

The Cast - December 31, 2016

Team: Wheelin' Warriors



Karin Piche, a mother of 4, has deep roots in the community. For the past three decades, Karin has served as a consultant and facilitator to health seekers throughout the extended Prince George Region. A well established authority on the psychology of leadership, organizational turnaround, the science of health and fitness and peak performance, she has been recognized consistently for her strategic intellect and humanitarian endeavors. Her non profit **Wheelin Warriors of the North** cycling team provides substantial fundraising assistance to Provincial Initiatives for cancer research in a system that boasts 230,000 survivors in British Columbia alone. Piche has directly impacted the lives of countless people through her Fitness and Nursing Career (at Northern Health) as well as her many Philanthropic endeavors. What began as a personal desire to help individuals transform the quality of their lives has grown into Piche's lifelong crusade to end CANCER and change lives.

Henry Lee Goats moved to Canada at the ripe old age of 15 and settled in Vanderhoof while going to school. Eventually he signed on with the Prince George Fire Department, retiring from distinguished career 30 short years later. He enjoys riding motorcycles and bicycles, flying, and listening to all kinds of music, and that's the connection to dancing— music and dancing just simply seem to go together. He is looking forward to his year's "Boogie with the Stars" event and working with Karin on the Cha Cha.



Team: The River



Tyler Lippingwel is born and bred in BC, growing up in the lower mainland in Maple Ridge, but recently moved to Prince George to work with the Jim Pattison Broadcast Group. He is the CKPF FunChaser, so with the nature of his job covering community events, don't be surprised if you see him around town enjoying the exciting things that Prince George has to offer. He is also involved in the sports community as he is in the Media Director for the major midget hockey team of the Cariboo Cougars. He has also done work with the Prince George Spruce Kings of the BCHL and this summer was appointed media director of the international World Baseball Challenge Tournament that saw baseball teams from as far away as Japan! Tyler is not scared to admit that he has zero background in dance, but that is why he is excited to take on this challenge, giving him the opportunity to learn, while helping a good cause! We are hoping his experience with the media is going to give Tyler an edge in the BWTS competition.

Dr. Laura Brough. Born and raised in Ottawa Dr Laura spent her last 20 years enjoying the outdoors and community that Prince George has to offer. When not working at the hospital, you can find her volunteering at the local YMCA. She considers herself a novice social dancer and thanks the many local dance instructors who have patiently shared their craft with her over the years. She is especially grateful to her spouse, Wil for supporting her in "one more event". She looks forward to "stepping the light fantastic" with her partner Tyler on New Years Eve when she guides him through a fusion routine that includes Foxtrot and Cha Cha.



Team: Brink Group



John A. Brink is the Founder, President and CEO of Brink Forest Products, an integrated lumber manufacturing plant producing a range of structural, industrial and value-added wood products designed for a local and international markets. John has a passion for the forest industry and his vision for the future is inspiring. John is also a property developer and played an instrumental role in the successful development of the Nechako View Subdivision. John and the Brink Group of Companies believe in the importance of giving back to the Prince George community by supporting various local events, fundraisers and charities. Fueled by passion, integrity and work ethic, John is also a competitor in the annual Iron Ore Classis. John has impressed us with his dedication and focus, so we can only imagine he will be a fierce competitor for the 206 BWTS trophy.

Anna Bkric was born and raised in Prince George. After graduating from the Education Program at UNBC, she decided to start her career in a small rural community. Growing up in the north, Anna had learned to love the winter and wanted to teach somewhere where summers were short and the 'bug free' winter was longer. She ended up in Prespatou and later Fort St John where she taught high school sciences. Family eventually beckoned Anna back home to Prince George where she continues to teach. Her introduction to dance started back at UNBC when a friend called her and asked if she would give ballroom dancing a try. She found a welcoming atmosphere and a fun personal challenge at Dance North. The Friday classical dances suit Anna's musical background and always bring a smile to her face. This is Anna's first year with BWTS and she is looking forward to dancing the Salsa with John.



Team: Hell Yeah Prince George



Scott McWalter, founder of the Hell Yeah Prince George Facebook Group, is a Marketing & Communications Executive with the Brink Group of Companies. Scott is a life-long promoter of Prince George and earned his Bachelor of Commerce degree in Marketing and his Masters degree in Business Administration all at UNBC. In addition to being proud resident of Prince George and fierce advocate for Northern British Columbia, he is also a Group Fitness Instructor at the Northern Sport Centre, Lead Organizer of the Prince George Terry Fox Run, former Vice President of the British Columbia Indoor Soccer League and on the Triathlon Organizing Committee. We are lucky to have Scott as part of the BWTS team this year and we are confident he will play a big part of reaching our goal for the UHNBC wheelchair replacement program.

Karelya Medialdea has deep Spanish roots. Born in historical Havana, she grew up in Madrid and then later in BC. Karelya graduated from the University of the Fraser Valley with a Criminal Justice Degree and successfully minored in both Liberal Arts and French. Her work experience is in the criminal and social justice system as well as immigration services. As she tells us, "I love dancing - it is a part of my soul; but lately I have been too busy with my career to find enough time to dance." She has studied Flamenco, Ballet and Contemporary Dance since the age of 10, with modeling and pageants also being a part of her life until recently. "I am a big fan of Dancing with the Stars, so when Paz & Peter recently asked me if I would like to be part of a dance competition I instantly said yes without knowing what it was - because I have always danced, I decided to dedicate time for it." She eagerly asked "Am I going to be Dancing with the Stars? I never thought I'd have such great opportunity knock on my door this soon and so spontaneously! I am very grateful to have been given a chance to be part of this amazing event. I am a Flamenco girl but I love the challenge of trying something new - West Coast Swing is completely out of my element." She wishes good luck to all of the Stars competing!



Team: Canadian Tire



Selen Alpaya and his wife Anita moved to Prince George in September 2007 when he took over as Associate Dealer of the Prince George Canadian Tire store. Selen started his career with Canadian Tire when he was in his teens, as a manual inventory counter in his hometown of Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario. Selen and Anita owned their first store in Amherstburg, Ontario, which opened in November, 1995. Since then they have owned a number of Canadian Tire Stores in Canada. They loved Prince George right away, not only because of the area's great natural beauty, but because the city still radiates a 'small town' comfortable feel. Selen has been very "community-minded" throughout his life. He believes strongly in giving back and helping others as much as he can, so has become very involved with the local charities and organizations. He believes that everyone has a story and deserves the right to feel cared for. He strongly believes in the power of the "TEAM". This is Selen's second time participation in BWTS, though he still says jokingly that he has "two-left feet". Selen has come back again this year knowing how these funds can make a large impact in our community and wanting to be involved in the fun of making it a success.

Colleen Sparrow has deep roots in Prince George having lived here with her family since the age of six. A graduate of Duchess Park Secondary (go Condors!), she joined the Citizen in 1991 and held various positions in the organization before becoming Circulation Manager in 2003, and then the newspaper's first female Publisher in 2012. A long-time member of Kiwanis, Colleen also served on the board of directors of Initiatives Prince George and the B.C. Yukon Community Newspapers Association and is currently the Board Chair of the Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation. She and her husband Mike, a long-time CN Rail employee, have two adult daughters who were born and raised in Prince George.



Team: Tommy B. Good



Tom Sentes. Tom and better half Judy moved to Prince George in 1993 – they have two married boys and three wonderful grandchildren. Tom joined Wood Wheaton GM where he enjoyed an involved and successful career until retiring in May this year - his retirement fit in nicely with his approach to life as an avid outdoorsman, with lots of fly-fishing, camping and hiking. He has served on many boards, including the Haldi Woman's Recovery Centre, Baldy Hughes Recovery Centr, Yellowhead Rotary, and most appropriately for us, the Board of directors for the **Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation**. Tom and two friends started two successful restaurants, Cimo Mediterranean Grill and North 54. He believes that dance improves the social community, and wants to promote it more. He has enjoyed partnering with Paz and learning dance so much, that he was convinced to build a dance floor in his own home - he is confident all those months of practice will pay off in defending his championship performance from 2011! Tom strongly believes in the Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation because it supports the North with all the money raised to help the people of the North staying here.

Paz Milburn was born and raised in the Philippines with a love for music and a passion for dance. Her passion for dancing was revived in 2006 when helped organized Dance North. "This year two of my first place partners Tom Sentes from 2011 and Selen Alpay from 2012 are back to our line up of competitors to help BWTS raise funds for the Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundaion" Paz points out. Our goal this year is to raise \$50,000.00 towards the fleet of Rehab wheelchairs. 2016 is the busiest BWTS yet, and Paz has the pleasure of helping and guiding four of the couples through their routines. She wishes the best of luck to the nine stars and expresses her heartfelt gratitude to the three Premier Sponsors, to the Stars, Dancers, Coaches and all the Volunteers. "BWTS wouldn't be a success without everyone's tremendous help and support".



Team: Prestige Hotel & Resorts



Craig Briere. Born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan, Craig Briere played five years of junior football with the Regina Rams and won four national championships (CJFL) before football took him on to Vancouver where he continued to play at the CIS level with UBC Thunderbirds for four years. Craig is President and CEO West Coast Hospitality Group, one of the largest hospitality companies in Northern BC that is focused on development, management and investment in hospitality based businesses. West Coast assets and investments include hotels, gaming, restaurant, pub and retail businesses focused on the Hwy 16 corridor from Prince George to Prince Rupert. Some of these establishments include the Prestige Treasure Cove Hotel, Nu Spa, Tropical Pool and Spa, Dales Wood and Gas Heat and the newly opened Don Cherry's Sports Grill Prince George. Volunteering is part of Craig's life – a few examples of that are a volunteer coach in PGMHA (Hockey), PGMHA (Football), PGYSA (Soccer) as well as past president of PGMFA and PGYSA. He is also on the fundraising committee for UNBC Athletics. Is it any wonder Craig has agreed to be part of the 2016 BWTS? With experienced, quality people like this involved, our event can't help but be a success!

Ania Starzyk was born and raised in Poland, where she worked as an elementary teacher in a school very close to her home. As a young adult she had always had a love for music and dance. In 1996, Ania moved to Prince George with her husband. She has two kids. Besides visiting back home, Ania also loves travelling all across Canada as well as throughout Europe. Ania has an ambition for exploring new places, experiences, and meeting different people. In 2014 she joined Dance North to learn the different styles and technical aspects of dancing. This is Ania's first time dancing in Boogie with the Stars and she aspires to do well enough to compete in future events! She will be doing the very challenging Argentine Tango with her Star partner Craig and we have no doubt Ania will excel in this because of her genuine commitment, her wonderfully warm and pleasant nature and her approach to life.



Team: Cariboo Brewing



Kyle Sampson is probably a name you've heard around town. Previously a Radio Personality, he now manages Marketing, Events, and Sales in Northern BC for Pacific Western Brewing Company. Giving back and staying involved in the community is a top priority for Kyle. He spends his spare time hooking up with local charities, not-for-profits and the like— you can usually catch him out and about supporting the community in various events, working with local businesses around town. He has his heart in Prince George and he's very proud to call it home, and we in turn are very proud to have Kyle commit to be part of the BWTS team—he is a great addition to our loaded cast. Watch out for him - he's here to bust a move in the face of fundraising tonight and has made it clear he has an eye on that trophy as he puts on his dancing shoes and gets ready to boogie with Colleen!

Colleen Ruddy. Hailing from Montreal, Quebec, Colleen is a full time teacher at Sacred Heart Elementary School here in Prince George. She moved here after teaching Kindergarten overseas. Faced with prospect of teacher Gr. 6/7 students how to dance, and the hooky pokey no longer being a viable option with this age group, Ms. Ruddy turned to Dance North for inspiration. Ms. Ruddy was a regular member of Dance North for 5 years until she took some time off to complete a Masters Degree, get married and become an instant stepmom. Now, with her Masters completed and domestic life settled, she has returned to **Boogie with the Stars**. This year at school, her students will be learning Thriller and swingdances, including the Lindy Hop. The students continue to press her for more dances and she continues to accommodate them believing that dance is cheaper than therapy and more fun too!) Colleen will be dancing with Kyle to one of today's popular songs.



Team: Hub City



Rich Schleich was born and raised in Prince George. His father, Karl was associated with Hub City for well over 40 years and was one of the owners for 25 of those years. Rich started his working career at Hub City as a lot person, working his way through as a detailer, then Certified Journeyman Technician. He ran the service department for 10 year and then ran the dealership and sales side for the past 4 years after officially taking over the company in 2012. He and his wife Sarah are now the current majority owners along with a business partner. They are very community oriented and having received so much support through the years from the community, they very much want to give back. They have three children, Quentin, Sawyer and Apollo, and Rich is currently working towards his BCommerce with accounting major. He is very much into running and working out and leads a very athletic lifestyle - the fact that he is at the gym by 6 every morning and works out for an hour and a half, 6 days a week proves that! He jumped at the chance for BWTS because he and his wife absolutely love DWTS. He has always wished that he could dance because his wife loves to dance and he wants to be able to join her on the dance floor—his goal is to learn to dance and help generate funds towards such worthwhile causes. We sure aim to help Rich do just that!

Leslie Farrela came to Canada from Massachusetts, the family settling in Prince George in 1977. Leslie is a NCCP Level 3 Coach and has volunteered her time in the sports field since 1990. She started dancing with Dance North in 2007 for enjoyment as well as physical and health benefits. Her interest and passion in dance has grown steadily ever since and she loves every minute of it. This is very obvious to her fellow dancers who have seen Leslie's style and technique improve dramatically. Now Leslie is going to share that knowledge and experience with Richard as she guides him through the **Paso Doble**.

