

BRITISH COLUMBIA CRIME STOPPERS

British Columbia Conference held in Revelstoke.

Nestled between the spectacular Selkirk and Monashee Mountains halfway between Calgary Alberta and Vancouver British Columbia is the community of Revelstoke British Columbia, population 5000. Revelstoke Crime Stoppers hosted the 15th Annual British Columbia Crime Stoppers Training Conference from May 1-3 2008.

The conference was a unique mix of small town hospitality and a big time, well-organized event. CSI President Gary Murphy, Canada Crime Stoppers President Ralph Page and the Board of Directors of CCSA joined the more than 120 registrants. Attendees experienced a wide ranging line up of presenters highlighted by two internationally acclaimed speakers: Crime Stoppers International Immediate Past President Steve Walrath and Serge LeClerc. As well, both Canada Crime Stoppers and British Columbia Crime Stoppers held their Annual General Meetings in Revelstoke. There was a lot going on!

The Future of Crime Stoppers ended up being the major theme of the conference. Over the past several years, Crime Stoppers has initiated a global partnership with the United Nations Office of Drug and Crime in Vienna, completed the worldwide re-organization structure of CSI and created the Crime Stoppers International Foundation.

Steve's Walrath's presentation looked into the future and saw limitless opportunity for the program as long as it continues to meet changing needs and understand "Generation X" and the "Millennial Generation". Technology has forced incredible changes in communication and Crime Stoppers needs to adapt.

Serge LeClerc's presentation also focused on the future and the needs of developing our youth. Serge provided the inspirational story of his life—starting a product of rape born in an abandoned building to a teenage girl, moving from a poverty-stricken inner-city youth to a young offender, a runaway street kid, a gang leader, and a drug king-pin who served a total of 21 years in some of Canada's toughest prisons while battling a twenty-year drug addiction, to his received a precedent setting Canadian National Pardon in the year 2000 due to his exemplary work for youth, their families, and their communities both in Canada and abroad.

Beside his presentation to the conference, Revelstoke Crime Stoppers also arranged for Serge to present a public lecture. It was well received and provided the Crime Stoppers program a unique opportunity to interact with the community.

Al Sismey was elected the new president of British Columbia Crime Stoppers at the BC Crime Stoppers Annual General meeting. A coordinator's session focused on the challenges of new technology, such as web tips and SMS text message tips.

Barrie Johnston of Greater Vancouver Crime Stoppers was named "British Columbia Crime Stopper of the Year" at the Saturday evening banquet.

Congratulations to Revelstoke Crime Stoppers president Marsha Kruger and her tireless organizing committee for putting on a "wonderful show".

As one attendee noted, "This may not be the easiest place to get to, but once I got here, wow, what a conference!"

The next British Columbia Crime Stoppers Training Conference in May 2009 will be hosted by North Okanagan Crime Stoppers and will be held in Vernon, British Columbia.