

# Generation change at Points North: new name, new direction after 25 years

**P**oints North Freight Forwarding celebrated 25 years of operation with a new name and a change of management in December.

Since freight is no longer the kingpin of their business, the company is now known as the Points North Group of Companies.

Points North was started in 1984 by George and Andy Eikel and partners as a transfer point where freight from the south was transferred to planes for the rest of the journey into the Athabasca region. Over the years the partners departed and third brother Norm joined the management.

Then a seasonal road was built, cutting down the need for flying freight up north.

Now, it's time for the younger generation to take over. Andy's son Mark replaces George as president of the company, while Blaine looks after the financial and administrative aspects formerly handled by his father.

Mark Eikel has been part of the operation all his adult life, as a labourer, pilot and member of the management team. Blaine has also been involved for many years.

Not that the three older Eikels are going anywhere - Points North has been

their second home all these years, and will continue to be.

The company held a reception in Saskatoon Dec. 1 to celebrate the changes. The new company is 62% owned by the Athabasca communities through the Athabasca Basin Development Limited Partnership. Recently two new investors joined the owner group: Prince Albert First Nation Business Development L.P. and the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. The balance is owned by GRAB Holdings, representing the Eikel family.

The company has several separate divisions, including: **Points North Camp Services** which provides meals and accommodation to the public (manager Ollie Kelly); **Points North Trucking** (manager Bud Janzen); **Points North Bulk Fuels** (manager Andy Eikel); **Points North Repair Services** (manager Bob Burseth); **Points North Homes and Points North Lumber** (Brian Kellett, Manager). This division is also constructing RTM homes, supervised by Henry Dyck.

"These divisions and others are the future of Points North. We are very excited about new opportunities, and look forward to the future growth and expansion of these divisions," said new president Mark Eikel.



Juniors flank seniors. From left: Blaine and dad Norm, George, Andy and son Mark Eikel.