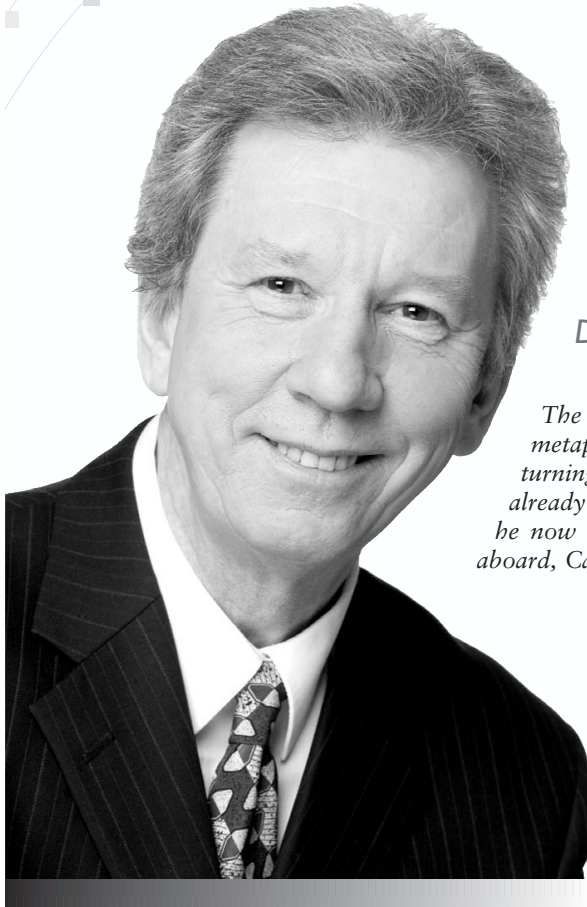


# Kaleidoscope

Newsletter for the employees of Canada Economic Development  
Produced by the Communications Team

Spring 2006



## Captain CED

*“...Throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover...”* (Mark Twain)

*The new Minister, Jean-Pierre Blackburn, does not lack for marine metaphors when talking about his arrival at the Agency. He speaks of turning the “ocean liner” around and reaching “cruising speed”. Having already been nicknamed “Captain Canada” and “Captain Saguenay”, he now has a new moniker — a variation on the same theme. Welcome aboard, Captain.*

as much, friends were scarce, the political label showed too much,” he admitted, resigned to the fickleness of politics.

“I’m happy in politics, it’s where I thrive,” he said about the reasons for returning to the political scene. His candour and selfless reasoning – so characteristic of the Saguenay people – was undoubtedly what made his wife, a nurse by training, and his honey, have a change of heart. Initially, she was opposed to his third return “to business” as de Gaulle would say, probably because of his crushing defeat in the Jonquière mayoralty race in 1995.

For Mr. Blackburn, who had probably joined the race as a wink to his grandfather, Alphonse de Launière, Mayor of Chambord in the fifties and sixties, the setback was just another democratic rebuff. For the fallen candidate, whom his grandfather affectionately called his “minister” when he was little, it would just be a matter of time until he could take his grandfather at his word.

Meanwhile, the former federal MP perked up and worked on a new project. An articulate and analytical man, his stint in the business world in the nineties was in sync with his forte, communications. He founded *Blackburn-Communication... Inc.*, a public relations firm where he wore all the hats: boss, administrator and employee.

As in politics, the business world can sometimes be thankless: “Let’s just say that I learned to manage meticulously,” he said, thinking back. The telephone stopped ringing off the hook and when it did ring, demand often outstripped supply. “People would come to me for advice, suggestions, assistance. Or I’d be asked to join such and such an organization.”

### A pure product of his region

In 2002, the future minister completed a master’s degree in regional studies and intervention at the *Université du Québec à Chicoutimi*. A pure product of his region, his academic and career path is a natural fit for the Agency. “I’ve never hidden the fact that my main concern is regional development,” he told us. His vision is based on an empirical approach. No wonder he spontaneously brought up the subject of rural youth out-migration during the interview.

This morning, less than an hour before his first meeting with a learned assembly of Agency staff, the new Conservative minister was still riding high on the wave that had carried him to power. He was on top form for a man who had got up at the wee hours and had just emerged from Trudeau-Dorval airport traffic. Understandably so. Rare is the person from his region, considered a separatist stronghold, who makes it to the holy of holies at the provincial

*Continued on page 2*

SPRING 2006

### TABLE of Contents

Word from the Editor	2
<i>La Releve</i> : Pierre Sirois	3
Destination Partnership	4
Understanding the Northern reality	4
A “cyberian” wind sweeps through the Agency	5
Regions on the move	6
News from the business offices	7
SME Day	7
Aconcagua: on top of the world in Argentina!	7
QFC Seminar	8
To your stations!	8
Inside Canada Economic Development: M.-Paul Gagné	9
Federal regional development in Quebec, decoded and presented	10
Diversity in our daily lives	11
Legal Capsule	11
Making a good first impression	12
“Mental Toughness”	12
Ultimate service	12

*La version française est disponible sur demande.*



By  
Jean Décary

Jean-Pierre Blackburn has come a long way. He says so himself: “Life after politics is hard.” In 1993, hoping to be “the rock that would stay put” in the tidal wave that swept the Liberals to power, he bided his time at home on the shores of Rivière-des-Sables, at the confluence of the Saguenay River.

What to him was an uneventful journey in the wilderness would have seemed a Paris-Dakar Rally to Joe Q. Citizen. Jean-Pierre Blackburn is a visible and active man. After nearly 10 years in the House of Commons as Member of Parliament for Jonquière, he had no intention of sitting on his pensioner’s pittance and watching his blueberries grow. In his mid-forties (he is 57 today), he looked to the future. But the post-Mulroney era had its low ebbs: “The phone didn’t ring

## Word from the Editor

### Yesterday, today and tomorrow



By Sandra Duchesne

What was the most talked-about subject in Canada early this winter? No, for once it was not the weather. It was politics of course and for good reason: it is not every year that we have a change of government in Canada. For many federal public employees, including yours truly, it was a first!

And of course, a change of government means a new party, and a new minister. In this issue, we profile our new Minister, Jean-Pierre Blackburn, who agreed to give us an interview just weeks after he assumed office. Member of Parliament for Jonquière-Alma, Mr. Blackburn is in a good position to understand economic development issues in the regions as well as the importance of the role played in Quebec by institutions such as the Agency.

While looking to the future with this interview, *Kaleidoscope* also takes a look back in time. Hervé Duff, who is retiring this spring, retraces the history of the federal organization of economic development in Quebec since its infancy over 40 years ago. An amazing corporate memory, wouldn't you say?

You can read about two business office colleagues. Pierre Sirois, a *La Relève* employee in the Outaouais, joined the Agency about three years ago. At 27, he's come a long way! Paul Gagné, who is with the Bas-Saint-Laurent office, shares his two great passions with us: gardening and new technologies.

Also to be read: the challenges facing Promotion and Information Outreach's Internet team in building the Agency's future website while simultaneously managing its existing content. As well, articles on our first and very successful Diversity Day in January, New Employee Introductory Days, and much more!

In closing, I would like to mention that François Bélisle is leaving the Editorial Board. François joined the team for the winter 2003 issue and one of his key tasks was to assemble news items for the Regions on the move column. His original approach to soliciting these texts helped fill the column for two years! Always generous with his time, François also wrote many articles for *Kaleidoscope*. Beginning with the next issue, his colleagues in Regional Communications will take turns taking over for him on the Board. Many thanks, François, for your valuable contribution!

Enjoy your reading, and a big thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue of *Kaleidoscope*.

## Captain CED

Continued from page 1

level and, *a fortiori*, at the federal level. Apparently, having your name start with the letter "B" helps: Benoît Bouchard, Marc-André Bédard, Jacques Brassard and Lucien Bouchard are a few illustrious politicians from the region.

If his ideology differs from that of most of them – after all Blackburn is a Scottish name – the new Alma-Jonquière Member of Parliament did not fall far from his tree. "I have the same roots. My role as a representative of Quebec and my region is very important." But do not expect him to spend his time proffering advice and tips as Gospel. "I will intervene only when I feel it is appropriate," he said modestly. Mr. Blackburn is one of only three MPs in the House to have been elected the first time in 1984.

### Two tips of the hat

With its 27 ministers, Stephen Harper's new government has a slimmed-down profile. It is what the Prime Minister said he wanted. When Jean-Pierre Blackburn was called for the formation of the cabinet, little did he know that he would be put in charge of two portfolios. "When they mentioned the two ministries, I thought they (the Prime Minister and his advisors) wanted to know whether I had a preference. When I realized they wanted me to take on both of them, I was doubly delighted."

He was about to continue when the waitress serving us recognized him and greeted him warmly: "Oh, of course, you're one of the new ministers!" She glanced at me and

seeing nothing ministerial there, simply asked: "More coffee too?" The Minister responded in kind, perhaps surprised that he would be recognized in Montréal. Mind you, his daughter (he also has a son) works in the hotel next to the restaurant where we were having our

If the name Blackburn echoes loudly from Richard-Desmeules Stadium to Arvida's Davis Square, it might ring fewer bells in Southern Quebec...

breakfast meeting. Perhaps she had spread the word that her Dad was in town. If the name Blackburn echoes loudly from Richard-Desmeules Stadium to Arvida's Davis Square, it might ring fewer bells in Southern Quebec, and even fewer west of the Ottawa River. However, with his two ministerial hats – Labour and the Agency –, his many future trips to Ottawa and his upcoming federal-provincial meeting in Whistler at the side of his BC counterpart, Jean-Pierre Blackburn will soon be a familiar name across Canada.

The new Minister's arrival at the top was closely followed at the Agency. Some of us pounced on our dictionaries to find out more about the American diplomat and politician, George Marshall, who, as secretary of state in the forties organized the European Recovery Program, often called the Marshall Plan. This is the kind of program which the new Minister would like to see implemented, in relative terms of course, at the regional level. When this article is published in the spring *Kaleidoscope*, more than a month will have gone by since he was sworn in as minister; the day he solemnly put his hand on the Bible and looked over at his wife, as if to say: "I made it, honey. I've come a long way." We wish you every success, Captain!

# Kaleidoscope

Editor: Michèle Déry-Martin

Coordinator: Sandra Duchesne

Editorial Board: François Bélisle, Jean Décar, Michèle Déry-Martin, Sandra Duchesne, Lise Gauthier, Claudie Lamontagne, Francine Lapointe, Lucie Lapointe, Line Maurel, Chantal Mimeault and Joane Simon.

Contributors: Stéphane Arcelin, Hervé Duff, Éliane Fréchette, Chantale Jeannotte, Éliane Jeannotte, Jocelyne Pelletier, Nadja Raphaël, Michel Rochon, Héléne St-Pierre, Emilie Tremblay and Michael Yake.

Graphic Design: DesJardins Conception Graphique Inc.



On February 21, Minister Blackburn met with Agency staff from the Greater Montréal area. He is pictured here with Michèle Loriston and Salah Ben Rejeb.