



# THE Tax Tipper

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We take your taxes personally!

Issue 24

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### Our Readers Respond

"Thank you Neel for having us on your mailing list. The "Tax Tipper" is a fine newsletter from PTC Canada and you have some nice Dodge cars on the website. Merry Christmas!"

Dave Malek  
 Once upon a mine  
 Dewinton, Alberta

We welcome your comments on the Tax Tipper!  
 Check out our [newsroom](#). We make press now and then!

Dear Clients and Friends,

### Christmas Message!

2010 continues to be a challenging year like its predecessor 2009. Our American counterparts still ride the economic roller coaster with uncertainty bobbing its ugly head at various turns. States like California and Michigan still boast unemployment rates as high as 20% for over 2 years in a row now which is unheard of in most of our lifetime! While the markets have shown recovery and there is some renewed optimism in the job market, many experts feel we are far from glory years of a few years ago.

When I watch the news, I see stories of very qualified people being out of work for 2, going on 3 years. This is extremely distressing for those who not only have other dependants but are genuinely trying to find employment. I remember hearing of a tow truck driver who gave exceptional service to a stranded motorist and the customer commented "I'll bet you love your job?" To her surprise, the tearful tow truck driver responded "I'm just so thankful I am working" and walked away. What a switch this is from just 3 years ago when having a job seemed like a burden? Having lived through at least 3 booms and busts, this was the first time if seen desperation at this level.

As I enter my 14th year of business, I continue to bring both services and means which match the needs of today. One of the features I have been personally proud to offer clients and non-customers for years are the free, up to date resources on [www.ptccanada.com](http://www.ptccanada.com). I am in a business where people are always challenged and if not in trouble with their taxes. Like the tow truck driver, they may not have the funds or confidence to deal with another person, yet I always feel morally obligated to do something for them. I can't count the number of times in my life where others have helped me and you can say this is a very small way I can return that. While I never personally meet all those who use our resources, I am grateful for all the praise and notes of thanks I get regularly from loyal clients and passerby's. You can't put a price on it and if I'm allowed one wish for Christmas, I hope more comes in for 2011 and beyond. These letters not only make my day but the challenges of this tough business well worth it.

Despite all the pessimism on the street, PTC Canada had another record year of growth, so needless to say I am very pleased. It is estimated there are an average of 400 changes to the tax laws each year and combined with your altering situation it is imperative that expertise service continue to be at your disposal. Today client needs are much more sophisticated and trying than they were when I started in the late nineties. Not only are tax laws getting more complicated, but people in general are too busy and don't have the time or determination to try and make sense of what needs to be done. That's why our updated website is here. It's designed for busy people who need something tax oriented done right away in the comfort of their own home. Over 90% of

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clients make use of it on a regular basis and since almost everybody in our country can get internet access, that is only going to increase. Whether you have a unique situation, just want to do the annual filing or want to stay in touch, [www.ptccanada.com](http://www.ptccanada.com) is rich in offering something for practically anyone at no cost or obligation.

At this time of the year we get together with old friends, family and acquaintances of which I myself will be doing and share festivities with memories of the past. This year our little town of Vulcan was visited by the legendary Leonard Nimoy in the spring and we made headlines all over the world for the first time in history. I've been a Start Trek fan all my life and while the show is classed as science fiction, it has some very timely messages. One of my favourite episodes from the original 60's series called "City on the Edge of Forever" contained this near prophetic speech by Joan Collins to the homeless in the shelter she was tending to:

*"Now I don't pretend to tell you how to find happiness and love, when every day is just a struggle to survive. But I do insist that you do survive, because the days and the years ahead are worth living for. One day, soon, man is going to be able to harness incredible energies, maybe even the atom, energies that could ultimately hurl us to other worlds in...in some sort of spaceship. And the men that reach out into space will be able to find ways to feed the hungry millions of the world and to cure their diseases. They will be able to find a way to give each man hope and a common future. And*

*those are the days worth living for...."*

While this insight is a combination of speculation and reality, I deliberately underlined the last sentence for a reason. Whatever situation you may find yourself in "*The days ahead are in fact worth living for!*" Did you know what the secret to a successful race car driver is? They keep their eyes on the road ahead instead of behind. We will in fact move out of this economic climate but by faith we have to hang in there after doing the right things!

Lastly, I ask you again at this time to help out where you can this holiday season. Many charitable institutions have experienced continued cut backs this year and places like the food bank or Salvation Army really feel the scaled back contributions. In our small town of 2,000 people a fair amount depend on our community goodwill as a matter of life and death. Cold winters can be especially trying and I am delighted that many of my clients, friends and family give heartily. Did you know Canadians are considered one of the most generous people? Having lived in Canada all my life, I'm personally proud of that. Apart from a tax deduction is the feeling that someone in need got it. Check out Mark Victor Hansen's book, "[The Miracle of Tithing](#)". I recommend it this time of year because it is very well written on the "non-economic" areas of giving. I have been tithing for years and can't tell you how many times it has faithfully rewarded me. Thank in advance you for doing this. Merry Christmas, Happy 2011 and enjoy the last Tipper of the year! 

Neel Roberts  
President and Founder

## What's Happening

### Clients Already Booking 2011 Appointments

Clients are taking advantage of the space available for the 2011 tax season without the worry of being left behind. There's generally no cost and we can flex you within reason. Are you ready to file your 2010 return? We have been ready to roll for a few months thanks to the help of our speedy software developers. Simply contact me with all your information and you may have your refund in January. Unfortunately "E-File" does not start until Monday, February 7th, 2011 and all early returns will be paper filed with the usual 4-6 weeks turnaround time, but there is still a slight advantage especially if you're expecting a large refund!



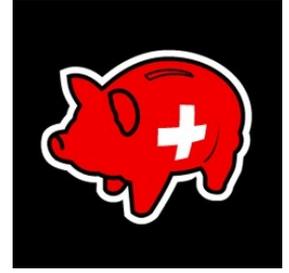
### New Login Required to Access Your Tax Information

If you already have an Epass, now you will need to register to CRA's unique Login user name and password as of last fall. This not only applies to professionals like me but those who are both personal and business users. For further information check out the news bulletin or call the e-services help desk at 1-800-714-7257.



### Beware Unreported Swiss Bank Account Holders

The days of finding secrecy in Swiss bank accounts without paying taxes is fast coming to a close as CRA now has the names and account details of those who have been eluding the taxman for years. The House of Commons finance committee launched a formal investigation 2 months ago into allegations hundreds of Canadians have stashed millions in offshore banks to hide their wealth from Canada's taxman. "Honest hard working Canadians are worried the rich are manipulating the system", said Liberal finance critic Scott Brison. Those who find themselves in this situation should ask us about a "Tax Amnesty" to avoid persecution and more!



### Last call for a 100% Computer Claim for Businesses

As the current Economic Action Plan expires, small businesses who purchase a computer can claim a 100% capital cost allowance for all computing equipment purchased up to January 31st, 2011. This is almost double from the current 55% and pretty well covers any type of computing equipment including smart phones. Check out the news bulletin for details and Classes of depreciable property for comparisons.



### Tax Ombudsman Slam CRA for Rejecting Appeals

Last month, Canada's first Tax Ombudsman Paul Dube criticized the CRA for unreasonably rejecting tax appeals for no good reason. In his November report, The Right to Know, Mr. Dube, a former criminal defense lawyer cited a "definite pattern" of appeals officials refusing to allow taxpayers to have their objections heard. "Reasons are part of democracy," Dube said Wednesday during an interview in his office. "You have the right to know why a decision was being made. You need the reasons from that decision to be able to launch an effective appeal." According to the Taxpayer's Bills of Rights legislated in 2007, a taxpayer now has documented appeal rights that the CRA "**MUST**" permit regardless of the application officer's opinion. If you feel you have been denied this basic fairness, contact the Tax Ombudsman at 1-866-586-3839.



### Are you "Tax Preparation Volunteer" Material?

Have you ever considered a profession preparing taxes but lack experience? The "Tax Volunteer Program" is an excellent program to get started in as there are minimal qualifications. This experience can be very helpful if you want to pursue a career in the tax industry. Many professionals actually started here before going into practise full time. I even heard a rumour they have a free meal at the end of the season but you have to bring your own ketchup, so don't let that discourage you. For further information contact the general enquires line at 1-800-959-8281 or drop by your local tax center!



### New Global Accounting Standard coming to The Canadian Tax System!

Beginning in 2011 there will be a new set of accounting principles known as "International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)" which affect the way CRA requires individuals and corporations to report income. As news gets released, I will keep you updated or you can follow various websites through RSS feeds, but expect the bulk of the new practises to be announced in mid-2011 for the 2012 tax season.



## “Missing in Action and Need to get Back in the Tax Loop”

Real People with Real Questions About Real Situations

Dear Neel,

I have moved so many times in the last ten years and forgot to file at the same time that CRA thinks I'm cheating them. To make a long story short I had a lot of personal difficulties including illness, death in the family and financial problems. I was self-employed and employed at various places but I don't think I owe them and probably entitled to GST/Child Tax benefits. I really liked your website and hope you can help because I feel totally alone!

Curtis L.

Dear Curtis,

I can assure you you're not the first person I have met in this situation and doubt it'll be the last however this does not mean you should take your circumstances lightly. Understand that CRA can only react to the information they have at hand and if you have the impression they are harassing you, I suggest you write them a detailed letter explaining your situation. Not only does it look like you can qualify for fairness under the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, but CRA "MUST" by law conduct themselves in a

courteous and ethical manner. If you feel this has not been the case, I suggest you start by filing a Service Complaint and even contacting the CRA Ombudsman at 1-866-586-3839.

Addressing your late taxes, you need to gather your information for each year and you should start by calling the general enquires # at 1-800-959-8281. Have them mail all slips they have on the database for unfiled years and fill out the Moving Expense Form T1M for each qualifying move. If you are using a tax professional, they can guide you with the self-employed years and our personal tax checklist with Small Business Tax Booklet & Excel business spreadsheet will help you compile the rest. Lastly, see if you qualify for the Disability Tax Credit as not only can you go back 10 years but you can use it for future returns. Merry Christmas and the very best for the New Year!

Are You *Just Asking* tax questions?

Neel can *Just Answer* them.



## Did You Know?

The first commercial Christmas cards were commissioned by Sir Henry Cole in London in 1843 and featured an illustration by John Callcott Horsley. The picture, of a family with a small child drinking wine together, proved controversial, but the idea was shrewd: Cole had helped introduce the Penny Post three years earlier. Two batches totaling 2,050 cards were printed and sold that year for a



Got an interesting fact? Email it so us!



Ever wondered what folks say about us? Check out our client testimonies!

As usual, we welcome your comments on the Tax Tipper!



# It's a Photo Finish! Step Into The World's Largest Toy Museum



Courtesy [World's Largest Toy Museum](#)

Is it possible to celebrate Christmas all year round? Trek out to Branson, Missouri, USA if you please and check out the "World's Largest Toy Museum" which has toys from the 1800's to today. Whether you're shopping for the kids or the kid in you, you're bound to find something of interest for all tastes. Check out the [picture gallery](#), [slide show](#) and videos but best of all you can scope that [hard to find gift](#) (don't we all have one of those on our list?) for the person who has everything!

[Send us your fascinating photo or story.](#)



Astronomy fans and enthusiasts can follow Neel's monthly column [Sky's the Limit](#) in the [Vulcan Advocate](#) printed the first Wednesday of every month!



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