

DOLLAR
-0.14¢
81.55 US

TSX
+103.12
8,759.63

DOW
+58.70
8,174.73

NASDAQ
+15.44
1,504.90

OIL
-\$4.15 US
\$41.58 US

GOLD
-\$9.30 US
\$899.20 US

Record BUSINESS

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Section C

The Record.com || Business editor Ron DeRuyter • rderuyter@therecord.com

Enterprise

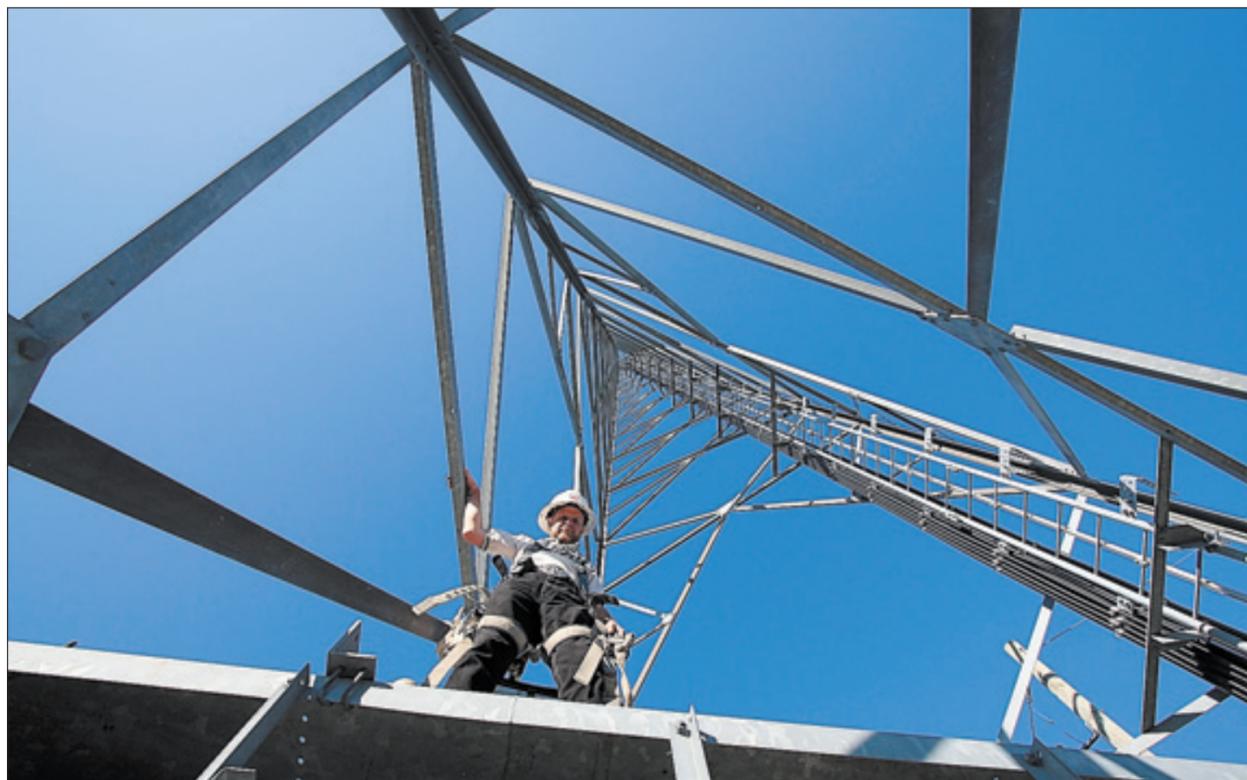


PHOTO COURTESY OF RIGARUS CONSTRUCTION

Rigarus Construction founder Paul Panagapka looks down from a Toronto-area tower the Elmira firm built for Rogers Communications.

Canadian regulations to set mark, bank boss reassures

By Michael MacDonald

HALIFAX — The governor of the Bank of Canada is sticking to his rosy view of the prospects for Canada's economy, saying yesterday the country is unlikely to suffer from a sustained bout of deflation.

However, Mark Carney stressed that his reassuring prediction — coming less than a week after he suggested the economy would strongly rebound next year — was predicated on two conditions.

The former Wall Street investment banker, speaking to business leaders in Halifax, said stability had to return to global financial markets and the massive stimulus packages proposed for Canada and the United States had to be effective.

The Canadian government was to do its part yesterday, tabling a budget with significant tax cuts and spending initiatives that will produce a projected \$64 billion in deficits over the next two fiscal years.

But Carney stressed several times that international financial markets remained in bad shape — a condition that could threaten Canada's economic recovery.

"We are facing a financial crisis without comparison for generations," he said in his speech. "The issues of financial stability that were once the obsession of a pessimistic few are now the daily concern of many."

Carney said the financial markets were in serious need of regulatory reform and Canada should lead the way to bring about change.

"We will do our utmost to influence the form of global financial regulation because Canada has a lot to bring," Carney said during a question-and-answer session after his speech to the Halifax Chamber of Commerce.

"We've done a lot of things right and we want the world to look more like Canada coming out of this."

The patriotic comment was one of many positive notes Carney struck during his speech.

He also said there's only a remote possibility sustained deflation will take hold of the Canadian economy, boasting of the central bank's ability to keep inflation stable and predictable throughout the 1990s.

Carney said he expects inflation to dip below zero during the second and third quarters of this year before returning to the central bank's two per cent target in 2011.

► Bank continued on page C2

Going up in the world

Elmira tower builder tries to be ready when opportunities arise

By Michael Hammond, Record staff

ELMIRA — A crew of construction workers from Elmira was recently forced to huddle together overnight in an ice-fishing hut on Main Duck Island in Lake Ontario, 18 kilometres south of Kingston.

Their helicopter to the mainland had been cancelled due to high winds. To understand what the crew was doing there, you have to know something about Rigarus Construction Inc.

The Elmira company specializes in tower construction — wherever those towers are needed. In recent weeks, it has also had crews on Manitoulin Island and in Whistler, B.C.

Rigarus builds and maintains towers for wireless carriers such as Rogers Communications and Bell, for Environment Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard and, more recently, for wind-energy companies.

Paul Panagapka, who has worked in the industry for more than two decades, started Rigarus in 2001. Since then, it has grown from a one-person operation to a staff of 20. And it has done work in such far-flung locales as Killiniq Island on the northernmost fringe of Quebec and Labrador.

"This is not the (typical) job in the construction industry," Panagapka says. "It's fun, it's interesting and you get to travel all over the place."

Rigarus recently landed a high-profile job to dismantle a weather tower in King City, north of Toronto, and reassemble it in Whistler, B.C. so the ski resort can be better prepared for next year's Winter Olympics.

Rigarus Construction Inc.

Address: 20A Arthur St. N., Elmira, N3B 2Z5
Phone: 519-669-5040
Web: www.rigarus.com
Employees: 20



The company is now in the final stages of assembling the tower and wiring it with the weather equipment.



PHILIP WALKER, RECORD STAFF

Paul Panagapka started Rigarus Construction Inc. in 2001. The Elmira company's motto is: "No such thing as can't."

Chris Doyle, Environment Canada's manager of web services for the 2010 Olympics, says the tower will allow forecasters to provide a more comprehensive weather outlook for the games. "Weather is more of a 3D problem here," he says.

Since forecasters need data for areas at sea level and others as high as 2,400 metres above sea level, the ability to get a three-dimensional view of conditions will be crucial for day-to-day planning in Whistler.

That's because what might fall as rain in one part of British Columbia will fall as snow at a higher altitude.

Doyle says he hopes the tower, located 10 kilometres from the Whistler downtown, will begin collecting winter weather data as soon as possible, to give Environment Canada a better idea of what to expect next year.

Panagapka isn't one to dwell on the competition — he says Rigarus has as many as five local competitors — or the complexity of the jobs his company takes on.

At any given site, Rigarus might have to build a tower foundation in rock, clay, sandy loam or a swamp. It also constructs access roads and crafts specific parts for the tower. The only part it doesn't do is the welding, which it contracts out.

Panagapka says he's not all that worried about the deteriorating economy, which will no doubt cut into the capital spending plans of potential clients.

In the coming years, he says, he sees wind farms as a major new source of revenue.

Rigarus has already constructed a number of wind-measurement towers at proposed wind farm sites around the Great Lakes.

Panagapka says he is content just to keep his hands on the wheel and see where opportunity takes him.

"We're pretty content," he says.

mhammond@therecord.com

Put partisanship aside for economic good, Obama urges Republicans

By Lee-Anne Goodman

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Barack Obama met with Republicans yesterday in an effort to win their support for the \$825 billion US economic stimulus package he hopes will keep the United States from plunging even deeper into an already devastating recession.

In two hours of meetings at the Capitol, Obama attempted to convince wary Republicans that swift, bipartisan action was needed to

rescue a frantically free-falling economy.

"I don't expect 100 per cent agreement from my Republican colleagues, but I do hope that we can all put politics aside and do the American people's business right now," Obama told the media in between separate meetings with House and Senate Republicans.

"The statistics every day underscore the urgency of the economic situation... the American people expect action."

Shortly after the meeting, White House spokesperson Robert Gibbs said the package's prospects were good.

"I think we will have Republican support for this bill," he said.

Obama's return to the Capitol on a snowy day exactly a week after his historic inauguration came amid grim economic news for Americans, with announcements of mass layoffs, soaring unemployment rates, sharp declines in house prices and

darkening consumer confidence.

The president has been arguing for weeks that time is of the essence for the package, and that the flailing economy needs a lifeline now. But Republicans have complained the bill is too tilted toward spending and doesn't contain enough tax relief. They voiced those concerns to Obama directly yesterday.

Congress is set to vote on the economic stimulus package later today. While the bill can poten-

tially pass the Democratic-dominated House without Republican support, at least two Senate Republicans will need to approve it for a filibuster-proof majority vote of 60.

The president was accompanied during his meetings with Republicans by Ray LaHood, the new transportation secretary who was once a Republican congressman.

► Obama continued on page C4

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