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# PRINCE GEORGE CITIZEN

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## Kinsley to chair rural national health board

### Feds dole out more than \$500K to northern B.C.

by **BERNICE TRICK**  
Citizen staff

Mayor Colin Kinsley has been selected to lead the new national Ministerial Advisory Council on Rural Health.

Federal health minister Allan Rock appointed Kinsley council chair Wednesday during a visit to Prince George, where he said Kinsley has a broad understanding of health issues and is a willing and constructive partner for the public good and improving lives.

While here, Rock handed out more than \$500,000 for health initiatives in northern B.C.

■ The Northern Interior Regional Health Board (NIRHB) received about \$300,000 to reduce the incidence of type-2 (late onset) diabetes in the Cariboo to the Peace Liard health regions. At a reception at Exploration Place, Rock said diabetes is among the fastest growing diseases and the key is prevention, starting with the young.

■ The NIRHB also received about \$38,000 to address issues of seniors falling. Rock said each year one out of three people older than 65 suffer falls requiring medical attention, and

it's a leading cause of death among senior citizens. He said the problem must be addressed now through the National Falls Prevention Strategy, because there will be five million seniors in Canada by 2011.

Eric Benwell, president of the Prince George Seniors Council, said the money will be used to help prevent falls. "We'll have 100 seniors observing and reporting unsafe conditions in the community."

■ UNBC received more than \$200,000 for Dr. Chow Lee to do cancer research on liver tumours. The grant is the first ever allocated by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, established last year. "He's a gifted researcher who came here in 1999 and has established his lab at UNBC," said UNBC president Dr. Charles Jago. Lee is researching chemotherapy failure in relation to liver cancer with a hope of determining new therapies, Jago said.

Kinsley said he's pleased to head Canada's 23-member rural health council.

The appointment shows Prince George and area is on the leading edge in health matters, said Kinsley.

The first council meeting will be held in September in Prince George.

Rock said the focus on rural health

care stems from the fact 10 million rural Canadians have a higher rate of illness and accidents than urban Canadians, but

have poorer access to health services. "It has become a national concern," he said.



KINSLEY



Nathan Zurowski of the Prince George Selects and Diana Arturso of the Vancouver Breakers battle for the ball.

## 200 P.G. nurses sign resignation papers

by **BERNICE TRICK**  
Citizen staff

Although more than 200 nurses in

Prince George have signed resignation papers, none have officially quit, says a B.C. Nurses union official.

"The resignations are tentative," said Birthe Cisecki, BCNU northeast region chair. Resignations are being signed by nurses across the province, she said.

The nurses hope the move will force the Health Employers' Association of B.C. (HEABC) to get back to the table to "bargain in good faith" to get the contract dispute settled, said Cisecki.

"We're short more than 1,000 nurses in B.C. right now," she said, and the ones working are "angry, frustrated and fed up with the government."

She said the tentative resignations are the nurses' way to give HEABC "a reality check."

"We feel the HEABC has bullied nurses through threats and intimidation tactics, but nurses are not going to back down this time around," said Cisecki.

"We don't intend to fold, and if the government thinks that, then they don't know nurses."

Dave Richardson, CEO of the Northern Interior Regional Health Board, said he wouldn't comment on possible resignations because none have been officially submitted.



CISECKI

## Whitecaps impressed with crowd

by **JIM SWANSON**  
Citizen Sports Editor

The professionals called it a pro-style atmosphere.

Kevin Holness, the captain of the Vancouver Whitecaps, was amply impressed with the enthusiasm of the crowd of 1,586 that turned out at Massey Place Stadium on Wednesday to watch a combined Whitecaps/Van-

couver Breakers team down a mixed local bunch called the Prince George Selects 4-1.

"This kind of support is amazing. It's a pleasure for us to be a part of this and come up here," said Holness, a former standout in the Regina minor soccer system who has represented Canada.

"Prince George has been tremendous in supporting us, and the sponsors like

(Pacific Western Brewing) have been great. This is fun for us."

While the Whitecaps usually battle in front of crowds of 5,000 people at home in Swangard Stadium in Burnaby, Holness admitted the Whitecaps don't always see crowds of 1,500 for road games in the A-League.

— See story on page 8

## Health workers returned to avoid contempt charge

by **BERNICE TRICK**  
Citizen staff

Health Sciences Association (HSA) members were back on the job Wednesday following two days of walkouts at hospitals across B.C.

Fred McLeod, HSA director for the North, said the membership of X-ray and lab technologists, therapists and pharmacists decided to go back to work after being served a notice of motion to appear before B.C. Supreme Court Wednesday.

"We knew we would be found guilty of being in contempt of a Labour Relations Board order issued Friday to cease and desist walkouts," McLeod said.

"Our members did not have a desire to be in contempt of court, so rather than waiting for the court decision, we decided

to go back to work."

The HSA knew the Health Employers' Association of B.C. (HEABC) was scheduled to appear in court at 2 p.m. Wednesday.

Despite the HSA returning to work, the HEABC kept its court appearance. Justice Patrick Dohm received assurance from the HSA it would not engage in any further illegal job action, said Gary Moser, HEABC chief negotiator.

"Whether or not there's been contempt will be dealt with in the future," said Moser.

McLeod said the walkouts were posi-

tive for the membership.

"Our membership has become united, we have support from the public and we made our point to HEABC that we are serious about negotiating a contract. It was a good time to stop," McLeod said.

He doesn't expect any action at the negotiating table until the court case is settled, but said the HSA is ready to get back to negotiating.

Meanwhile at Prince George Regional Hospital, X-ray, lab and other procedures cancelled Monday to Wednesday this week due to the job action are being rescheduled.

"It will probably take two weeks to a month to reschedule those who were cancelled," said Renee Foot, communications director.

— See more on page 6

**TODAY**

**Cornered** by Baldwin

Stupid cell phone. One more thing he hated about walking her yappy little dog.

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