

local

A better payday loan option

Mark Nielsen
Citizen staff
mnielsen@pgcitizen.ca

Banks and credit unions need to “find ways to innovate their services” to prevent the financially-stressed from turning to payday loan stores in times of need and digging themselves into deeper holes in the process.

That’s one of the conclusions three UNBC researchers set out in a report prepared for the Prince George Aboriginal Business and Community Development Centre on “fringe financial institutions, the unbanked and the precariously banked” in Prince George.

The authors, economics professor Paul Bowles and researchers Keely Dempsey and Trevor Shaw, also suggest creation over the longer term of “new institutions designed specifically to meet the needs of low income individuals.”

There have been attempts made elsewhere, they note in the report, although they’ve been money losers.

In 1996, Four Corners Community Savings was established in east Vancouver with a \$300,000 annual subsidy from the provincial NDP government, but in 2004 the plug was pulled by the subsequent Liberal government, citing accumulated losses totaling \$6 million.

But that same year, Vancouver City Savings Credit Union, in a partnership



Ray Gerow with a report on fringe financial institutions.

Citizen photo by Brent Braaten

with the Portland Hotel Society, opened Pigeon Park Savings. As of 2007, PPS was serving 4,200 members but was losing about \$100,000 a year.

However, PPS is an improvement over Four Corners, the authors contend, in that it is part of a larger chain of 59 Vancity branches and so is not subject to as onerous regulatory requirements of its stand-alone predecessor.

“PPS offers clients cheque-cashing, unlimited withdrawals, bill payments, money orders and ATM access all for a simple fee of \$5 per month,” the authors wrote.

“Currently, PPS is promoting financial literacy amongst its members and the community in an effort to provide the ‘tools to make sound decisions’ and to effectively deter the use of fringe financial institutions.”

With the report in hand,

ABCDC president Ray Gerow said the next step will be to raise some funds to move to the business planning stage to explore options for Prince George.

“I would think the options that will be explored would be looking at both short and long term solutions, which may or may not include an ‘institution,’” he said. “It’s too early yet to be able to effectively gaze into that crystal ball, but for sure we are examining what is happening with Pigeon Park Savings in Vancouver to see if it is a suitable model for Prince George.”

The report is centred on a survey, conducted over an eight-month period, of 176 people found exiting payday loan stores. They identified two types of users — those who frequent the stores at least once a month and are likely to rely on income assistance and disability payments and those who have accounts in banks or credit unions but occasionally turn to payday loans to meet short-term needs - although a large portion of that group frequents the stores once a month or more.

B.C. legislation limits the stores to a maximum interest rate of 23 per cent and \$1,500 in fees on short-term loans (up to 62 days). But that still adds up, the authors indicate, as a lender can charge \$64.40 for a 10-day loan of \$280, which works out to 839.5 per cent when annualized.

Nonetheless, the authors found that their patrons preferred payday loan outlets in part because their hours and locations are more convenient and holds are less likely to be placed on cheques.

Other factors, like easy access to emergency funding for car repairs, tax refund loans and wire transfers and bad credit records that preclude patrons from borrowing elsewhere were also important.

Rustad's reprieve

Nechako MLA dropped from recall hit list

Gordon Hoekstra
Citizen staff
ghoekstra@pgcitizen.ca

Nechako Lakes Liberal MLA John Rustad has been officially dropped from the anti-HST recall list.

Anti-HST organizers who launched a successful initiative petition against the HST are holding a competition to see which of 18 Liberal MLAs initially targeted for recall can sign up the most campaigners. The riding with the most will be the first to be targeted for recall. They’ve already signed up more than 2,000 campaigners, more than 100 in some ridings.

Rustad, who was dropped in the first week, didn’t even know he was no longer on the list. Rustad said, in fact, he couldn’t even say who was on the list. “It’s kind of irrelevant. I’m carrying out my responsibilities as an MLA,” said Rustad, repeating his stated position on the recall effort.

Rustad was the only northern B.C. Liberal MLA on the recall list, so his removal means no Liberal MLAs are immediately targeted for recall.

The Liberals also hold the ridings of Peace River North, Prince George-Mackenzie and Prince George-Valemount. Blair Lekstrom, who held Peace River South, recently resigned from caucus and the Liberal Party over the HST.

Anti-HST organizer Chris Delaney said Rustad was dropped because Mike Summers, the chief anti-HST organizer in the Nechako Lake area, had health issues, and nobody immediately stepped up to fill the spot. (Summers earlier said that while there was wide support for the anti-HST campaign, it didn’t translate into an appetite for a recall).

Delaney linked the lack of a recall effort in northern B.C. to the coming winter months, which he said is not a good time to conduct a campaign.

UNBC political scientist Jason Morris said the size of the ridings in northern B.C. could also be a stumbling block, noting that some ridings in the densely-populated Lower Mainland can be traversed in just hours.

The anti-HST camp would also be seeking out the most organized campaigns for their initial recall attempts, and its possible those teams are not in place in northern B.C.

The Liberals have decided to take the initiative petition to a province-wide vote in Sept. 2011. Premier Gordon Campbell has also said that a simple majority of voters will decide the HST’s fate, a lower threshold than under the existing rules. The anti-HST forces are launching recall campaigns, they say, because they want the B.C. Liberals to hold the vote sooner.

Delaney said the recall effort would end the moment the Liberals agreed to overturn the HST.

The new tax — which combines the seven per cent provincial sales and five per cent GST — came into effect on July 1.

The change means consumers are paying the provincial seven per cent portion of the HST on some new items including meals, domestic airline tickets, funerals, haircuts and new homes over \$525,000.



RUSTAD

Strange Grapes!

Wine Event

Join us for a unique evening and experience unexpected wines and some unforgettable food!

Experience five unique wines and with five unique culinary creations!

Saturday, October 16th

Doors open @ 6:00 PM - Food @ 7:00 PM
Tickets \$40.00 each or 2 for \$75.00 available at

The Twisted Cork Restaurant
Mon-Thu: 11:00-11:00; Fri, Sat: 11:00-12:00; Sun: 5:00 - 10:00
Phone: 250 561-5550 • 1157 5th Avenue

PRINCE GEORGE NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

41st Annual General Meeting

Date: October 19, 2010
Location: Prince George Native Friendship Centre
Time: 5:30 PM - Stew & Bannock
6:30 PM - Registration
7:00 PM - Annual General Meeting
Power of Friendship Hall
1600 - 3rd Avenue
Prince George, BC V2L 3G6
Phone (250) 564-3568

Membership Application Deadline:
Applications will be accepted until October 18, 2010. Forms are available at front reception.
NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

PRIMETIME programs on TV tonight 10/14/10

	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30
CTV	CBS: Crime Scene Investigation "Squeals" (N)	The Big Bang Theory	You Think You Can Dance	Grey's Anatomy Jackson tries to get ahead (N)	The Mentalist Investigating a convict's murder (N)			
CBC	Wheel of Fortune (N)	Jeopardy! (N)	The Nature of Things Elephant and human bond (N)	The Twins Who Share a Brain (N)			CBC News: The National	
Global	Entertainment Tonight (N)	ET Canada	Bones A skull and hands are discovered (N) (PA)	The Office "Sex Ed" (N)	Out-sourced (N)		The Apprentice Launching a new shoe line (N)	
NBC	Evening Magazine	Inside Edition (N)	Community (N)	30 Rock "Live Show" (N)	The Office "Sex Ed" (N)	Out-sourced (N)	The Apprentice Launching a new shoe line (N)	
CBS	Entertainment Tonight (N)	The Insider (N)	The Big Bang Theory	S.I.M.Y. Dad Says (N)	CBS: Crime Scene Investigation "Squeals" (N)		The Mentalist Investigating a convict's murder (N)	
ABC	Wheel of Fortune (N)	Jeopardy! (N)	To Be Announced	Grey's Anatomy Jackson tries to get ahead (N)			Private Practice "A Better Place to Be" (N)	
PBS	U.S. Senate Debate Washington candidates discuss issues.	Pioneers of Television "Late Night"	Point "Fire at End House" (Part 2 of 2)	Antiques Roadshow "Philadelphia, PA" (Part 3 of 3)				
FOX	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Bones A skull and hands are discovered (N) (PA)	Fringe A shapeshifter is called into action (N)			Q13 FOX News at Ten (N)	

Protect Yourself with ANTI-VIRAL

Anti-Viral

- Helps to shorten the duration and severity of colds & flus
- Effective relief for sore, irritated throats
- Enhanced immune function

Sale \$16.99 (60 softgels reg. \$21.49)

Are Maria Specialties 1631 - 20th Ave 250-561-6388
Mother Maria's Market Bon Voyage Plaza 250-961-6686

"Healthy Products for Body and Soul" 00672092

INCOME TAX COURSE

CURRICULUM — During the 9-week course, students study the basics of income tax preparation including current laws, theory and application.

THE TUITION COST covers the complete course, including textbooks, all materials, reference guides and registration.

FULL DETAILS ARE AS CLOSE AS YOUR PHONE. Just call for complete details on class locations, starting dates, tuition, etc.

REGISTER TODAY!

Register online at hrblock.ca or call **1-877-32BLOCK (322-5625)** for details.

H&R BLOCK KNOWS TAXES and how to teach them. Our instructors are expertly trained and are experienced Block personnel who make each session an exciting experience with discussion sessions, reference materials and instructions using regulation forms and schedules.

CLASSES BEGIN OCT 18

Morning, afternoon or evening sessions. Applicants need only the willingness to learn about taxes.

H&R BLOCK

Enrollment restrictions may apply. Enrollment in, or completion of, the H&R Block Income Tax Course is neither an offer nor guarantee of employment. © 2009 H&R Block Canada, Inc.

REGIONAL DISTRICT of Fraser-Fort George

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ZONING AMENDMENT BYLAW NO. 2644

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing into Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2644 will be held:

1:30 pm
Thursday, October 21, 2010
Regional District Board Room
155 George Street
Prince George, BC

Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2644 is proposed to amend zoning on the South West ¼ of District Lot 4620, Cariboo District, on a site specific basis, to allow a recreation cabin on the subject property. The property is located directly off the end of Patterson Road East. The owner is Wayne Linehan.

At the public hearing, all those who deem their interest in land to be affected by the proposed bylaw shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard or to present written submissions. Please note that emails cannot be accepted as written submissions. Any material received before or at the public hearing will become public information. The public hearing will be chaired by a delegate of the Regional District Board. Copies of the resolution making the delegation, Zoning Bylaw Amendment, and other relevant background documents, may be examined at the office of the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, 155 George Street, Prince George, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., October 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20 and 21, 2010.

Kenna Latimer Development Services Prince George, BC Fax: 250-562-8676

155 George Street, Prince George, BC V2L 1P8
Telephone: (250) 960-4400, Toll Free 1-800-667-1959
Fax: (250) 563-7520, Web: www.rdfg.bc.ca

Cash for Quesnel airport

Citizen staff

Runway maintenance equipment at the Quesnel Airport will be upgraded now that the federal government has granted the necessary funds.

About \$158,000 was needed to replace the airport's old wet/dry chemical spreader, which Transport Minister Chuck Strahl provided on Wednesday. Cariboo-Prince George MP Dick Harris made the announcement.

"The Government of Canada is investing in the Quesnel Airport to ensure that efficient, safe, and affordable systems are in place to serve British Columbia residents in this community well into the future," said Harris.

Quesnel mayor Mary Sjostrom said the new equipment would help keep the runway safe and clear for aircraft coming and going from the Cariboo city.

"Our airport is a vital piece of infrastructure," said Sjostrom. "Not only does it open up the region for aviation tourism, but it plays a pivotal role in forest fire suppression activities, health-care emergencies and economic development initiatives. The addition of new capital equipment is a necessity and we appreciate the investment the federal government is making in our regional airport."

the prince george citizen
it's what matters to you

LOTTO BC, LOTTO 6/49 LOTTO MAX

The winning numbers in last Friday's **Lotto Max** draw were **03, 04, 05, 08, 13, 22, 33**. The bonus number was **32**.

The four **EXTRA** winning numbers for British Columbia on last Friday were **10, 20, 29, 47**.

The winning numbers in Wednesday's **Lotto-649** draw were **02, 03, 23, 29, 34, 36**. The bonus number was **17**.

The BC-49 lottery winning numbers on Wednesday were **18, 21, 25, 34, 41, 48**. The bonus number was **29**.

The four **EXTRA** winning numbers for British Columbia on Wednesday were **06, 22, 80, 85**.

In the event of a discrepancy between this and the official winning numbers list, the latter shall prevail.