

# Plenty of Liberal interest in Prince George North

*Three eyeing chance to take on Paul Ramsey*

By MICHELLE LANG

Free Press staff writer

It appears there will be some serious competition for the B.C. Liberal nomination in Prince George North.

Dan McLaren, president of Commonwealth Mortgage Corporation, says he is "very seriously considering" his candidacy for the riding. Local teacher Richard Giroday confirmed to *The Free Press* Friday that he intends to run and there are strong rumours that local realtor Preet Sandhu plans to challenge Mr. McLaren and Mr. Giroday for the Prince George

North Liberal nomination.

Mr. McLaren, who made a failed bid for city council in the 1996 municipal elections, says he has signed up 200 members to the party who support him. The 35 year-old businessman says he is the B.C. Liberal's only approved candidate in Prince George. But Mr. McLaren says he still wants to gauge whether he has sufficient support before he makes a formal announcement to run. He plans to make that decision within a week.

"I'm very seriously thinking of running for the position but it will depend on

whether I have the support. I think I do but I don't want to paint myself into a corner," he says.

Mr. Giroday, 48, teaches math at D.P. Todd Secondary School. He says it was a tough decision to run for the nomination but says he has something to offer Prince George.

"I think it's like getting pregnant. It's something you probably don't want to do, something you don't want to experience but there is a reason you would do it that is internal for you. You know that at the end there is something of great value there," he says.



Sandhu



McLaren

Mr. Sandhu is the president of the B.C. Liberal Prince George North Riding Association and many local Liberal supporters believe he will seek the riding nomination. Mr. Sandhu also made a failed bid for a city council seat in 1996 and is well known for his involvement with the Guru Gobind Singh Temple Association as a local Sikh moderate.

When contacted by *The Free Press*, Mr. Sandhu said he was not ready to make a statement to the media on the matter.

Last week Shirley Bond, chair of the Prince George school board, and John Brink, a local businessman, declared their intention to seek the Liberal nod in Prince George-Mount Robson.

NDP MLA Paul Ramsey, the province's finance minister, currently holds the Prince George North seat.

## Kidnapper will serve five years

A 24-city man who tried to kidnap a boyhood friend was sentenced to five years in prison. And he will serve five years in prison.

The B.C. Court of Appeal has dismissed Travis Twizell's bid for a reduced sentence.

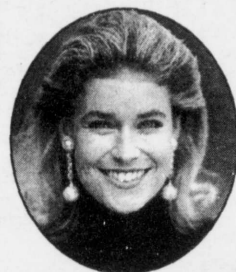
Mr. Twizell, a serious heroin addict, went to trial on two charges, break and enter with intent and attempted kidnapping, after he was arrested on February 19, 1999 from a treed area near a house of Hubert Road. The house was vacant and for sale. Investigation showed it had been broken into. It was Mr. Twizell's plan to lure a boyhood friend to the house, kidnap him and hold him for \$150,000 ransom.

The facts at trial showed that Mr. Twizell had bought a snowmobile the day before, and calls were made to the intended victim's office.

The plan was foiled when police got an anonymous tip about the scheme the day before.

They showed up at the house that morning, and a police service dog found Mr. Twizell hiding in a treed area roughly 100 metres from the house. He was dressed all in black, with what the Crown contended was a balaclava on his head. With him was a bag containing extension cords, duct tape a cassette and recorder. Mace was recovered from the snow.

In July, following a pre-sentence report, Judge Hogan sentenced Mr. Twizell to five years in prison.



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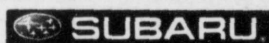
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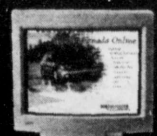
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