

All committees received EXPO 86 flags for their City Hall. They all received special plaques and certificates of commendation in recognition of their volunteer work for the community. A distinctive, community Banner Program was initiated by Public Affairs. Each community received two sets of six EXPO 86 zone coloured banners, sponsored by one of the Exposition's corporate sponsors, Minolta.

Large public meetings were organized and coordinated by Public Affairs in many regions of British Columbia. Hosted by the local EXPO 86 Committee, these informational sessions drew audiences of up to 900 enthusiastic citizens who wanted "Expo Info." Guest speakers usually included EXPO 86 Chairman Jim Pattison and provincial government representatives. These gatherings began approximately 18 months prior to opening, ending mid-April of 1986. They were held bi-weekly which made the final tally 36 -- most regions of the province were visited several times.

Members of the Public Affairs Department travelled the province. They attended committee meetings, local tourism association meetings, gave speeches and presentations at service clubs, schools, churches and gave media interviews. Their creative input was given on marketing strategies and advertising plans. They acted as liaison between the committees and other departments of the Expo 86 Corporation. They solved problems -- often before they arose. They planned and organized site tours for committee members and coordinated special awards dinners and large informational meetings on community programs.

EXPO 86 Committees helped promote the B.C. Invites the World campaign in B.C. and across Canada. At the instigation of Public Affairs, a Community Challenge emerged which resulted in 1.4 million invitations being sent around the world. B.C. communities challenged one another: invited sister cities, business associates and friends from across the country.

Expo Eve -- Light Up B.C., a program to turn on lights and make noises in celebration of the opening of EXPO 86, was held on May 1, 1986. Public Affairs involved communities around the province, local residents and the media with much assistance from EXPO 86 Committees. Celebrations took place from Vancouver to Fort St. John, with ideas ranging from ringing church bells to tooting train whistles or blowing on a trumpet. People turned on lights, put up Christmas lights or porch lights. The idea of bringing the farthest regions together with a common celebration at the same time was well received. Participation was enthusiastic with support coming from many quarters.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD

Public Affairs continued to communicate on a regular basis with EXPO 86 Committees. The department also coordinated details of the Cariboo regions's Ride of a Lifetime at Kodak Pacific Bowl. (The ride began at 100 Mile House in the interior of B.C., travelled the old Gold Rush Trail through 500 km of rugged terrain arriving on site three weeks later.) The second event was the Heiltsuk Indian Glwa Expedition. (Fourteen young