

BUSINESS

BREAKING NEWS AT LEADERPOST.COM

SECTION D WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2013



Site bosses and architects signed the last piece of steel before it was lifted by crane and set in place at the top of Centre Square Place on the 2300 block Broad St. on Tuesday.

BRYAN SCHLOSSER/Leader-Post

TREE NURSERY

Coalition gets reassurances

LEADER-POST STAFF

The newly formed Western Canada Tree Nursery Coalition has received assurances from Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz that the Agroforestry Development Centre at Indian Head will continue to operate for the next year or so.

“Minister Ritz confirmed that the tree nursery will be fully operational to the end of 2013, including harvest and distribution in 2013 and plantings to ensure supply for 2014 and 2015,” said Norm Hall, president of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS), who met with Ritz last Friday. “These assurances are all important as the tree nursery must be maintained as a viable business if it is to be successfully transitioned to the federal government,” Hall said in a press release Tuesday.

Hall said he’s been informed by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) the ADC will have “all the employees needed to complete a successful season. (The AAFC official) didn’t promise that there would be zero layoffs, but there will be admin staff to send out order forms and to receive them and process them. There’s going to be enough staff for planting, maintenance, as well as harvest.”

Funding for the 111-year-old shelterbelt program and tree nursery was cut in the 2012 federal budget, and officials are in the process of winding down the ADC. Lay-off notices have been issued

or will be issued for the 60 or so full and part-time staff and the centre is expected to cease operations by Dec. 31.

The coalition was formed in late April to develop a business plan for the continued operation of the tree nursery and shelterbelt program on a cost-recovery basis through a co-operative or non-profit organization. The coalition expects to complete a business plan by Aug. 31.

The coalition has also asked western Canadian rural municipal governments for help, as their ratepayers have been the beneficiaries of this service and are concerned about its continuation. In Saskatchewan, APAS has asked all RMs to write to Ritz and their MP in support of the tree nursery, the shelterbelt program and the coalition’s initiative.

Saskatchewan RMs have also been asked for a small financial contribution to assist in the costs of developing a viable business model. Hall said the province’s nearly 300 RMs have been asked to contribute \$100 each to fund the business plan. Similar requests will be made to rural governments in the other provinces.

Members of the coalition include APAS, the RM and Town of Indian Head, the British Columbia Grain Producers Association, the Peace River Regional District, the Wild Rose Agricultural Producers of Alberta (WRAP), the Keystone Agricultural Producers of Manitoba (KAP), and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA).

Centre Square ‘topped off’

BRUCE JOHNSTONE
LEADER-POST

After three years of development and 16 months of construction, Centre Square Place has poured the last yard of concrete and placed the last piece of structural steel at a \$31-million, 10-storey luxury condominium project at 2300 Broad St.

The “topping off” ceremony marks a significant milestone for the project, which was designed by Kirk Banadyga of Number Ten Architectural Group, developed by Centre Square Developments GP Inc. and built by Graham Construction.

“I don’t think you’ll see another building like this in the city,” Banadyga told

“I DON’T THINK YOU’LL SEE ANOTHER BUILDING LIKE THIS IN THE CITY.”
KIRK BANADYGA

assembled guests at the ceremony Tuesday. “I think it will be another icon on the Regina skyline.”

Banadyga said the building is unique because of its location at the corner of 15th Avenue and Broad Street, which affords views of the downtown to the north and Wascana Centre and University of Regina campus to the south. “Some of the views are absolutely incredible. The city of Re-

gina’s skyline is second to none,” Banadyga said.

The building’s circular design and floor-to-ceiling windows distinguish it from other highrise condo developments. Centre Square Place also boasts a rooftop garden, “complete with grass, shrubs, trees, barbecue area, circular walking track with probably the most spectacular view in all of Regina,” Banadyga said. “You add the famous Saskatchewan sunsets, and it’s fantastic.”

Banadyga said Centre Square Place is one of a number of luxury condo projects coming on stream in Regina, so there’s plenty for homeowners to choose from. “There’s some interesting product coming on line; each will have its own

merits. But I think this building will stand the test of time.”

Wayne Hydeman of Centre Square Developments said the building is scheduled to be completed by the end of October with occupancy of the building’s 71 units to begin immediately after completion. “Right now, we’re about 72 per cent (sold out),” Hydeman said.

The remaining unsold units range from \$360,000 for a 1,017-square-foot, one-bedroom suite to \$550,000 for a 1,411-square-foot, two-bedroom suite.

Hydeman said the project is about three to four weeks behind schedule due to the extended winter weather. “But I firmly believe in the next three or four months, they’ll pick it up.”

WORKERS’ COMPENSATION BOARD

Compensation board getting new chair, legislation

WILL CHABUN
LEADER-POST

David Eberle is moving on, confident he “left a bit of a footprint”.

Since he became chairman of the Saskatchewan Workers’ Compensation Board, the rate of “time-loss injuries” has fallen to the lowest point in a decade.

The board has the fourth-lowest premiums in the country and a recent reduction was put in place.

New legislation covering the board was recently passed by the Legislature and needs only proclamation, expected to come in the second half of this year.

The avuncular Eberle, whose five-year term is nearing its end, finds great significance in the fact the province now has a ministry of labour relations and workplace safety — a first in its history.

As well, the “Mission Zero” workplace safety campaign, on which the ministry and the WCB collaborate, has gained a high profile.

Still, Eberle — a man so dedicated to his job that his voice wavered for an instant Tuesday as he talked about workplace injuries and deaths — knows he’s leaving a job only partly done.

Last year saw 60 deaths linked to the workplace — not only trauma, but heart



David Eberle

attacks and occupational diseases many years in the making. And despite a steady drop in the rate of time-loss incidents, Saskatchewan has the second-highest rate in Canada, be-

hind only Manitoba.

“Sixty deaths are appalling,” Eberle told the meeting, which will be rerun Wednesday in Saskatoon as part of the board’s commitment to communicate with its stakeholders — that is, workers and employers.

At Tuesday’s WCB annual general meeting, Eberle noted this is the 100th anniversary of the Meredith Principles, the social contract under which employers pay into an insurance pool covering their workers; in return, workers give up their legal right to sue employers over injuries.

Simple — but Eberle says it’s “an eyeopener” to visitors from countries that lack

similar programs, and regularly see workers killed or injured without compensation, their families destitute.

The WCB’s finances, reported earlier and which show a surplus of \$155.8 million, by law must be used for compensation, treatment or reducing rates.

The new act — which CEO Peter Federko called “a total rewrite” — will mean increased financial compensation for workers, something he concedes comes with “a fairly significant pricetag”.

Looking ahead, Federko said the WCB sees revenue from premiums growing by about four per cent this year, then two per cent in both 2014 and 2015, reaching

about \$321 million.

It’s also projecting a 4.0-per-cent increase in investment income each year, and expects time-loss injuries to fall slowly over this period, though the revised compensation payments should rise to \$282 million in 2015 from \$196 million this year.

He also noted that to the end of March, 11 workplace fatalities had been reported, with three more in April.

Extrapolating that, Saskatchewan is on track to another bad year.

Said Federko: “The single largest challenge continues to be doing something about the number of injuries in the province.”



BONE structure.ca

Home Buyers | Builders | Real Estate Developers | Architects

Sign up for a FREE information session and find out why the BONE Structure® Light Steel Construction System is an international revolution in single and multi-dwelling residential building.

FREE INFORMATION SESSION IN REGINA

14 MAY

TUESDAY AT 6:00 PM
Radisson Plaza Hotel
2125 Victoria Avenue
Regina, SK S4P 0S3

REGISTER TODAY VIA
BONEstructure.ca
Hurry! Limited Seating.
T. 1 855 978.2663