

### SouthGrow Values Members Input

During the month of June and July, Shilpa Stocker, Project Manager for SouthGrow Regional Initiative visited member communities' Chief Administrative Officers and Economic Development Officers and asked for feedback. Specifically, we wanted to know what SouthGrow can do to assist members in their efforts to attract opportunities and investment as well as retain and grow business and industry in their communities. In addition, we wanted information on how SouthGrow is doing as it reached its fifth anniversary.

Chief Administrative Officers and Economic Development Officers were very giving of their valuable time and candidly provided valuable feedback which will be used to develop next year's operational plan. In addition, we received valuable advice from each member community that will be discussed at a special planning session in September for Board and Committee Members.

While member community representatives are critical stakeholders in SouthGrow Regional Initiative, we understand that their feedback and advice reflects one perspective. We therefore invite you, our partners, industry stakeholders, and supporters to provide us with additional feedback from your perspective. Tell us what you think of the progress SouthGrow Regional Initiative has made in the past five years and more importantly, what issues, projects and opportunities we should be investigating and assessing as we move into our next five years. We encourage you to send any comments you may have to [info@southgrow.com](mailto:info@southgrow.com)

### Regional Water Assessment

SouthGrow Regional Initiative is having a unique study conducted by the University of Lethbridge, Department of Economics. Specifically, researchers have been contracted to detail the existing water situation, both societal and economic in the SouthGrow region. In addition to the availability of water in the region, existing legislation pertaining to water as well as the impact of water licenses will be detailed. Understanding and ensuring the capacities of the sustainable water supply is key to the economic well being of our region's agriculture and processing sector. It is expected that once an initial assessment of the region has been conducted, the researchers will outline some "next steps" for SouthGrow Regional Initiative. These steps will enable it to make communities better aware of water's impact on economic development and investment attraction, now and in the future and the balance required to achieve optimal societal and economic use of water in the region.

### Who are the Key Players?

The SouthGrow region has many strengths in industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, metal fabrication, architecture, engineering and construction and transportation and logistics. In order to ensure that these industries grow in the region, it is important to encourage and support innovation and technology commercialization that may cross/enhance these industries. Supporting this vision of encouraging innovation and commercialization is the region's strong base in institutional research and development.

The Province of Alberta is developing support in order to encourage innovation and commercialization across industries. In order to gauge the support that SouthGrow Regional Initiative can provide this sector, an assessment of the innovation and technology commercialization assets, systems and supports is being conducted. If you have thoughts on this sector or are currently involved in a venture that involves this sector, we invite you to contact us so that we can incorporate your observations in the assessment. It is expected that the assessment will lead to an identification of systems and supports gaps/barriers that may exist in the region as well as opportunities that may be surfacing as a result of the expertise and assets existing in this sector. For more information or to contribute to the assessment, contact us by phone at 403-381-5414 or by e-mail at [info@southgrow.com](mailto:info@southgrow.com)

### Summer 2008

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### We Are...

- City of Lethbridge
- Town of Cardston
- Town of Claresholm
- Town of Coaldale
- Town of Coalhurst
- Town of Magrath
- Town of Milk River
- Town of Picture Butte
- Town of Raymond
- Town of Taber
- Town of Vauxhall
- Town of Vulcan
- Village of Barons
- Village of Carmangay
- Village of Coutts
- Village of Champion
- Village of Lomond
- Village of Milo
- Village of Nobleford
- Village of Stirling
- Village of Warner
- Cardston County
- County of Lethbridge
- MD of Taber
- Vulcan County
- County of Warner
- Blood Tribe



# SouthGrow

Regional Initiative

Creating Opportunities...

### SouthGrow Holds 5<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

SouthGrow Regional Initiative held its fifth Annual General Meeting on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008. During the meeting, Sandra Nelson, Chair of the Marketing and Communications Committee informed membership of the progress of the regional economic development alliance's three committees. Mayor Paul Goldade of Nobleford provided the financial report and the Lethbridge Regional Director for Alberta Finance and Enterprise, Linda Erickson detailed the 2008-2009 Operations Plan. The following are projects to be spearheaded by each committee:

#### Strategic Collaboration Initiatives

- Develop and Build Regional Partnerships
- Community Visitation and Needs Assessment
- Community Profile Update
- Enhancement of the SouthGrow Website
- Policies and Procedures Maintenance
- Sector Ad Hoc Committee Development

#### Marketing and Communications Initiatives

- Website Enhancement
- Branding and Marketing Initiatives
- Internal and External Communications Activities
- Recognition Event
- Success Stories Development

#### Economic Development and Innovation

- Alternative Energy Initiative
- Regional Innovation and Commercialization Infrastructure Assessment
- SouthGrow Water Situational Analysis
- Labour Initiative
- Metal Fabrication Productivity Improvement Initiative

Election of the new board also took place at the meeting. Members are:

- Chairman – Jon Stevens, Town of Picture Butte
- Vice Chair – Mayor Bob Tarleck, City of Lethbridge
- Treasurer – Councilor Don Wentz, Town of Coaldale
- Secretary – Mayor Paul Goldade, Village of Nobleford
- Director – Councilor Harlan Cahoon, Cardston County
- Director – Daryl Sutter, Town of Claresholm
- Director – Councilor Kym Nichols, Town of Coaldale
- Director – Councilor Ron Lagemaat, Town of Coalhurst
- Director – Sandra Nelson, Village of Stirling
- Director – Harley Frank, Blood Tribe Council, Standoff

The Board and the staff are looking forward to another productive and successful year.



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**PEOPLE ...  
make the  
SouthGrow  
Region proud.**

**In Fond Memory**

Dana Higa, Deputy Mayor of Raymond passed away in June of this year. Dana is remembered as a valued member of the SouthGrow Management Board and served as the dedicated Chair of the Strategic Collaboration Committee. Her input and participation on SouthGrow proved a great benefit to her community and the entire region. She will be missed by the Management Board and Members.



Dana Higa

**PRIDE ...  
in the Region's  
accomplishments.**

**Westwind Rodeo Academy Grows**

The Westwind Rodeo Academy in Cardston will receive \$1.53 million in funding from the Rural Alberta Development Fund, enabling the program to continue to grow. The program started in February 2007 as a pilot project with 24 students and progressed to being offered full time by the school division in the fall of 2007. While the program was initiated to focus on sports performance and academics, Program Administrator Shellee Shaw indicates that it will now have a third component, equine therapy. This component will help students psychologically and physically, while gaining a variety of horsemanship skills. In addition to assisting the students at the Rodeo Academy, the funding benefits the community of Cardston in terms of improving health and quality of life and perhaps attracting people to tour the area or take up residence.

**Lethbridge College Leading in Wind Turbine Education**

Lethbridge College's first class of turbine students graduated in the Spring, certifying them to work on wind power equipment anywhere in the world. To cap the College's accomplishment of offering the first wind turbine technology program in Canada, officials indicated that the institution will now be a role model for similar courses across the country. In fact, the college will be named Canada's leader by internationally recognized BZEE Consult in Germany. The college's training and facilities meet industry standards endorsed by all major builders, most of which are located in Germany. Lethbridge College is the first college in Canada to qualify and five more are in the process of obtaining similar status.

**Birds of Prey Earns National Award**

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Alberta Birds of Prey Foundation and the Town of Coaldale received the Canadian Environment Award from Canadian Geographic at an awards ceremony in Toronto. The Alberta Birds of Prey Nature Centre was one of three nominees in the Restoration & Rehabilitation category at the Community Awards level. The "Gold Award" was presented to the organization based on its 20 year history of how the present site was developed partly as a storm water retention project for the Town of Coaldale and the adjacent County of Lethbridge lands. In fact, in the last 50 years, the site has been a prairie marsh, a stormwater retention area and a cultivated field. In 1991, it became a home for the centre and in addition to being a tourist attraction and a wildlife habitat, the centre rescues injured birds and provides a venue for environmental learning. A component of the Gold Award is a \$5,000 prize which the Centre can donate to an environmental cause of its choice. Recognition coupled with the ability to "pay it forward" ... it doesn't get better than that!



**PRODUCTS ...  
showing  
diversity in our  
region..**

**Managing Water Through Innovation**

While HydroLogics Inc. has developed a new computer model for the South Saskatchewan River Basin, the main water resource in southern Alberta, the University of Lethbridge has earned the proprietary rights to the public domain computer model and is the hub for Alberta access to the program. The model has the ability to tell users the impact of proposed changes in water use. For example, water licenses in Alberta's irrigation industry can be shifted and the model has the ability to outline the potential impact from such shifting. Such a tool can be critical in ensuring that the water use and water flow are balanced, resulting in having water available for the right use at the right time.

**Home to Vulcan**

Galaxy Fest and Spock Days took place in Vulcan this year on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, with special guest being Eugene Roddenberry, son of Star Trek creator Gene Roddenberry. This year marked the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the convention and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tourism centre. Anniversaries and special guests certainly warrant celebration, but the Town decided to top those achievements with efforts to host the world premiere of Star Trek XI when it is released May 8, 2009. While discussions with executives from Paramount Pictures did not immediately result in being awarded the ability to host the World Premiere of the movie, the proposal is being seriously considered.

The remarkable effort started with the Town of Vulcan launching a campaign to host the world premiere in September 2007 through a Facebook forum. The endeavour was titled Star Trek XI: Help bring Spock home to Vulcan, Alberta. This was followed by a media campaign and the submission of a multi-media proposal to Paramount Pictures in Hollywood. The forum's membership has reached nearly 1,000 and coverage was received on CTV Evening News, Canada AM, Agence France Presse, The New York Times and The China Post. The media coverage received internationally even caught the attention of other places that could host similar premieres such as Riverside, Iowa (the future birthplace of Captain Kirk) and Linlithgow, Scotland (future birthplace of Scotty).

With the magnitude of attention paid worldwide to this innovative idea developed and grown by the people in this unique town, how can Spock not come home to Vulcan?

"Live Long and Prosper"



**Communities Working Together To Provide Good Government**

The Town of Magrath, the Town of Raymond and the Village of Stirling are embracing the need to think and act strategically. The communities' strategic priority is to foster healthy working relationships with neighbouring municipalities and to actively participate in regional service initiatives where it makes business sense. The three communities believe that working cooperatively with neighbouring municipalities can make business sense.

In fact, the three communities share a unique synergy and history. Many of the settlements in the late 19th century in southern Alberta, for instance, were promoted by prominent Lethbridge residents like Elliott Galt, Charles Magrath and David Elton. Their vision and legacy continues today as communities like Magrath, Raymond, Stirling and others function increasingly—like spokes in a wheel—as an integral part of the rapidly developing broader Lethbridge region. Residential and economic development in satellite communities such as these has a direct bearing on the vitality of Lethbridge and vice versa.

And, working together is not a new concept to the communities. Currently, Raymond and Stirling, which share a Chief Administrative Officer are constructing a regional water treatment facility. By working together they saved over \$5 million dollars, financial resources that can fund other community priorities. Just this month, Magrath, Stirling and Raymond have agreed in principle to explore the possibility of sharing some human and physical assets, which are not being fully utilized. The communities have agreed to start with simple solutions, such as the use of public works equipment. Savings realized will be used to help fund assets to increase capacity and enhance the services provided.

Scott Barton, Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Raymond and Village of Stirling notes, "we are charged with providing good government. Good government is about making sound decisions that increase our ability to provide services to our communities. Sometimes, by working with our neighbouring communities we are providing good government." Wade Alston, Administrator for the Town of Magrath agrees. "Our communities' outstanding quality of life presents great opportunities for further high quality residential, commercial and light industrial development in the area. Working together to enhance each others' strengths makes sense."

