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Progress
North East

Growing communities one idea at a time

Community Futures St Paul-Smoky Lake Region

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Corporate Head Office

PO Box 1484
4802-50 Avenue
St. Paul, AB
T0A 3A0
T 780.645.5782
F 780.645.1811

Satellite Office

PO Box 1030
35 White Earth Street
Smoky Lake, AB
T0A 3C0
T 780.656.2110
F 780.656.2106

admin@cfspsl.ca
www.cfspsl.ca

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, June 18 ~ 7:00 pm

Vilna Senior Citizens Recreation Centre

It's that time of year again!

Everyone is invited to attend, meet the staff and learn about the year's accomplishments and future plans and projects.

Help celebrate our successes and find out what your local Community Futures Office can do for you.

Refreshments will be served following the meeting.

Executive Assistant

Community Futures is proud to officially welcome Janey Blair to the St Paul – Smoky Lake team. Janey joined us as Executive Assistant in February and is a warm, smiling face when you enter the St Paul office space. Janey provides friendly, quality service and has been a welcome addition to the office.

Janey can be reached by telephone at the St Paul office and via email: janey@cfspsl.ca.

Office Relocation…

Recent visitors to our Smoky Lake office have noticed a change in location. The office has moved to 35 White Earth Street in Smoky Lake. The space offers additional meeting and client work areas and we are excited to welcome current and new clients and partners into our expanded location.

Regional Success

Smoky Lake Collision & Restoration Ltd.

Perry Purich had been employed at Ed's Autobody for 26 years when the existing owners decided it was time to retire. Having industry experience, Perry decided that purchasing the business would be a natural transition and took the leap into entrepreneurship in May 2006. Smoky Lake Collision and Restoration Ltd. has been a whirlwind of activity. Demand for services is increasing and more customers are walking through the doors everyday.

Smoky Lake Collision and Restoration operates at 190 West Railway Drive in Smoky Lake. Perry and his five employees offer a full range of collision and restoration services, including: glass replacement and rock chip repairs, sandblasting and painting, air conditioning recharging, estimates, and salvage inspections.

Perks like setting your own work hours and seeing more financial benefits are standard with owning a business and with those perks comes an equal number of challenges. "There is a huge time demand, keeping up with the volume of work is our biggest challenge." With business increasing and customer base expanding, Purich says that Smoky Lake Collision and Restoration is busier than ever. He eventually plans to rebuild the existing building, expanding into a larger shop with more production and more employees.

Purich also says that new business owners need to be prepared to work a lot and to learn a lot. "I've dealt with customers before but didn't have as much experience with the financial side of the business. There are a lot of small things that you have to learn the hard way but you eventually figure out the best way to get things done."

Purich turned to Community Futures St Paul – Smoky Lake Region to help him get over his first learning curve. The Smoky Lake office helped him put together a business plan when Purich first thought about purchasing Ed's Autobody and later, helped him secure financing through the Community Futures small business loans program.

A thriving business and bright future plans. Smoky Lake Collision and Restoration Ltd. is growing and Perry says he still learns something new every day.

One idea at a time…

Community involvement and partnerships throughout the region include:

- Rural Destination Marketing Fund
- St Paul Marketing Committee
- St Paul Vision 2020
- Northern Alberta Youth Entrepreneurship Camp 2008
- Junior Achievement of Northern Alberta

Eye on Progress

From the Manager's Desk

We continue to improve your CF in order to provide a wider array of services to the region. Over the last year and a half we have improved the administration of the loans portfolio and have initiated some badly needed discipline in the management of the files.

I'm pleased to advise that we now have approximately One Million Dollars in our investment func to be used for Business Diversification projects in our region.
The projects we are looking for should be viable business ideas that improve the services to residents in our region.

If you have a business idea that you want to investigate, we invite you to come to one of the regional offices and talk to our business counselors to see if your plans fit our criteria.

Regional Food Branding Initiative

As a leading supporter of community based business and regional growth, Community Futures St Paul – Smoky Lake is exploring the feasibility of regional food processing opportunities in our communities. A regional strategy would allow the benefits of local production to remain within our communities, where local producers gain local support and experience the positives of common branding initiatives. Currently, we are identifying existing processing capacity within the region and determining local support for a regional marketing strategy.

Contact us today for more information on this exciting project.

Working Together…

Community Futures St Paul – Smoky Lake Region prides itself on community partnerships. Our partners throughout the year include: Healthy Alberta Communities, Northern Alberta Development Council, Elk Point Regional Allied Arts Society, Northern Alberta Junior Achievement, HUB Regional Alliance, Vilna Ag Society, Smoky Lake Economic Development Committee, and Chambers of Commerce throughout our service region.

Entrepreneur Training

Business Counselling, Planning, & Loans

Do you find the entire process of starting your own business confusing? Are you having trouble figuring out where to start? Do you have too many ideas & not enough focus? Do you just need guidance? The answer to all of these questions is….

Community Futures!

Our team of professional and experienced staff is ready to help you turn those business dreams into reality. Whether you are starting from scratch, purchasing an existing business or looking to expand into new areas, we have the skills and knowledge to get you started.

In the past year we have:

- Served 541 clients
- Developed and maintained 81 partnerships throughout the region
- Leveraged $267,000 through business development clients
- Provided information services to 258 clients

We are at work in your communities, answering questions, identifying resources, and developing partnerships to foster both business and community development and growth.

Entrepreneurs have access to valuable training opportunities through Community Futures. Brown Bag training sessions are offered by video conferencing located the St Paul office. This partnership with The Business Link means that entrepreneurs in rural communities have access to pertinent information and resources regarding daily business operations and planning tools for the future.

Visit **www.cfspsl.ca** to find out more about what we have to offer.

Get started now!
Contact us for more information.

Northern Alberta Youth Entrepreneurship Camp 2008

August 17-23

The June deadline to apply for NAYEC 2008 is fast approaching.

Four campers from the St Paul and Smoky Lake areas will be accepted to attend this year's camp, taking place at Moose Lake Camp, near Bonnyville. Applications can be picked up at the Community Futures offices and at local schools throughout the region.

We are excited to be taking part in another great camp season. Campers are guaranteed to have a fun-filled week of teamwork, recreation activities, and money-making!

Contact us today or visit our web site for more information!

www.nayec.ca

> Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.
>
> - Thomas Edison