surrey Board of Trade to continue its strong role in Surrey and in the Lower Mainland as a whole, we need the continued support from our business community. Be it attending the multitude of networking events hosted by the SBOT each year, volunteering to assist in the variety of activities or serving on these committees. It is a give and take commitment that makes the Board and the business community that much stronger.

It was first introduced to the Surrey Board of Trade four years ago when I moved to the community via the Industry Team. It was amazing the issues tackled by the “Team” and the passion shown by the committee members. I really learned what this organization was all about. But for those existing members and future members it must be said if you really want to receive the full benefits of a membership, get involved. You need to become more engaged with the process in order receive the organization’s full benefits. Whether you’d like to become a member on the board of directors, join one of the many committees, or volunteer your time or a staff member’s to assist the Board of Trade – the opportunities are endless.

In terms of what’s planned for my presidency, I like to keep things simple. We need to look at what we do best and review areas where we can become more efficient. Basically what best suits our members. The Board of Directors will meet in July at our Strategic Planning Session. Stay tuned.

Mayor Dianne Watts and the City of Surrey recently hosted a meeting involving the Surrey Board of Trade, Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce and South Surrey White Rock Chamber of Commerce. The intent at the meeting was to bring the three organizations together to share common views/goals and how these three organizations can work more closely together in the future. At the end of the day we need to look at the best interests of the businesses in Surrey proper and how we can collectively or as one present that message as we move forward.

The Surrey Board of Trade will continue to advocate on issues as they arise. The growing frustration at the multitude of taxes one pays when filling up their tank is key on my agenda. Unfortunately, we as Canadians, taxpayers and business people alike, need to take a strong stance when dealing with the greed of those levels of government and oil companies who are dipping into our gas tanks. At the very least we need to lobby to have a more consistent price at the pump vs. the peaks and valleys we experience. At the end of the day the price at the pumps increases your operating costs no matter what type of business you run, and further, your staff is paying more to get to and from work. These costs are also resulting in our residents going across the border to fill up their tanks. Something needs to be done for a more consistent pricing model at the pumps. I look forward to a great year!
We have been complacent about disaster planning. After all we have enjoyed years without any major disaster. Yes there have been the occasional floods and even fires but not on a scale large enough to interrupt our daily routines. But the unexpected can happen.

Last week two unexpected disasters were presented as case studies at the Emergency Preparedness for Industry and Commerce Council’s (EPICC) annual forum at the Justice Institute that illustrated the importance of being prepared for a disaster and having a business continuity plan.

The Canuck Riots of 2011 had a significant financial impact on the local businesses in the downtown core, not to mention the trauma to the owners and employees of the businesses that were mobbed and looted. One of the hardest hit was London Drugs. Fortunately, they had developed a plan for the Olympics and the security measures they incorporated protected both staff and clients. They did incur considerable loss due to damage and stolen goods estimated at $825,000. In spite of the damage, they were still able to open their doors the next morning when, once the police allowed people to enter the area, their staff returned, unasked, to help with the cleanup. Also, they had glass repair people standing by with plywood to secure broken doors and windows. Benz Coffee was not as fortunate. The owner was in the store when it was looted and it took a month before she reopened her doors.

The second incident occurred in 2010 in Slave Lake. Wildfires were raging in the area and Slave Lake was receiving evacuees from the surrounding area. Unfortunately the winds changed direction and at 100kms per hour blew the fires into Slave Lake. 7,000 people were forced to evacuate with seven minutes notice. At one point there was no escape route safe to travel and water bombers had to be deployed to open up one of the roads. The estimated cost of the damages was $700 million dollars. Water and sewage was out for more than two weeks after the event. They are still settling people into temporary housing. The loss to business has yet to be tallied but the Mayor of Slave Lake recognized that without government help the business community would be slow to recover so she negotiated with the Alberta government recovery grants for business. As this community served the oil patch, Alberta recognized the importance of her request.

Consider the fate of the people and businesses of Christchurch New Zealand. Speaking with Peter Townsend, the Executive Director of the Canterbury Employers Chamber of Commerce in Christchurch, whose business centre was devastated by two major earthquakes six months apart. Their disaster scenario was flooding from a nearby river, not earthquakes. Their response was remarkable and is now a template for recovery from disaster. This will be explored in detail in the next edition of Business in Surrey.

So the message is plain. Be prepared to weather an unexpected disaster and plan ahead for your recovery once the danger has passed. Involve your staff in the planning. As in the London Drugs situation they were able to open their doors the next morning within an hour and a half of their regular time due to staff loyalty. Staff are an important part of your business continuity plan. In addition, check your insurance policy. Know if you have adequate coverage. This can be a major stumbling block for recovery. For assistance in creating a plan check out http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/prg/em/gds/index-eng.aspx

The Surrey Board of Trade is preparing an interactive seminar workshop on preparedness. Watch for information and details on the event. Mary-Lou McCauldland is the Chair of the Crime & Justice Team.
When the Guildford Town Centre mall opened in 1966 it won an Architect's Digest award, and building on those award winning designs the shopping centre is in the midst of an expansion and renovation which is anticipated to double the annual number of shoppers to 20 million, compete for customers with Robson Street and Metrotown, and provide employment for up to 4500 people, when it's completed on August 14, 2014.

At $280 million, the renovation and expansion project is the largest in Canada, and will take the mall from 980,000 sq.ft. to 1.2 million sq.ft. It will become the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold-certified shopping mall in Canada and will be the largest regional shopping centre south of the Fraser River.

Editor Ray Hudson asked General Manager, Peggy White, to outline the scope of the work.

PW: We're removing every tile, every balustrade, all of the drywall is being taken out and being replaced because back in the sixties asbestos was often used as a fire retardant. We have a crew do that in the middle of the night, dressed in the full hazmat suits. When we're done, everything in the interior will be brand new when we open next year.

The biggest changes have been to the south side of the mall where Walmart was dramatically enlarged (149,000 sq.ft.), and opened on October 28, last year. To the east of that, an almost quarter of the mall size section will be added ever what used to be the east parking lot, where we're building a parkade and 200 thousand square feet of retail, which will house about 75 new stores. There will also be a lot of new restaurants and our parking count will return to 5000 stalls.

I think one of the most amazing things is that we've already taken away about 185 thousand cubic meters of soil as we excavate that east parking lot so that it will be at the same grade as 152nd Street. Before, the entrance of the old Walmart was 22 feet higher.

What kind of an economic impact has this mall had on Surrey's economy?

The shopping centre currently brings in 10 million shoppers. A renovation of this magnitude, we expect, will double that number to 20 million shoppers per year from and coming into Surrey.

For the last five years, we've only been able to draw from our primary target area

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Guildford Town Centre Expansion
Big Economic Boost For Surrey

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everyday we have over 450 construction jobs happening here. That’s been going on since 2010 and will continue until 2014.

The existing shopping centre has about three thousand people working in it. And that will increase again by the seventy-five new stores, which will bring the number to about 4500 that are working the property.

We are working with the City of Surrey to make sure that the signage is appropriate to make the property look good. The city has also asked for one tree for every six parking stalls, and we’re going to have 5,000 parking stalls, so that shows you how many trees will be put into the property. The 104th Avenue overpass will have the corrugated concrete look covered by a vertical garden on both sides, as will one wall in the Centre Court inside.

We are working with Green Over Grey, the company that did the vertical garden at the new Semiahmoo library. As well there will be lots of water features at the entrances and lots of exterior seeding, so people will really feel that it is the place to be in Surrey.

I’d like to mention that the Architect who won the “Town Shift” design competition for Guildford is with MCM; the company we use as the architects for the shopping centre. He wasn’t on this project but is with the same firm. We’ve adopted some of the elements such as making it greener, making 152nd a much more livable road, and those are features you can see in those designs.

If you want to “fly through” the new centre, go to: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wagl73DtEKw or visit them at www.guildfordtowncentre.com
Located in the thriving Central City District of Surrey, this prime location is a short six minute walk from the King George SkyTrain station, making it easily accessible from anywhere in the lower mainland. It's also conveniently located directly across from Surrey Memorial Hospital for Medical Professionals.

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Lynda Pancanet, President and CEO of the Better Business Bureau serving Mainland BC, will retire from the BBBC on June 30.** Lynda has served the BBBC for the past 30 years. She has brought warmth and humor, and helped to grow the BBBC presence in the marketplace. More Info: Joanne@bbbc.org or 604-688-8792.

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