

## Today's Greatest Leader: Change

A wise man once said:

"Keep your mind open to change all the time. Welcome it. Court it. It is only by examining and reexamining your opinions and ideas that you can progress."

- Dale Carnegie

But, the problem is, many of us consider change to be frightening or daunting. We are fearful of it, we avoid it, and we ignore it, even when we know it is inevitable. It seems that most of us hate to venture outside our comfort zones; we are creatures of habit and find it easier to stick with what we know. We are comforted by the status quo.

However, change is a great motivator and can bring new life to dying institutions. Change inspires us to do better, to dream new dreams, to forge ahead and to explore new horizons. Change is powerful, but if embraced has the potential to lead us to greater things. The impossible somehow becomes possible.

Kirkland Lake has faced incredible changes over the last few years and so has the businesses that have lined the Mile of Gold. Some of those businesses have not been able to cope with the changes and are no longer a part of our community. Some continue to do business as though nothing has changed. While others have adapted, have stepped up and have embraced the changes, knowing full well that to survive and even thrive in our community they would have to make some changes also.

One of the most glaring examples of change is our community has been with the Northern News. I congratulate all those who had to make this decision. I am sure it was not an easy decision to make. However, the potential you now possess is extraordinary. I say that we should all celebrate, embrace and support these new changes because we will all benefit in the end.

This is not the only change that has occurred and with the arrival of spring we have seen signs of life in some of the "veteran" businesses that have long been a part of the Mile of Gold. Paul's has been in business in our community

for over 58 years and this year they have installed a brand new sign on their store front. With a new sign and a new slogan, it appears that the Larose brothers intend to continue doing business in our community for years to come.

The Hobby Shop is now in its 20<sup>th</sup> year of operation and they too have given their store a fresh look with their brand new sign. It is wonderful to see business people taking pride in their businesses and in our community. It would have been much easier to leave the old signs hanging as is, where is. It would have been easier to let things get run down. Instead these businesses have forged ahead and made some much needed changes, ones that will have a positive impact on our entire community. These are not the only businesses that have made some positive changes over the last few months. So, I challenge you to take a look around. You may be surprised at what you see or at what you have failed to see.

It seems that, over the years, Kirkland Lake has been shaken up, stirred and poured over the rocks. The business community has faced many challenges and changes. We have seen business close on the Mile of Gold, but we can not forget that we have also seen new ones open and existing ones expand. I have faith that, no matter what, Kirkland Lake and its business community will continue to rise to the challenges that change presents us. In doing so, our future will continue to be bright and our Mile of Gold will continue to shine. And this is, the one thing I hope never changes.