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BUSINESS LINK

Spotlight on Volunteer

By Marnie Hughes, Communication Artistry

When asked to join the Business Link newsletter committee five years ago by then-editor Grant Lee, Eric Doubt was eager to apply his unique talents to contribute to a new look and feel for the publication. These past years have seen the Business Link evolve into a newsletter with colour and with content that is up-to-date and relevant to businesses. Eric's fingerprint can also be seen through the increased number of visuals now enjoyed by our readers. The introduction of the Business Profile piece also occurred during Eric's tenure here. He may have passed the torch, but his light continues to shine brightly here at the BusinessLink.

Eric will be the first to tell you that committee membership is not entirely altruistic. It has given him a tremendous networking opportunity particularly with Chamber members and executive as well as with businesses of this community. These new relationships have netted positive business outcomes for Communication Associates, Eric's marketing and communications firm.

"It is easy to become isolated in a sole proprietorship," says Eric, "I have found that committee participation kept me in touch with my community and I have been able to expand my circle through my Chamber membership and volunteer involvement." He found that the Business Link was an opportunity to keep connected with local businesses and to get to know more about his town and its institutions. Eric also found that "sticking with it" for a while enabled him to make more of a contribution to the newsletter.



Eric Doubt, Communication Associates

Although his input and charm are missed at the committee table, Eric continues to volunteer with the Chamber and his varied skills are gratefully appreciated by a new organization called Healing Hands for Haiti which delivers rehabilitative medicine and education to the people of Haiti. The timing was right for Eric to make this leap. He was ready to make a commitment outside his community and when he first discovered this organization, his medical writing background, ability to speak French, and the proximity of Haiti to Canada made it possible for him to offer his services. We know he will excel as a marketing consultant and the editor for their newsletter and we wish him every success.

Children and Taxes

Are the young adults in your family getting the tax refund they deserve?

If a child is over 16 years of age at the end of the tax year and without any income, they should apply for the Ontario Provincial Sales Tax credit of \$100.00 (provided this is not claimed by the parent).

Perhaps they have a small, part-time job that pays only a few hundred dollars a year. This would not be taxable to them and it would be tempting not to file an income tax return. However, they might be missing out on the refund of any EI (employment insurance premiums) or income tax they paid. They could also begin building RRSP contribution room for when the time comes that they proceed to a full time job.

If a dependent is 18, be sure to file a tax return to ensure that the GST credit is paid starting in the quarter he or she turns 19. Is your child in attendance at a University or College? Did you know that your child must file an income tax return first and use his or her tuition fees to reduce their income to zero before they can transfer to you the balance to a maximum of \$5,000.00 (even though you have mortgaged your soul to pay those fees)?

Childcare is certainly costly. Be sure to claim this on the tax return of the spouse with the lower net income, unless that person is in full or part time attendance at a designated educational institution.

Sending your child of 16 or under to camp for the summer can result in a tax reduction for you. You can claim up to \$175.00 per week for a child under the age of 7 and \$100.00 per week for other eligible children. For a disabled child under the age of 17, with a disability tax credit, you may claim \$250.00 per week.

If you adopted a child in 2005, you may be eligible to receive a tax credit for up to \$10,000.00 of adoption expenses such as legal fees, travel and living expenses required to achieve the adoption.

Child support is not included in the income of the recipient if the agreement or court order was made after May 1, 1997. However, the legal fees to establish the child support or to increase it are deductible.

If you were single, divorced or separated at any time during the year, you may claim an additional tax credit amount with regards to one of your children.

Submitted by the Tax Specialists at
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