

Canwest gets restructuring OK

Court approves media giant's bid to deal with its massive debt under federal bankruptcy law

The Canadian Press

TORONTO — Canwest Global Communications Corp., owner of Global Television and the National Post newspaper, has received court approval for a bankruptcy restructuring that affects a chunk of its operations, deals with its huge debts and puts the media company's ownership potentially into foreign hands.

Tuesday's approval from Ontario's Superior Court of Justice starts the ball rolling

for proceedings under the federal bankruptcy protection law for several major Canwest divisions, as the company works to restructure a mountain of debt.

The bankruptcy filing affects just over a fifth of the company's businesses, or 1,700 of 7,400 employees, but operations which carry much of Canwest's bond debt. But it also excludes most of its big-city newspapers, specialty TV channels and other properties, which suggests that a streamlining may not lead to widespread cuts or job losses.

The company said it will be business as usual while it restructures over the next several months. However, the long-term future of its big city newspapers from Vancouver to Montreal, its Global TV operations and other businesses remains uncertain.

Some may be sold to Canadian private investors under an auction process and other non-core assets may be wound down or closed as the company's U.S. creditors, the expected new owners, assert themselves in the restructuring process.

Canwest has been struggling for the last two years to deal with a \$4-billion debt load, which the Winnipeg-based broadcaster took

on when it bought the former Southam newspapers and the National Post earlier this decade.

Business units that will be filing for creditor protection include the Canwest Television Limited Partnership, which holds Global Television, MovieTime, Deja-Vue and Fox Sports World, and The National Post Company.

Canwest president and CEO Leonard Asper told the company's employees in an internal memo that executives were working to minimize the impact on the media giant's daily operations.

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Enterprise



RECORD STAFF

Matt Bellew owns HankyBean, a dog behaviour-management business, and has two dogs of his own — Simon, at left, and Hank. He says his goal is not to be famous, but to create a community where dogs can be dogs — as well as man's best friend.

Workers could see big hikes in EI premiums

The Canadian Press

OTTAWA — Canadian workers could see their employment insurance premiums rise by \$632 over four years while employers may face even bigger hikes if the government is to meet its economic update targets, according to economic forecaster Dale Orr Economic Insight.

The analysis, released Tuesday, estimates that Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's revenue projections on the EI account builds in a sizable employment tax hike for both workers and employers of about \$15.5 billion by the 2014-15 timetable laid out in last month's update.

When it issued the update, Ottawa said it could return to balancing the budget after the 2014-15 fiscal year without raising taxes, but did acknowledge it will likely entail increases in employment insurance premiums to balance the account over time.

The new analysis puts a firm figure on just what it will take to do so.

Economist Dale Orr says premiums must rise from the current \$1.73 per \$100 of earnings — which will be frozen for another year — to \$2.33 over the next five years.

That will result in an accumulated extra payment of \$632 for every worker earning more than the bottom threshold of \$42,300.

As well, employers will need to fork over about \$884 per worker during the period.

"The government may not call it a tax, but if it quacks like a duck, it's a duck," Orr said in an interview.

The economist added that employment taxes are among the worst a government can levy because it discourages employers from hiring by making employees more expensive.

Orr, who usually does not make recommendations in his report cards on government fiscal policies, made an exception in this case, saying Ottawa would do better to increase the GST by one point for two years to make up the difference.

He said if Ottawa were to do neither — raise premiums or the GST — it would set the date for balancing the budget back by about two years, to 2017-18.

This local 'dog whisperer' handles canines with care

By Rose Simone, Record staff

WATERLOO — As much as the owners wanted the boxer to play nicely with the chocolate lab, the dogs could never be put near each other, for fear they would kill each other.

Then the dogs were brought to Matt Bellew, the 30-year-old owner of HankyBean, a dog behaviour-management business he runs from his Waterloo home. His solution involved getting in between the two dogs and leading them on a brisk walk.

"I had one on either side and I led them so they had no choice but to follow me. When they realized that neither was in control and they had nothing to worry about, they became best friends, within about 15 minutes," he says. "All it really took was for someone to get in between them and risk getting their legs bit."

The owners were delighted. It was the sort of transformation that is earning Bellew a reputation as a local "dog whisperer" among clients who liken him to the famous Cesar Millan of the

television series called *Dog Whisperer*.

Although Bellew calls that "a great compliment," he says his goal is not to be famous, but to create a community where dogs can be dogs as well as man's best friend.

Bellew, who has two dogs of his own — Hank, a chocolate lab, and Simon, a lab-collie cross — says helping dogs has always been his passion. "We always had dogs growing up and it was always easy for me to relate to dogs, sometimes more so than humans."

Prior to starting the business, Bellew was a marketing consultant who trained dogs for family and friends. Three years ago, around the time he got Hank, he decided to follow his passion and start HankyBean, which does dog grooming and walking, sells homemade meals for dogs, and provides rehabilitation and behaviour management services.

Bellew works with a dog walker who takes dogs on pack runs, which can also be part of the behaviour-management therapy

HankyBean

Web: www.hankybean.ca
Phone: 519-574-6640

for dogs.

Bellew says it takes a natural empathy for dogs to do what he does. "Unless you can put yourself in a dog's mind, you really have a hard time troubleshooting a problem."

Bellew says much of the dog training he sees is focused too much on keeping the pet owners happy, which does not always lead to having a dog that can share a person's home and life.

"One of the things that I hear most often is, 'I don't understand why my dog has problems if it graduated at the top of its class in obedience school.' So what I have to do, right out of the gate, is explain the difference between obedience and behaviour. A dog might be phenomenal at doing tricks, but that does not mean on a psychological level, it is being taken care of."

Bellew teaches owners how to lead the dog and looks at all aspects of the dog's life, including its diet and the owner's lifestyle, to troubleshoot a problem.

Bellew also makes homemade dog food containing human-grade ingredients, such as chicken and vegetables. People order the food, which he packages and freezes with the help of other dog owners, and then sells it at cost. The ingredients are also posted on his website for people who want to make the food themselves.

Bellew, who is a volunteer with the Kitchener-Waterloo Humane Society and National Service Dogs Canada, says he would like to start a rehabilitation centre for dogs. Meanwhile, he has no regrets about leaving the marketing world to start HankyBean.

"I have never looked back and I have never slept as well as I do now," he says. "The amount of community support I get in a business like this is phenomenal. I wouldn't change it for the world."

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