



# BCTI Alumni NEWS

issue 3 | volume 11 | December 2013



Honourable Linda Reid  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of B.C.

## Speaker in the Schools Program Launches in Haida Gwaii *by Karen Aitken*

On November 19 and 20th, Madame Speaker launched the new Speaker in the Schools Program in four communities in Haida Gwaii: Masset, Port Clements, Skidegate and Sandspit. Visits were conducted with students in grades 4 – 7 in four elementary schools where the students participated with enthusiasm in a model parliament.

The students were keen to introduce and debate new laws that would affect their lives in their local communities, such as building a new skating rink or swimming pool or limiting the amount of daily homework. Students took on the roles of Speaker, Clerk and Sergeant-At-Arms as well as Premier and Leader of the Opposition. One young Speaker was anxious to have her say and was disappointed to learn that the Speaker does not enter debate.

Madame Speaker was pleased to introduce a new program in elementary schools that supports and encourages young people to become involved in communities and consider becoming parliamentarians when they grow up. It was also an opportunity to bring awareness to the many educational resources available to B.C. teachers and encourage teachers to apply for the upcoming BC Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy which will be held in April 2014.

The Speaker in the Schools Program is about safeguarding democracy and I would like to extend a special thank you to the principals and teachers who invited us into their classrooms.



## Spring Institute April 22 - 26, 2014

The next B.C. Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy will be held in Victoria from April 22 - 26.

Please encourage your colleagues to **apply online** today!

[BCTI Alumni Corner](#)

To complete a BCTI Alumni Survey or to view photos of past Institutes, visit the Alumni Corner.

For any other inquiries, to update your contact information, or to unsubscribe to this newsletter, email: [PEO@leg.bc.ca](mailto:PEO@leg.bc.ca).



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## Update from the Legislative Tour Office...

Please remember that the spring is our busiest time of year for school tours - especially the months of May and June! We encourage you to **submit your tour request** sooner rather than later in order to get the date you're hoping for.

And don't forget to make the trip easier and order bagged lunches through the **Parliamentary Dining Room**.

In 2013, we had 293 school groups come through the Legislature representing about 12,000 students! See you next year!

## Christmas Lights Across Canada

On November 28th, all was merry and bright at the Parliament Buildings during the annual Christmas Lights Across Canada celebration. Hosted by the Honourable Linda Reid, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, this joyful event symbolically united Canadians by linking federal, provincial and territorial legislatures in a festive display of lights.

This year's celebration featured performances by the SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus, the James Bay Community School Choir, the St. Andrew's Regional High School Choir, and the Reynolds Secondary School Carol Band. Following remarks by Madame Speaker, Norm Letnick, MLA for Kelowna-Lake Country and Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, and Carole James, MLA for Victoria-Beacon Hill, two students were invited to pull the lever and illuminate the provincial Christmas tree in front of the Parliament Buildings. Guests of all ages cheered as the tree sparkled with over 2,500 energy-efficient LED lights.

Following the lighting, all guests were invited inside for cookies, cocoa and hot apple cider.



## Legislative Trivia

Who reads the Speech from the Throne at the start of each new legislative session?

Email your answer to [PEO@leg.bc.ca](mailto:PEO@leg.bc.ca)  
The first correct respondent will receive a 2014 Legislative Assembly of British Columbia Calendar!



## THE SPEAKER'S CHAIR

The Speaker's Chair was unveiled in June, 2013 to commemorate and celebrate the role of the Speaker in a parliamentary democracy and to acknowledge the contribution of the individuals who have served as Speakers, Deputy Speakers and Assistant Deputy Speakers in the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia.

The Speaker's Chair is painted cast aluminum with a Douglas Fir seat. It is surrounded by 79 engraved bricks representing the names, positions and dates served of former Speakers.

The Speaker's Chair is located in the Speaker's courtyard, facing north - the same direction as the Speaker's Chair in the Legislative Chamber of B.C.'s Parliament Buildings. Be sure to have your photo taken in the Chair upon your next visit!