

CONNECTIONS

THE LABRADOR WEST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MAGAZINE

2025 SPRING ISSUE

Hodge Bros: 40 Years of a Local Legacy

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Layout and Design: Lydia Rickards (LWCC), Ashley Quirke (QuirkeyDesign)
Cover Photo: Keith Fitzpatrick Photography

As we emerge from another long, cold, Labrador Winter, we welcome the arrival of our glorious and enchanting Spring. The snow is melting quickly, the days are growing longer, and a renewed energy is in the air. We are especially heartened by the tremendous success of MINEx 2025 held in February – a true highlight that showcased the resilience, innovation and strength of our region’s resource sector.

However, we are also aware of the serious challenges that lie ahead. The imposition of steep tariffs by the U.S government presents significant obstacles for many of our local businesses, particularly those that rely on cross-border trade and supply chains. Compounding this uncertainty is the upcoming federal election at the end of April, which may bring changes in leadership at both federal and provincial levels. *(Results unknown at time of publication).*

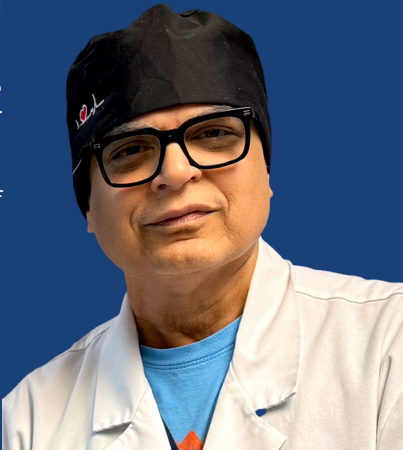
In times like these, it is more important than ever for us to stay focused, remain calm, and face headwinds with courage and unity. Labrador West has always been a region of determination, and our businesses have never shied away from tough times.

We are proud to live and work in one of the best countries in the world, and without a doubt, in one of the finest regions in Canada.

“Tough times never last, but tough people do.” – Robert H. Schuller

Please enjoy this edition of Connections - it’s full of interesting voices from our community.

-Dr. Rehan Malik, LWCC Director and local business owner





HODGE BROS LTD

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS SERVING LABRADOR WEST

What did two brothers and their father from a small town on the Great Northern Peninsula have in common? They had a dream of owning and operating a business in Labrador West.

Rodger Hodge arrived from Main Brook, NL in 1975 and is a former heavy equipment operator with the Town of Labrador City. He left the Town job to join Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOCC) in 1981 but was laid off in the downturn of 1982, the same year he and his wife Gail welcomed their first child, Shelley. The next few years saw him exhaust his EI, worked on a government make-work project at Javelin, tried his luck out west, worked with Real Ste. Marie Ltd, before being rehired by IOCC in 1984.

By 1985, Rodger had another idea.

Brothers, Rodger and Scott Hodge, along with their father Maxwell (Mac), decided to go into business together and successfully bid on the Town of Wabush residential garbage collection contract. It was 1985 and all three were working at the Iron Ore Company of



Canada at the time. Mac had some business experience having operated woodworking equipment with his brother Malcolm for Bowaters pulp and paper mill in his hometown of Main Brook, NL.

With a modest downpayment and a lot of resistance from the bank, they soldiered through and secured a small business loan to purchase an oval steel garage in Wabush and a 1985 Ford LT8000 garbage truck from Peter Walsh. They were in business! Hiring few employees to get started, Mr. Seymour Gaulton was hired and remains the longest standing employee to date. Times were tough in Labrador West in those days. The entire family stepped forward to help. Even the family's mothers worked as garbage collectors!

Mr. Walsh decided he was selling his bus transportation a few months later, and just like that, the Hodge family was in the bus transport business; transporting Wabush Mines employees to and from work. In December of 1985, Rodger and Gail welcomed their second child, Justin, to their family.

Keeping both branches of their business while working full time and operating was quickly becoming too much to manage. Rodger had less time with IOCC than the others and truly wanted to work for himself, so, he made the move into full-time entrepreneurship. He was now a full-time garbage truck driver and his dad the mechanic with Scott filling in when he could.

The opportunity for freight forwarding came in 1987. Cabano Kingsway (now Transforce) was responsible for moving freight vans to and from Sept-Isle via QNS&L railway. It was the way the communities and IOCC received the majority of it's goods. Martin Mesman was the contract holder at the time, and he decided it was time to sell. The Hodge boys were eager to expand so they purchased a LTL 9000 Ford tractor and got to work loading,

offloading and delivering these vans from the rail flats. It was time to move the office out of the kitchen and into a professional business space at the Bruno Plaza.

In 1988 Hodge Bros Ltd became the successful bidders for the Town of Labrador City's residential garbage collection contract. Previous contract holder, Martin Mesman, decided it was time to retire and sold the twin towns' commercial garbage collection service and equipment to Hodge Bros. Ltd. They were now responsible for garbage hauling for the entire region. Things were getting busy!

While rail service was still the main way of transport, Cabano Kingsway wanted to end their total reliance on the rail system. Route 389 was open - for better or worse - and Hodge Bros Ltd would begin the transfer of freight between Baie Comeau and Labrador West. This required more heavy tractors, long haul drivers, and a warehouse facility.

By 1992, the Trans Labrador Highway would become passable for heavy traffic, though barely in many areas. It was unpaved and would test one's abilities. Many road construction changes have taken place since then. Only the most adventurous would attempt it and the Hodge boys were up for the challenge. They formed a new company, Hodge Transport Ltd, and with the help of some of the most daring and courageous young tractor drivers, they would be the first to offer freight forwarding service between first Labrador West and Churchill Falls to start and later include Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

The journey to and from Churchill Falls and later, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, was essentially a rough-cut woods road. Old Tote Road was used to make deliveries into Churchill Falls. The trip would consist of a driver in a tractor pulling the trailer, an operator following behind in a loader with chains to push the trailer up the rock cuts and sometimes a driver, usually Mac Hodge, in a pickup to assist. The trip to Happy Valley-Goose Bay would take 3-4 days. Hodge Bros Ltd would loose a tractor at a rate of one per year. Gratefully, there has never been any loss of life. To this day, there is a saying in the family; when you've had enough you've reached your "Pope's Hill"; which was one of the most notoriously treacherous parts of that road.

Over the years, Hodge Bros Ltd have employed many young people, most looking to gain experience in their fields to move onto the local mines. Many have passed through the doors at Hodge Bros



Ltd. Scott decided to leave the company many years ago, and tragically, their father, Maxwell, passed away in 2002. Nearly every family member and friend has worked at Hodge Bros Ltd over the years from Rodger's sister Dianne to his brothers, parents, in-laws, and kids!

ONLY THE MOST ADVENTUROUS WOULD ATTEMPT IT AND THE HODGE BOYS WERE UP FOR THE CHALLENGE.

Over the years there have been countless changes in the ever-evolving economic landscape of Labrador West. Today, Hodge Transport is owned and operated by someone else. Hodge Bros Ltd carries on with the same municipal garbage collection contracts, commercial contracts, landfill operation and heavy equipment rentals to the Iron Ore Company of Canada.

From the earliest days starting a business with his father and brother, Rodger now carries on the family business tradition with his children, Shelley and Justin. Along with their respective partners, Brad and Brianna, all are vitally integrated in the daily operations and future of the business. Since 1985 it truly remains a family affair!

This family-oriented approach along with a strong team of long-time, dedicated employees are the secret to the company's longevity and success. Hodge Bros Ltd has long embodied tradition, values and shared purpose. It has stood the test of time with hard work and dedication.

Hodge Bros Ltd celebrates 40 years of business and supporting the communities in Labrador West. It is important to acknowledge and show appreciation for the family, friends, employees, suppliers and customers alike for their continued support over the years, without which this tremendous achievement wouldn't have been possible.

Submitted by Gail Hodge



DIGGING DEEPER:

CONVERSATIONS AND CONNECTIONS AT LAB WEST MINEX 2025

For three action-packed days, Labrador West was alive with energy as MINEx 2025 took over the town - bringing together industry leaders, innovators, and professionals from across the country and beyond. With more than 300 attendees from Atlantic Canada, Vancouver BC, and even as far away as Australia, this year's event proved to be one of our most dynamic yet.

Insightful keynote presentations by Amanda McCallum (Mining NL) and Walter Parsons (Hydro NL) helped set the tone for a gathering focused on progress, collaboration, and the future of the mining sector. Other presenters included Ryan Harnden (Rio Tinto IOC), Kevin Foley (Kami Project), Brian Penney and Bob Gagne (Tacora Resources), Alison Chan (ArcelorMittal), Joseph Lanzon (Search Minerals), Joanne Hart (Department of Industry, Energy & Technology), as well as government dignitaries.

The Mike Adam Recreation Complex was home to the trade show and panel discussions, offering space for connection and collaboration – including topics like leadership, project management, diversity and workforce inclusion, innovation and workforce development.

Attendees kicked back at the Smokey Mountain Ski Club during the popular Steak and Ski Night, proudly sponsored by Hestia Heating, and gathered at Iron Rock Brewing Co. for a Meet & Greet, thanks to PAL Airlines. Throughout the three days, Well-Bean Café was on hand at multiple venues, keeping everyone fuelled and refreshed.

Adding to the buzz, the team from Gale Force Wins captured the spirit of the event with video interviews and on-site coverage. You can catch all the action, including full recordings of the sessions, on our website: www.labradorwestchamber.com

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all our delegates, exhibitors, speakers, sponsors, and funding partners for making MINEx 2025 such a success. And to our incredible volunteer planning committee, the LWCC Board, and our hardworking event staff - we couldn't have done it without you.

Until next time, thank you for being part of an event that truly powered ideas, people, and progress.

Written by Lydia Rickards, LWCC



Photo Credit: Keith Fitzpatrick Photography



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OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

WHEN ONE FIRE ISN'T ENOUGH



2024 was a challenging year for all of Lab West. This summer we found out the lack of winter snow, combined with well below average rainfall turned Lab West into a ticking time bomb for forest fires. Come July our community was evacuated, our businesses shut down.

In came the water bombers and fire fighter reinforcements and slowly but surely we returned to normal as the panic settled and we all started to breath a sigh of relief that we were all safe.

Fast forward to December and our little store had another tragic fire, closing our beloved Canadian Tire just mere weeks from our biggest season, Christmas. Something we internally are tongue in cheek still referencing as a Dumpster Fire. Afterall, that is exactly what it was – I mean if you can't have a sense of humour about it, it would be far too devastating as a business owner. We brought in what felt like an army from all over the country to get us back to an operational level. Beyond those helpers we'd be remiss if we didn't thank our own local first responders who jumped to action and really saved the day. Further our local business owners who consistently reached out to us with support and supplies, we are grateful for all of you. Almost two weeks later we had the mess cleaned up and were as ready as ever to re-open, again.

As you can imagine this was a huge blow to us as a business and our community. Being as remote as Lab West is and the unfortunate timing of the Canada Post strike making online shopping more painful than ever we knew we needed to be firing on all cylinders to support Lab West when we re-opened.

What did we do behind the scenes while we were closed? We worked. We worked a lot. We doubled down on ordering to re-stock the store from the loss, we did our best to forecast product demand from the flyer and brought more stock in than usual. George and I negotiated with vendors to get the best blow out, super sales possible to be able to support our ever growing Facebook deal shoppers.

Were we perfect? Far from it.

Did we do our best? The Team certainly did.

Did we learn about our community and feel the support? Absolutely.

Are we growing to make things better going forward? Without a doubt.

We want Lab West to know we are here for you and we can feel that you too are here for us.

This is the reason we love retail and do what we do. The community.

For the latest Canadian Tire offers follow your local store on Facebook: facebook.com/CTLabradorCity

Submitted by Jason Anaka and Jennifer Morehouse



NAVIGATING UNCERTAINTY:



3 ACTIONS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES IN A WORLD OF TRADE WARS

Uncertainty is growing for businesses, especially in Canada and the U.S., due to trade wars, fluctuating tariffs, and geopolitical shifts. These tensions affect both multinational corporations and small businesses. Newfoundland and Labrador companies are also being impacted by the ongoing trade disputes.

While external factors like trade wars remain beyond the control of business owners, there are strategic moves that small businesses can make to mitigate risk and increase resilience. Focusing on areas of certainty and taking proactive steps within their control can help businesses thrive in the face of uncertainty. Here are 3 strategies that businesses can pursue, now, to stay competitive and agile in these challenging times.

1. Diversify Your Markets through the MEDP Program

One of the most effective ways to mitigate the risks of trade disruptions is to reduce dependence on any single market. The Atlantic Chamber of Commerce's Market Entry Development Program (MEDP) offers a key opportunity for businesses to expand into new international markets. Learn more about how the MEDP can benefit your business here: <https://medp-pdem.ca/>

2. Support the Removal of Internal Trade Barriers in Canada

Internal trade barriers within Canada can significantly hinder businesses. The Atlantic Chamber of Commerce and its provincial partners are advocating to reduce these barriers to create a more competitive domestic market. Implementing policies to ease interprovincial trade can help businesses expand, improve supply chains, boost productivity, and lower costs. For more information, visit www.atlanticchamber.ca.

3. Engage with Your Local Chamber of Commerce

Staying informed and connected is key to navigating uncertainty. Your local chamber of commerce plays a pivotal role in keeping businesses updated. By engaging with your local chamber, you can gain valuable insights into regulatory changes, trade negotiations, and new opportunities in the marketplace. Chambers also offer networking opportunities, advocacy for business interests, and educational resources to help you make informed decisions.

Our history, shared values, and deep economic, cultural, and geographical connections between our country, Canada, and the United States make it essential for us to continue working together. With the longest border in the world, our mutual commitment to peace, security, and prosperity is undeniable. **It is crucial that we build on these enduring relationships, address challenges collaboratively and ensure that our partnerships remain strong for generations to come.**

Submitted by Rhonda Tulk-Lane,
CEO of Atlantic Chamber
of Commerce



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• Stephen Hale, Vice President, Rutter Inc.

→ See program guidelines and apply.

The Market Entry Development Program (MEDP) is delivered by the Atlantic Chamber of Commerce and is an initiative of the Atlantic Trade and Investment Growth Strategy (ATIGS), funded in part by the Government of Canada and the four Atlantic Canadian provinces.



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The Future is Women:

How NLOWE is Supporting Women-Owned Businesses

For over 25 years, the Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs (NLOWE) has been a driving force in supporting, mentoring, and advocating for women entrepreneurs throughout the province. Founded in 1997, NLOWE has established itself as a trusted resource for women-owned businesses, providing them with the tools, networks, and opportunities necessary for success in a competitive marketplace.

As a provincial, non-profit organization, NLOWE's mission is to help women start, grow, and scale successful businesses through customized services, programs, and professional development opportunities. Whether it's business planning, financial literacy, export readiness, or leadership training, NLOWE equips women with the skills and resources needed to thrive in entrepreneurship.

Services Offered by NLOWE:

- **Business Start-Up Support:** NLOWE assists aspiring women entrepreneurs in turning their ideas into viable businesses, offering one-on-one business advisory support, business planning resources, financial guidance, and access to startup funding.
- **Business Growth & Expansion:** Through peer mentoring programs, networking events, and business skills development programs, NLOWE's Business Growth Advisors help women-owned businesses scale and increase market reach.
- **Export & Market Expansion:** Recognizing the importance of global markets, NLOWE provides export readiness training and connects businesses with international trade opportunities.
- **Networking & Leadership Development:** NLOWE fosters a community of women entrepreneurs, offering opportunities to connect, collaborate, and learn from peers and industry leaders.

As part of its commitment to fostering a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem for women in the province, NLOWE hosts a series of signature events each year. These events provide networking opportunities, professional development, mentorship, and business growth support, helping women entrepreneurs connect, learn, and thrive.

1. Annual NLOWE Conference

The NLOWE Conference is a flagship event that brings together women entrepreneurs, business leaders, industry experts, and key stakeholders. This multi-day event features:

- Keynote speakers sharing insights on leadership, innovation, and business growth.
- Workshops and panel discussions covering topics such as financing, marketing, business scaling, and overcoming gender bias.
- Networking opportunities where women entrepreneurs can connect with like-minded professionals and potential business collaborators.

This event is an essential platform for knowledge-sharing and empowerment, providing women in business with the resources and motivation to achieve success.

2. Entrepreneur of the Year Awards

The Entrepreneur of the Year Awards is a prestigious annual celebration recognizing outstanding women entrepreneurs in Newfoundland and Labrador. These awards honor women who have demonstrated exceptional leadership, innovation, and business success in various industries. By celebrating the achievements of women in business, NLOWE aims to inspire and encourage more women to pursue entrepreneurship while showcasing the vital role women play in the province's economic growth.

3. International Women's Day Events

Every year, NLOWE hosts special events in honor of International Women's Day, celebrating the accomplishments of women entrepreneurs and advocating for continued progress toward gender equality in business. These events serve as a reminder of the ongoing efforts needed to create a more inclusive entrepreneurial landscape while celebrating the remarkable strides made by women in business.

4. Regional Networking Events & Business Mixers

NLOWE organizes various networking events, business mixers, and professional development sessions throughout the year in different regions of Newfoundland and Labrador. These events allow women entrepreneurs to:

- Expand their professional networks.
- Gain industry insights from business leaders and experts.
- Explore new collaboration and mentorship opportunities.

These events help foster connections and build a supportive community where women can access the guidance and encouragement needed to grow their businesses.

Why these Events Matter

NLOWE's signature events play a crucial role in empowering women entrepreneurs, giving them access to resources, mentorship, and opportunities to showcase their businesses on a provincial and national stage. Through these events, NLOWE continues to break down barriers, promote gender equality, and create a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem for women in Newfoundland and Labrador.

To learn more about upcoming events or to get involved, visit NLOWE website or follow us on social media for updates.



NLOWE Launches 3 years Project: The Gender Bias Project - Addressing Gender Bias in Entrepreneurship in Newfoundland and Labrador

The Gender Bias Project, spearheaded by NLOWE and supported by Women and Gender Equality Canada, is a transformative three-year initiative designed to identify and eliminate gender bias in Newfoundland and Labrador's entrepreneurial ecosystem. As the research phase concludes, the project now shifts towards developing actionable strategies, implementing change, and fostering sustainable growth opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

Key Initiatives Over the Next Three Years

1. **Completing the Research Phase & Strategic Planning**
 - The project has worked alongside external consultants and formed an Advisory Committee to analyze gender bias trends and intersectional barriers within the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
 - Insights from focus groups, interviews, and surveys will inform the next stages of program development.
2. **Engaging Stakeholders & Expanding Partnerships**
 - **Strengthening Collaboration:** NLOWE will work closely with universities, colleges, business support organizations, and policymakers to create awareness and build strong alliances.
 - **Industry-Specific Engagement:** Tailored discussions and advocacy efforts will target key business sectors where gender disparities persist.

3. Developing & Implementing Support Tools for Women Entrepreneurs

Addressing Funding Gaps & Investment Bias:
Partnering with financial institutions to explore strategies that increase access to capital for women-owned businesses.

Advocating for equitable funding programs and inclusive investment opportunities.

Providing training modules on overcoming gender bias, leadership skills, and financial literacy.

4. Policy Advocacy & Long-Term Systemic Change

Formal Policy Recommendations:

The Gender Bias Project will present findings and recommendations to government agencies, investors, and policymakers to drive legislative and financial reforms.

Encouraging Institutional Change:

Working with corporations, business associations, and accelerators to embed gender-inclusive practices within their frameworks.

How to Get Involved

As the Gender Bias Project transitions into its next phase, there are many ways for businesses, professionals, and entrepreneurs to contribute:

Collaborate with us host or Sponsor Industry Workshops to share expertise and provide training for women business owners. Become a Business Mentor and guide women entrepreneurs on navigating leadership, funding, and business expansion.

Advocate for Change by promoting gender-inclusive policies within your business or industry sector.

For more details or to get involved, visit www.nlowe.org

Submitted by Catherine Itheme, MBA - Project Coordinator



HIGHLIGHTS FROM '24-'25

- June '24:** Procurement Session with Kami Project
- September '24:** Golf Tournament
- October '24:** Small Business Week, Luncheon with Tacora Resources
- December '24:** Santa Parade, Kami Project Public Sessions
- January '24:** Annual General Meeting
- February '25:** First 'Business After Hours' event Hosted by Maverick's Lounge; Lab West MINEx 2025.
- March '25:** Her Time To Shine - Women in Business Breakfast

A GLIMPSE INTO THE YEAR AHEAD

(June 1st 2025 - May 31st 2026)

- May '25:** 'Business After Hours', Hosted by The Frozen Rooster, May 29th
- September '25:** Annual Golf Tournament (Date TBC)
- October '25:** Small Business Week, October 19th - 25th
- January '26:** Annual General Meeting (Date TBC)
- March '26:** International Women's Day, March 8th

Luncheons and events scheduled throughout the year
Dates for MINEx 2026 will be announced soon!

BECOME A MEMBER!

Joining is easy: just contact our office for a membership form to get started.

Membership rates vary based on the size of your team, starting at just \$50 + HST for Home Entrepreneurs.

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OR COLLABORATE ON AN
EVENT? CONTACT US TODAY!

FROM MY DESK: MEMBERSHIP YEAR IN REVIEW WCC '25

It's been another eventful and demanding membership year for the Labrador West Chamber of Commerce and our members. As we continue to navigate an unpredictable world - whether it's the ripple effects of U.S. tariffs or the growing threat of wildfires in our region - we are reminded of one vital truth: adaptability is key.

As business and community leaders, we work hard to stay ahead of challenges, to be proactive rather than reactive. But the reality is, we can't always plan for every twist and turn. What we can do is stay flexible. In uncertain times, it's not just policies or procedures that carry us through - it's the strength of our values and the character of our people. Resilience, collaboration, and a deep commitment to our community are what matter most.

And while the unknown can be daunting, it can also be full of promise. We're energized by the potential in our region - whether it's the exciting developments connected to the Churchill Falls MOU, or new mining projects on the horizon. Labrador West is on the brink of incredible opportunity, and we're proud to play even a small role in shaping that future. One message I always try to share with both current and potential Chamber members is this: we exist to serve our

community. If there's something our membership wants to see us focus on - whether it's a big idea or a small improvement - please reach out. Even if we don't have the immediate solution, we are part of a strong network that spans from right here in Lab West to the Atlantic Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Together, we can find the path forward.

Over the 2024/2025 membership year, we've continued to host some of our most cherished events - like Small Business Week, our annual golf tournament, and numerous luncheons and socials. We've also made strides behind the scenes: rebuilding our website, upgrading our advertising signage (corner of Avalon Drive and Humphrey Road), and keeping this very magazine alive - in print!

In November, I had the opportunity to attend the Mineral Resources Review Conference and Trade Show in St. John's. While I was there to promote MINEx 2025 and grow our network, I was struck by how warmly people across the province welcomed the presence of our Chamber. Labrador West is on everyone's radar, and they are so excited to talk to us - that's something to be proud of.

Of course, progress never comes without its challenges. In 2024, we hosted the Future of Lab West Summit, and we left that event full of hope and momentum. We approached potential funders to bring on a dedicated Project Manager to push those Summit ideas forward - unfortunately, that didn't come together as planned. But that hasn't stopped us.

We remain committed. We're active members of the Lab West Alliance, a coalition of industry and community leaders working on the big issues. And within the Chamber itself, we've got smaller committees tackling initiatives bit by bit. Just because you don't always hear about it doesn't mean nothing's happening. We're working hard behind the scenes, and we'll always keep doing our part.

So as I wrap up this message, I want to leave you with a simple ask: help us help you. Come to an event. Share an idea. Write something for the magazine. Follow us on social media. Tell us where we can improve. Offer your voice, your time, your insight.

The Labrador West Chamber of Commerce has been around since 1970 - and we're as busy and passionate as ever. We're always rebuilding, always growing. And we want you to be a part of that journey. Because when our businesses thrive, our whole community thrives. And the reverse is also true: a strong community builds strong businesses.

Thank you for your continued support.

BEST WISHES, LYDIA

LABRADOR WEST
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Planning for Cash Flow Gaps for Small Business

Submitted by Brian Hurley,
Business Manager, Iron Rock Brewing Co.
Professor of Venture Creation at Memorial University



In the previous edition of Connections, I shared guidance on developing a cash flow forecast and using it as a tool to manage your business. The most important use case is ensuring your cash balance does not fall below zero.

Where the cash planning process becomes extremely valuable is in using it to anticipate a cash crunch and taking measures to mitigate that scenario. This is an extremely valuable practice for your business, as the more time you have to adjust, the more options you have on your plate. We've experienced this many times in the years of operating Iron Rock, most acutely during the winter months. I won't waste too much time on the importance of getting your invoices out immediately—you already know how important that is.

If you need to run payroll tomorrow and you don't have the cash on hand, your options may be limited to finding an urgent cash injection for the business (likely from personal funds) or delaying payroll until you have the funds to do so.

However, when you can anticipate a cash flow shortfall in the coming week or month, your options broaden. Before we discuss those options, I believe it's important to focus on early payment discounts.

Beware the Impact of Early Payment Discounts
We can all appreciate the appeal of early payment discounts to drum up short-term cash. When payment terms are 30 days and you have a significant amount of those funds not yet due, it can

be tempting to offer a discount to access those funds sooner. However, keep in mind that shaving even 1% or 2% from your margin eats directly into your bottom-line profitability and can compound across customers to have a major impact. Additionally, there are several relationship-based factors to consider:

- Are you encouraging behaviors where customers only pay when there is an incentive?
- Will your customer expect this discount with every invoice?
- Will they potentially ask for a deeper discount if they sense you're desperate for funds?
- Is there a potential for other customers to expect the same in the future?

There are times when early payment discounts may be the correct course of action, but be sure to understand the impact they have on your business. For more details on calculating the impact of these types of discounts, the Business Development Bank of Canada offers some thorough guidance in this article:

<https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/money-finance/manage-finances/early-payment-discount-big-returns-business>



Scan to access link

Correcting Course to Avoid Cash Flow Shortfalls

When you review your situation using your cash flow forecast and have identified the reason for your shortage of funds—be it an equipment failure or delayed receivables—you have options at your disposal to help you correct course:

1. Preserve the Cash You Do Have

Find ways to reduce expenses in the time you have. Delay non-essential purchases, hold off on paying the credit card bill if needed, review or tighten your labor needs, and reach out to your suppliers to ask if delaying payment is acceptable.

2. Attempt to Speed Up Cash Inflows

Pick up the phone. I cannot stress this enough, in all cases. Email reminders are in no way comparable to speaking directly with your customer. These are sensitive conversations, but should be handled firmly and respectfully. You've delivered a product or service, and your customer agreed to pay based on the terms of that invoice.

3. Explore Your Financing Options

Back in winter 2023, when the repayment of the pandemic-era Canadian Emergency Business Account (CEBA) loan was on the horizon in January 2024, I knew we were not going to have \$40,000 on hand to repay it. At that time, I contacted the Labrador CBDC to discuss our financing and repayment options. Thankfully, we were able to arrange a loan to pay on time and realize the \$20,000 forgiveness the federal government offered. That's one example from our camp. If you're in a comparable situation, reach out to the CBDC Labrador team to discuss.

4. Communicate & Pay What You Can

These tactics all rely on your relationships and reputation with your customers, suppliers, and lending partners. If you can't pay a \$2,000 invoice, pay \$500. Be sure to explain the temporary nature of the situation—hopefully backed by a history of on-time payments.

Ultimately, businesses don't cease operations due to a lack of profitability, but by running out of cash. If you are routinely experiencing cash flow shortfalls, it's time to take a closer look at your profitability and performance. Initiatives that focus on productivity and pricing review may be what you need to address these challenges.

If this is something you could use some help with, there are programs focused on small businesses to support the identification and implementation of improvements. I'm here to support, so feel free to reach out.

IRONFEST

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THE CELTIC CONNECTION

Reflections on the Special Olympics World Winter Games: An Unforgettable Experience

At 16, Colin Rumbolt proudly represented Canada and furthermore Labrador on the world stage in Pragelato, Italy in the Piedmont region near Turin as a member of Team Canada 2025.

Special Olympics World Winter Games 2025 brought together nations, athletes, volunteers, families and spectators as one, for a jam packed week.

Colin skied in divisioning and finals for 1k free and 2.5 classic, with personal best times recorded in all races respectively.

He started the week strong in the top 1k Freestyle M01 division and secured a personal best time at 3:20.88s. Which sat him at the 4th place respectively, narrowly missing the bronze by 1 100th of a second, to which Colin's response was "wow!! I'm fourth in the world!". He was able to proudly cheer for the third place finisher, his teammate from BC.

In his second race, the 2.5k classic he secured the second place spot with a personal best time 7:12.55s. Securing the silver medal!

During the final event for Colin of the week he was able to ski in the 4x1000m relay, with three of his teammates. They were able to secure the Gold Medal for Team Canada. A monumental day for Team Canada as they swept all relay events and took the gold in all divisions.

Colin thrived under the conditions of the races and pushed himself to beat the preliminary times he recorded and to further beat those times in his final races.

During his time in Italy, he was able to explore, sight see, meet new friends, become close with friends from team Canada and have a lot of fun.

If you ask Colin what his favorite part of the games was, he will be quick to tell you, the new friends and the food were the best part. **And at 16, he's just getting started, with plans to compete at future events already underway.**

Submitted by Natasha Rumbolt



From Sister to Supporter: A Personal Journey Behind the Scenes

Where can you go where people are celebrated for who they are, country boundaries and language barriers aren't actual barriers at all, smiles are contagious and where the last place finisher is cheered on the same as the first? It's a place where everybody can dance together, and joy is on full display. It's not Disneyland, it's the Special Olympics World Winter Games.

Anyone who was there would tell you it was amazing seeing the athletes, and everyone around them, enjoy themselves. There is always a dance party wherever they go and no matter who you are they would let you join in on the party. Every time someone won a medal or even placed in one of their races or (even better) got a personal best they would come running out and everyone would be celebrating their win. Team Canada was the biggest group of supporters for the athletes from Canada and any other country. Our supporters would be at the ski lodge as the first race started and they would stay until the last medals were presented and you could hear the support for every athlete no matter where they came from.

You're probably thinking, "Now she's going to talk all about her brother Colin," because everyone thinks he's awesome - and I guess he is. He has made a big impact on me - but I want to share some interesting stories from other amazing Team Canada athletes I was lucky to meet.

Francis was skiing his second lap of the 7.5k race when he broke his ski pole. After his race someone tied a Canada flag to his broken ski pole and for the whole week it was held and waved at every race. Team Canada spectators referred to that broken ski pole turned flag as a symbol of bravery, dedication and passion for the sport of cross country skiing. (And yes, even with a broken pole he still won gold).

Darby is from the Yukon and is a party everywhere they go. Darby is usually a classic skier but they tried something new to them on the world stage. They worked really hard to learn the technique to skate ski and their hard work paid off with a fourth place finish in their 7.5k and only got faster as the week went on. At the family lunch in Turin Darby made a speech where they told us about their Special Olympics journey, what sport means to them and how the Special Olympics brought them a sense of community.

Chanelle is a 17 year old classic ski sprinter and one of the quickest girls I've seen on a set of skis. She skied in the top division on both of her races. She placed gold in her first race, but I'll never forget her second race - she fell down 2 times at the start, but she got up, took off and she just flew by the other skiers. She came third overall in her race and she was so happy about her results because she worked hard and every time she fell she got back up and was able to finish it. After she finished her races her and Colin would always celebrate their wins together.

Although all the athlete's stories will stick with me my whole life, the last story I want to share is Tommy's. Tommy is 63 years old and had 11 people travel across the world to watch him ski! His family would always be cheering for everyone but you knew whenever Tommy was skiing, his family would be cheering so loud you could hear them all over the valley. On the last day Tommy hadn't gotten a medal but in his very last race even though he fell down twice he got up and finished the race and got what we thought was third place. It was such a sweet moment because everyone was crying and cheering. When he came out his family was so proud of him and when the medal ceremony started and Tommy stepped up to second place on the podium, it was a total surprise to everyone who was there! Everyone was crying tears of joy and he did great things. It was a great way to end the final day of the games

So where can you go where people are celebrated for who they are? Country boundaries and language barriers aren't actual barriers at all, smiles are contagious? and where the last place finisher is cheered on the same as the first place finisher? It's a place where everybody can dance together, and joy is on full display. **It's the Special Olympics World Winter Games!! And I was lucky enough to be there for it all!**

Submitted by Jenna Rumbolt, 14 years old.



THE ARTISTIC JOURNEY OF TANEA HYNES

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT



Growing up in Labrador City, Tanea Hynes was always drawn to creativity. “As a child, I was obsessed with arts and crafts and still love to work with my hands, as do all the women in my family,” she says. That early love of tactile creation naturally evolved with age, leading her into the world of photography. “During my pre-teen years, I became interested in taking photos. I loved technology and witnessing it evolve in real time. All I wanted was a cell phone with a camera built in.”

Her creative path took shape during the early days of Facebook. She began sharing photos online and found an unexpected thrill in connecting with others through images. “This instant feedback was exhilarating to me and started the foundation of my love for making pictures,” she recalls. Looking back, Hynes sees her journey with photography as one that grew in tandem with how digital images and social media have transformed our world. But growing up in a small, remote town came with its limitations. “For one, I had almost no points of reference,” she says. With no access

to museums or galleries, Hynes turned to the internet - sites like Flickr and Tumblr were her creative lifelines. But it was a student job at the Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOCC) that left a deep impression. “I saw an open mining pit for the first time, and the scale absolutely astounded me. I had a lot of time alone in a haul truck to think. I started to wonder about how I could share that experience, artfully, with people who knew nothing about it.”

Leaving Labrador for Halifax to attend NSCAD University was a transformative chapter. “Going to university in Halifax brought me into the rest of the world. I learned art history. I met working artists and photographers. My professors were successful in their fields, and that set an example I didn’t have before.” While Hynes often felt out of place among peers from art-centric high schools and big cities, that sense of difference became an asset. “Coming from an isolated town like Labrador City informs my perspective, and I believe it has given my work a unique edge. I no longer resent my upbringing there - I truly value it.”

Hynes went on to complete graduate studies at Concordia University in Montreal, and although the transition wasn’t always smooth, the experience was formative. “There were certainly times that I didn’t believe in myself, and even times that I didn’t think I would pursue the arts at all,” she admits. But the opportunities that followed - like a residency at Eastern Edge Gallery and a solo exhibition at The Rooms in St. John’s - cemented her path as a professional artist.

Among her proudest achievements is a recent solo exhibition in Brussels at KIN, curated by Nicolaus Schafhausen. “The show felt like the result of everything I have been working for over the last 10 years,” she says. Hynes traveled to Europe multiple times leading up to the exhibition, developing connections and carefully preparing the work. “It means a lot to me to be able to travel and show in Europe at this stage in my career, with a curator and gallery whom I deeply respect - and vice versa.”

Looking ahead, Hynes is excited for upcoming shows in Toronto and at Art Rotterdam, but her focus remains grounded in her artistic values. “I am learning to trust my instincts more and more. In the future, I hope to compromise less in terms of what people might expect from me.”

Her advice to emerging artists? “It’s a long game and like any career, nothing happens overnight. You have to think your work

is worth enough to submit to open calls, to garner funding, and to be shown publicly. If you don’t believe in what you have to share with the world, there is nobody who is going to push you to do that on a daily basis. You have to be your own biggest cheerleader in the face of rejection and certainly criticism.”

From our humble mining town to international galleries, Tanea Hynes’ journey proves that creativity can thrive anywhere - and that a unique perspective, once seen as a disadvantage, can become an artist’s greatest strength.

<https://www.tanea-hynes.com/>
<https://www.instagram.com/taneahynes/>

Written by Lydia Rickards, LWCC





ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: MIXTAPE 2025

Labrador West is home to some incredibly talented musicians – some of whom currently reside here, and others who have left the area over the years. While few have gone on to careers in the music industry, talent from this area is undeniable. In recent years we have seen a welcome resurgence and appetite from the community for live local music and an upward trend of support from venues who recognize the value it brings.

But, make no mistake, behind the scenes in garages and basements across the community the love and art of making music has never gone away. Being a life-long music fanatic, and in recent years a musician myself, I wanted to find a way to celebrate, document and preserve the music scene and artists from Labrador West.

Enter MIXTAPE 2025. This project is a compilation of local musicians featuring both original and covered music.

Once the idea of a compilation was put out to the community back in the spring of 2024, support and interest for this project was immediately evident. I needed to figure out what to do with this music and what this thing would look like. Ultimately, as a group – with the artists that were now onboard – we decided a limited run Vinyl Record was the preferred choice for preserving and showcasing the music in a physical format.

I was now collecting music from local musicians and friends for a project that, up to now, only existed in my head.

The Bad News: I had precisely zero knowledge, experience, or (frankly) business putting a project like this together. Put simply, I didn't know what I didn't know.

The Good News: I didn't care. I was too stoked, stubborn and perhaps naive to back out.

The last year has been a steep, relentless learning curve with a seemingly infinite amount of details I was learning on the

fly from figuring out the technical elements, to (on the most basic level) learning about recording/mixing/mastering, to graphic design and artwork, to finding and working with a vinyl pressing company and pricing out various options, and perhaps most importantly – who was going to pay for it all.

In the end, we managed to pay for it ourselves – the artists and the community – without external financial contributions, making this album truly and beautifully independent.

MIXTAPE 2025 is and was always envisioned as a passion project for the love of the music, the local scene and for the community. It is a tangible collective and home for local music that may not otherwise have space to exist in an accessible way to the broader community.

Not to mention, it's just cool as hell for anyone to have their music committed to vinyl!

This project represents a snapshot in time of the hard work and talent of our local music scene in Labrador West today. Hopefully, through the lessons learned with this project we can continue to document and preserve the growing and evolving musical talent this region has to offer for tomorrow.

The album has a projected delivery date for early-mid June, 2025. In addition to the record, a digital version of the compilation will be available online for streaming and will include bonus tracks from artists and songs that could not make it on the vinyl. More details on this will be shared soon. An album release party is in the planning stages to celebrate this compilation, the artists featured and the local music scene.

Stay tuned, it'll be a good one!

*Submitted by Brad Dillon
MIXTAPE 2025 Creator/Curator*

FUN FOR EVERYONE AT THE ODDBALL EXPO!

Get ready for a fun day at The Oddball Expo on June 7th, 2025, from 2-8 PM at the Carol Curling Club in Labrador City! Our “comic-con” style fandom event is bringing together over 30 themed vendors—some all the way from Goose Bay! From local comic book illustrators and artists to sourdough and pastry bakers, you'll find something to geek out about around every corner. Join our all ages Costume/Cosplay contest, get your picture taken with Lightning McQueen, courtesy of Northern Industrial Supply, and check out some awesome displays from a local Twitch Streamer and The Shed Makerspace Labrador Inc. When you're hungry, Tobin's Food Truck will be dishing out delicious bites outside, while inside, you can grab a drink from the Carol Curling Club's bar or sip on a magical “Magic Mocktail” served by Iron Rock Brewing Co. After the huge success of last year's inaugural Expo, where we raised funds for Faith's Haven Animal Shelter and the local Food Bank, we're back for round two—and it's going to be even bigger and more fun than ever! Whether you're a comic-book fan, a foodie, or just looking for a good time, **The Oddball Expo has got something for everyone. We'll see you there!**

Submitted by Mackenzie Hynes.

Carol Curling Club
June 7, 2025
2-8PM

2ND ANNUAL

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Tobin's Food Truck
and
Drinks by
the Carol Curling Club
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Moving on from Menihek

Hello, I'm Jack. I am a part of the graduating class of 2025, one of roughly 100. We're graduating on May 17th, and I imagine that we're all both excited to begin a new chapter in our lives, yet terrified of the thought of beginning the first step towards the rest of our lives.

To the teachers at Menihek, on behalf of not only every grad, but every student, thank you all for inspiring us, for pushing us to be better, and for all of the amazing memories formed now and those still to come. As well as a thanks to the rest of the staff, who work incredibly hard everyday to make Menihek what it is.

Like I said, that thought of moving forward is a rough one. We're taking our baby steps once more, learning how to be independent and how to manage our lives without anyone to guide us. I'd like to close with some inspiring words for the future. Be bold, be original, be invincible.

Submitted by Jack Dumaesque, Class of 2025



How Time Flies: Menihek's Class of 2025

In September 2013, a group of eager little students entered various Kindergarten classrooms to embark on their respective learning journeys. And here they are, mere months from finishing their studies in the K-12 system. A quotation often attributed to the late John Lennon states, "Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans." His words speak truths that are easily attributed to the passage of life's stages and milestones. I am sure many parents are shaking their heads at how quickly the years passed. It probably seems like no time ago when time with their children meant bedtime stories, tea parties, trips to the playground, and the comforts of predictable routines. That has all been replaced with plans for post-secondary studies, talks of careers, and journeys near or far from home. Plans to celebrate Menihek's graduating class have been underway for most of the 2024-2025 school year. Countless hours by parent and student committees, along with some insights and support from school liaisons alike, have gone into ensuring that the celebrations will

be memorable. The Class of 2025 will soon be ready to take on the world and begin writing wonderful new chapters. The staff of Menihek High School wish them all the best for continued academic success and personal growth.

Submitted by Margaret Pittman



WHAT'S ON?

MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
May 10th: Science Rendezvous, Royal Canadian Legion	June 7th: The Oddball Expo, Carol Curling Club	July 1st: Canada Day, activities all over town (Check 'Labrador West Special Events' Facebook Page for up to date information)	August 7th-10th: IronFest 2025. A four-day festival with something for everyone. Including two major events on August 9th:
May 12th: Susan Aglukark, 30th Anniversary "This Child" Tour, Arts and Culture Centre	June 9th-13th: Vacation Bible School, Glad Tidings Church	July 14th-20th: Pride 2025	Wonderbolt Circus – a spectacular show that's perfect for all ages
May 14th: The Irish Descendants 35th Anniversary Celebration, Arts and Culture Centre	June 10th, 11th, 13th & 14th: Encore Community Arts Association presents Disney's The Little Mermaid, Arts and Culture Centre	July 25th: Regatta Day, Jean Lake	19+ IronFest Concert – poised to be one of the most highly attended events in the region.
May 23rd: Tara Nova East Coast Tour, Kash Nightclub & Pizza House	June 14th: Relay for Life, Carol Curling Club		Events will also include a teen event, senior's luncheon with live entertainment, and a community BBQ.
	June 15th: Iron City Duathlon, Menihek Nordic Ski Club		
	June 24th-26th: Expo Labrador, June 24th-26th, Happy Valley-Goose Bay		

Keep up to date with the latest events and happenings by following **What's Happening: Labrador West** on Facebook.

The group is updated daily! Scan QR to join!



Join us on the water this summer in our 4-person sliding-seat shells!

It's a fantastic way to start your morning or unwind in the evening while rowing on beautiful Jean Lake. Whether you're new to the sport or looking to get back into it, we've got you covered – we'll teach you everything you need to know and provide all the equipment.

Scan the QR code to get started!

Celebrate the season at our year-end Regatta and Family Fun Day on Friday, July 25th.





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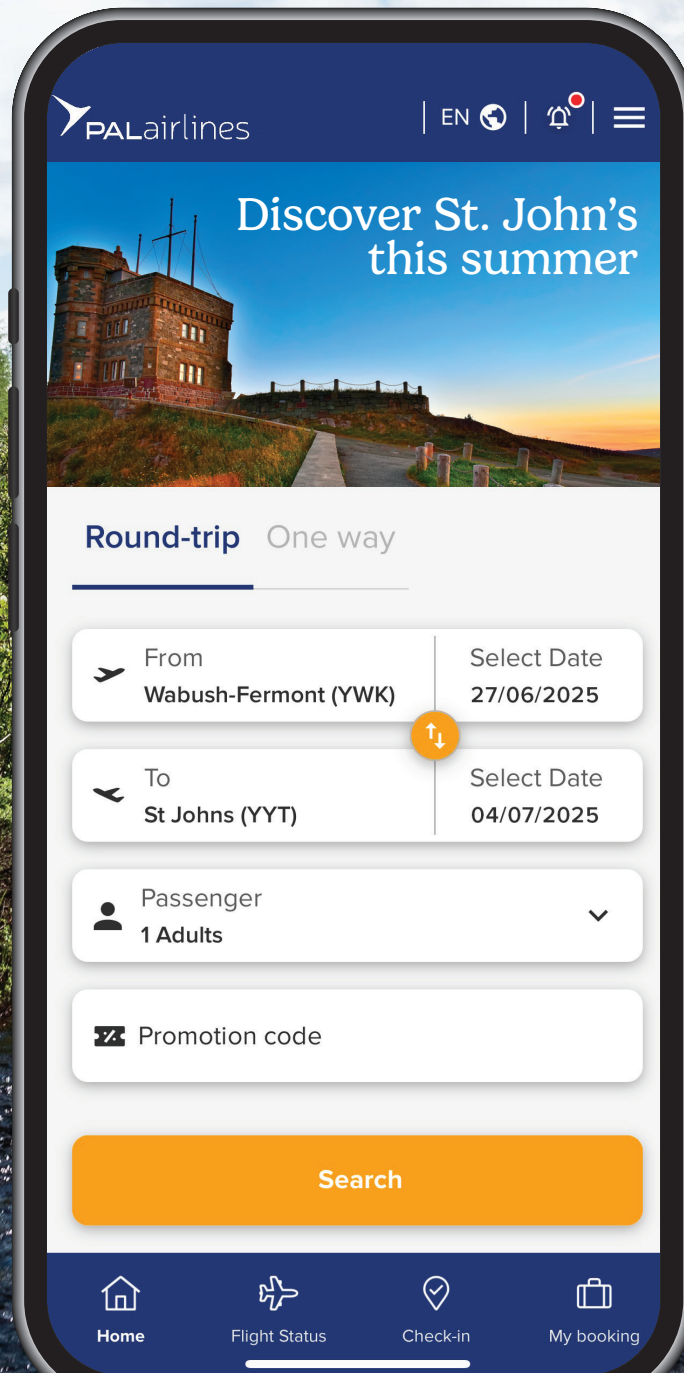


Image courtesy of
Town of Labrador City