January 11, 2018

Community grieves loss of boy in car accident

by Art Joyce

In a tragic reminder of the hazards of living in a mountain environment, the community of New Denver/Silverton is grieving the death of 10-year-old Liam Butler.

Liam, his 11-year-old sister Keara, and their father Ryan Butler were returning home to New Denver after an outing at Halcyon Hot Springs on the afternoon of December 27 when their vehicle went over a steep bank on Highway 23 and into Arrow Lake.

The accident occurred just south of Halcyon, about 34 kilometres north of Nakusp.

Ryan Butler went repeatedly into the freezing water trying to rescue his son but was unable to free him before the car sank. Liam’s sister Keara managed to exit the vehicle and scale the bank to the highway above to flag down help, likely saving her father from death by hypothermia.

The two were taken to the Arrow Lakes Hospital in Nakusp and discharged later that day. An RCMP dive team recovered Liam’s body the next day, December 28, about 60 metres below the lake surface.

The incident is under investigation. Severe winter storms bringing snowfall, freezing rain, and extreme cold were a factor in this and many other accidents across BC. A vehicle collision on the Trans-Canada Highway 40 kilometres west of Revelstoke claimed another life that day.

“This is a tragic end to a family’s holiday season. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and their extended network of family and friends,” Sgt. Monty Taylor of the Kootenay Boundary Regional District RCMP said in a statement. The RCMP has offered victim services counselling to both the Calles and Butler families and New Denver’s Lucerne School.

On December 29, Lucerne School teacher Katrina Sumrall and daughter Danika Hammond organized a bonfire and prayer circle on the vacant lot across from the school. Everyone was given a chance to speak of their memories of Liam. Those present were offered a ceremonial ‘smudge’ by Francine Jennings and Al Richardson, First Nations representatives. (Smudges are a traditional aboriginal cleansing ritual.) At one point, a large wicker basket containing tobacco and cedar sprigs was passed around the circle so that each person might take a pinch to offer the fire along with a prayer or blessing, spoken or silent.

Mourners were kept refreshed with hot cocoa and apple cider as well as snacks. Liam’s mother Emma Calles and sister Keara were present along with the children’s grandmother Elise Charlet-Calles and members of the Butler family. Many tears were evident. For many, simply being there without speaking was enough, almost too much to bear.

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And indeed, within 24 hours of the tragedy, a ‘meal train’ was established for both families and was fully subscribed almost immediately. A Go Fund Me campaign for each parent has been established for donations.

“Liam was such a sweet, kind, compassionate little man,” says Amber Butler, Liam’s aunt. “He loved bringing people together and understanding what was happening. I believe the whole community is looking forward to gathering in his name. We miss him more than words can say.”

Private ceremonies were held prior to Liam’s body being sent for cremation. A public ceremony, a celebration of life for Liam, will be held Sunday, January 14 at Silverton Memorial Hall, 3-6 pm.

The New Denver/Silverton community came out in a show of support and mourning for 10-year-old Liam Butler, who died in a car accident December 27 near Halcyon Hot Springs.
Crash near Fernie takes life of Slocan Park man

submitted

A 47-year-old man from Slocan Park, whose name has not been released, was killed in a collision December 28 on Hwy 3 north of Hooper near Fernie. RCMP from both Elk Valley and East Kootenay Traffic Services, along with BC Ambulance and local fire departments were called out about 8 am to the site.
A Subaru Impreza was travelling eastbound on Hwy 3 at 85 km/h, crossed the centre line and collided head on with a westbound Dodge Grand Caravan also travelling at 85 km/h. The driver of the Grand Caravan suffered a broken leg, and was transported to Fernie Hospital for treatment. The passenger in the Impreza was also transported to hospital with a broken leg and fractured pelvis. The Impreza’s driver suffered extensive injuries and died shortly after the collision at Fernie Hospital.
RCMP say a contributing factor in this collision was insufficient winter tires on the Impreza; two were summer tires, which were not able to rule out possible recent drug use at this point with respect to the Impreza driver.

Nakusp’s Queen Anne Turret B&B damaged in Christmas Eve fire

by Jan McMurray

Doug and Heather Peters of Nakup are very grateful to the fire department and the community following a fire that damaged their Victorian home (Queen Anne Turret Bed & Breakfast) on Christmas Eve.

The response from the community has been phenomenal,” said Doug. “We went on the Nakusp Communicator and asked if anyone had a place to stay for us while our house is being cleaned up, and we had no less than five offers. We settled on one and we’re in a house now.”
The couple spent the first 10 days after the fire in a motel.
Doug explains that the fire started in the attached garage. The garage and everything in it, including their car, was destroyed. The house was engulfed in flames and already a total loss. Six firefighters with their two trucks stayed on scene for six hours and stopped the fire from spreading.
The next day, firefighters returned to follow up, and extinguished three hot spots.

The cause of the fire was deemed by Jan McMurray

A mobile home one kilometre north of Burton was destroyed in a fire the evening of December 27.
The cause of the fire was deemed to be the extension cord to the heater.

Mobile home in Burton destroyed by fire

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Ronald (Ron) Orest Volansky

January 12, 1934 – December 18, 2017

It has with great sadness and heavy hearts we announce the tragic loss of our beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother and uncle on Monday, December 18, 2017 in Needles BC, at the age of 83.

Ron was born January 12, 1934 in Calgary and moved to Needles as a young boy with his parents, Steve and Polly Volansky and his sisters.

In 1959 Ron married Phyllis Settle and they made their home in Needles and Fairview. Ron was a prominent businessman in the area. Over the years Ron generously volunteered his time and resources to the community.

Ron was well respected in the area and instilled strong family values in his sons and grandchildren. He looked forward to having family and friends stop by to visit.

In recent years Ron enjoyed woodworking and farming, especially cutting hay. Ron was pre-deceased by his parents, Steve and Polly Volansky and his sister Liss Dyble.

Ron is survived by his wife Phyllis, and four sons Brent, Blair (Anne), Rodney (Crystal), Ronald (Gina). His grandchildren, Tyson (Ty), Blaine (Andres), Kyle, Bre (Mike), Marla, Adam, and Quentin. Great-grandkids: Zaccor, Kasii, Nate, Eva and Everly. His sisters, Helen Edwards, Pat Kin, Dev Clark and Lang Hoppe, along with many nieces and nephews.

Ron will be sadly missed and forever be in our hearts.
Thank you to extended family, friends and our communities for the overwhelming support.
A memorial service will be held on April 28, 2018 in Edgewood, BC.

In lieu of flowers, donations so desired can be made to the Edgewood Fire Hall or the Royal Canadian Legion in Ron’s memory.

Chip truck rolls over at Callison’s Corner December 21

by Jan McMurray

A Sutco chip truck rolled over and spilled its load at Callison’s Corner on Hwy 6 just north of New Denver on December 21 at about 5 pm. The highway was closed until 8:15 that evening, then open to one-lane traffic until the trailer was finally towed out on December 23.

Supeco is responsible for cleaning up the pile of chips, still on the side of the highway.

Barb Yeomans and Dick Callison, who live off the highway at that corner, say they can count seven accidents in the 25 years they’ve lived there, including three chip truck rollovers and one fatal motorcycle crash.

The Callisons recall a community survey in the early 1990s that identified their corner as one of the community’s top four priorities for improvements on Hwy 6 in the New Denver area. The three other priority projects have been done: Hwys 6 & 31A intersection; Weisbrich hill; and S-curves at the north end of New Denver.

When asked why the ministry hasn’t done any upgrades to Callison’s Corner, the response was that based on their records, “the location of this incident is not significantly collision prone.”

A ministry spokesperson told the Valley Voice that the ministry investigates all reported incidents to determine if there are any road-related factors that should be addressed, such as road geometry, environmental conditions, maintenance, and signage. “Our engineer staff review curves to ensure that our signage is appropriate for the road alignment and posted speed limit,” the spokesperson added.

The ministry said it considers many factors when prioritizing road works, including traffic volumes, location history, stakeholder needs, construction constraints and other improvement priorities in the area.

RCMP investigating two deaths in Needles

by Jan McMurray

Tragedy struck the small community of Needles near Edgewood on December 18.

Two men were found dead of gunshot wounds, each in their own home, in what is widely believed to be a murder-suicide over a dispute between neighbours. The RCMP press release does not confirm this, but states that investigators aren’t looking for further suspects at this time.
Deceased are 83-year-old Ron Volansky, a longtime and beloved resident of the community, and 58-year-old Roy Bugera, who retired to Needles about a year ago with his wife.
The RCMP press release says that reports of possible shots being fired at a residence on Needles North Road were called in to police at about 5:30 pm. Nakup RCMP attended, secured the scene, and waited for the Southeast District Emergency Response Team to arrive and enter the two homes.
The RCMP Southeast District Major Crimes Unit and BC Coroners are investigating the men’s deaths.
SHELLEY BORTNICK, MSW, RSW
Individual, couple and family therapist
25+ years experience
Offers counselling services involving mental health (depression, anxiety, etc.), addictions, grief and loss, trauma and life transition issues.
For appointment, please call 250-265-3397

Wanted!
Increased Fish and Wildlife

The Arrow Lakes Environment Stewardship Society is working toward a Watershed Planning Team Model to increase Fish and Wildlife populations and habitat in the Arrow Lakes area.

Join the Arrow Lakes Environmental Stewardship Society for this 40 minute presentation.
Nakusp Seniors Building at 210 8th Ave. NW. ‘The Log Building’ at 4 pm. THURSDAY JANUARY 25th at 4:00 Coffee and Tea Provided

New Year clear outs! Selected New Balance runners - 40% off

by Claire Parodi and Jan McMurray
Interior Health will be coughing up funds for the renovations to the Arrow Lakes Hospital emergency department after all, reported Councillor Leah Sinixt recognized as aboriginal people of Canada by BC Supreme Court
by Jan McMurray
The Sinixt people have won another victory. The Supreme Court of BC has dismissed the appeal of the landmark Rick Desautel decision, upholding the Colville Sinixt man’s aboriginal right to hunt in traditional Sinixt territory in Canada.

Main at the December Silverton council meeting. This is a welcome ‘about-face’ from Interior Health. In October, the West Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital said “it could not afford to carry the costs” of the Colville Confederated Tribes in the US, “the door is open to Sinixt descendants who live in Canada. They may be able to come forward as well, on another day. The trial judge affirmed that there is a larger group of the Sinixt than just the CCT members, that may well straddle both sides of the border, but their rights would have to be decided in another case.”

The Crown can show that they were inhabitants of the Arrow Lakes for thousands and thousands of years – the experts from both sides in the trial agreed on that. And that’s who should be an aboriginal people of Canada. The border and citizenship, imposed by the Europeans, ‘don’t get to define them, or take away their identity.’

The appeal was filed by the Crown after Rick Desautel, Sinixt man from the Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT) reserve in Washington, was acquitted after Rick Desautel, Sinixt man from the Colville Sinixt, but all Sinixt people and the citizens who now reside in Sinixt territory.

This is the right decision not just for the Colville Sinixt, but all Sinixt people and the citizens who now reside in Sinixt territory.

The Sinixt as an aboriginal people of Canada is consistent with the goal of reconciliation. The Sinixt people have won another victory. The Supreme Court of BC has dismissed the appeal of the landmark Rick Desautel decision, upholding the Colville Sinixt man’s aboriginal right to hunt in traditional Sinixt territory in Canada.

The appeal was filed by the Crown after Rick Desautel, Sinixt man from the Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT) reserve in Washington, was acquitted. In the appeal of Justice Mrozinski’s decision, the Crown asserted that Desautel won’t have the aboriginal right to hunt in Canada because he is not an aboriginal person of Canada, but a US citizen and a member of an aboriginal group that is not resident in Canada.

Justice Sewell rejected this argument. “I conclude that the term aboriginal peoples of Canada… means those peoples who occupied a part of what became Canada prior to first contact…” he said in his reasons for judgment.

This is the right decision not just for the Colville Sinixt, but all Sinixt people and the citizens who now reside in Sinixt territory. The appeal was filed by the Crown after Rick Desautel, Sinixt man from the Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT) reserve in Washington, was acquitted. Justice Sewell rejected this argument. “I conclude that the term aboriginal peoples of Canada… means those peoples who occupied a part of what became Canada prior to first contact…” he said in his reasons for judgment.

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Open letter to Minister Mungall

Thank you for your reply. On Site C, the provincial government faced the same agonizing decision any of us face when we find ourselves owning a bad investment. It is a moot point if we got into the bad investment ourselves or if it was handed down to us by poor decisions made by others. The question is: do you keep throwing good money after bad? Or do you face your losses and try to do better with the resources you still have in hand?

Site C is an example of why we need proportional representation. The Liberals would not have had the power/ arrogance to push this project past a point of no return if they had to govern by consent, with significant cooperation from the other parties. Both in Canada and in the USA, we see huge projects completed, only to be dismantled by the next administration. Zigzagging through history is a waste of public funds, holding back progress for society. Coalition governments are likely to make less polarizing choices on large projects that span several elections. This was not the case with Site C.

Daniela Gadotti

December 21 Catalan elections and beyond

The results of the Catalan elections were as predicted: the three pro-independence parties won a majority of seats in the Catalan Parliament. However, the leaders of those parties have been accused of again in the Catalan Parliament. After the election, the exiled Catalan president asked for a meeting, with no conditions, with Spanish President Rajoy to resolve the situation. True to his style, the Spanish president replied that there was a detention order in Spain against the exiled Catalan president (implying he would risk imprisonment as soon as he crossed the Spanish border) and Rajoy is not willing to meet with him anywhere else. Sadly in Spain, as most Spaniards know and the Council of Europe recently stated, the judiciary is not really independent of the government.

It seems that the stalemate will continue unless the EU and other influential countries start demanding a political answer from the Government of Spain to the people of Catalonia. So far, it seems that President Rajoy is letting the issue slide, as he has done for years, and is relying on the judiciary to solve the problem by imprisoning and bankrupting the “rebels” Catalan politicians and pro-independence organizations.

The PP embraces the Francoist ideology that was inserted into Spain’s Constitution when Franco died, by which democratic values such as the indivisibility of the Spanish territory and the supremacy of the Spanish language are secondary to other objectives such as the indivisibility of the EU and the supremacy of the EU law. For anyone interested in Spain’s recent history, I recommend Spain in Our Hearts by A. Hochschild.

Silvertown

Sinxit division

I honour the RDCK for taking a radical leap into the future by asking the federal government to reconsider the extinction status of the Sinixt. Kados to Director Paul Peterson for speaking the truth. Gratitude to all the RDCK directors who supported the motion. This is truly an amazing historic moment for all those who care about justice.

The excellent VV article also mentions the division that exists among the Sinixt. Both Sinixt elder Marilyn James and representatives of the Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT) spoke against the establishment of the Westbank Nation’s reserve in Sinixt territory. The CCT in Washington is a reservation that includes Sinixt/Lakes People among its 12 Nations. The CCT has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work with the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA), of which the Westbank Nation is a member, to represent its interests in Canada.

Because I work with Marilyn James, people often ask me about this division among the Sinixt. At the crux of the division is the CCT-ONA Memorandum, which effectively allows the ONA to disregard or even act instead of local Sinixt people. To quote Marilyn, “No settler person, no expert, no tribal government representative... can tell me what I can talk about... It’s my job to provide a Sinixt perspective. If that’s being manipulated or being disallowed, you’re missing a severely important aspect of what a Sinixt person has to offer about our laws, our responsibilities and what needs to be preserved in this landscape.”

It’s important to note that Marilyn James, Bob Campbell, and Robert Watt were appointed by their elders 30 years ago to be the official representatives of the Sinixt return to the Canadian portion of their territory. This move did not come from the colonially elected government of the CCT; at that time, there was already a deep divide between the CCT tribal government and the traditional governing body of the Sinixt.

This division between traditionalists and colonially designated tribal governments is evident among many First Nations in Canada. It is a significant philosophical and political divide. (For more info, read Peace, Power, Righteousness by Taiaheke Alfrred.)

In this era of Truth and Reconciliation, people often reach out to Indigenous people thinking, “Any Indian will do.” But surprise surprise, just like among settler folk, there is a wide range of political perspectives among Indigenous folk. The question for settlers to examine is: which Indians do you share political perspectives with? Find out and align with them.

When CCT representatives are in the area, I encourage people to find out what they think. What is their stand on watershed protection? What is their plan of action around the ravages of industrial logging? Why are they having CCT tribal members in Canada charged with criminal offences (Marilyn James, Lola Campbell: Break and Enter)? Why are local cultural people banned from the CCT residence in Vallican? What work are they doing to support caribou recovery?

“If we don’t have a say, and if we don’t speak out, then colonial oppression is being layered on us again and again and again,” says Marilyn. What happens when that attempt at silencing comes from your own people? It means colonialism is alive and well.

K.L. Kivi

Bird Creek

OPINION / LETTERS POLICY

The Valley Voice welcomes letters to the editor and community news articles from our readers.

Letters and articles should be no longer than 500 words and may be edited. We reserve the right to reject any submitted material. Please mark your letter “LETTER TO THE EDITOR.” Include your name and the town you reside in. Letters and articles should be no longer than 500 words and may be edited. We reserve the right to reject any submitted material. Please mark your letter “LETTER TO THE EDITOR.” Include your name and the town you reside in.

Moria Grau

Vantinlong

This is fabulous! With the reduction of MSP rates and the cost of natural gas decreasing, I may just be able to finally balance my

430 Front Street, Kaslo, BC

40621191

430 Front Street, Kaslo, BC

454268

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The excellent article also

The excellent article also

The excellent article also
Net metering and the cost of power

Another year of net metering shows that our household held gross grid consumption at just over 7.2 kW per day, while the amount of electrical energy that we purchased from FortisBC grid increased from 3.8 kWh/day to 5.1 kWh/day. Thus in 2017 we offset 70.3% of the electricity we purchased from FortisBC, and have now achieved an 87.4% reduction in grid electricity use since 2006. The average residential household use of electricity in the FortisBC service area is over 32 kWh per day. We used an average of 2.1 kWh per day in 2017. This amounts to an annual average reduction of 3 MWh of electricity over the last 12 years, 5.4 MWh in 2017. After two full years of net metering, the decrease in use is so great that the reduction of purchased electricity has seen the payback period decline from 53.8 years in 2016 to 48.7 in 2017. For residential customers increases and the number of saved kWh increases each year, we anticipate that the payback period will continue to decrease.

In each of the six 2017 billing periods we transferred back from our solar PV production system as follows: February 16.5%; April 28%; June 75.1%; August 196.4%; October 138.4%; December 17.9%.

We therefore respectfully disagree with FortisBC's contention, placed before the BC Utilities Commission in 2016/17, that solar PV production systems have no role to play in providing electrical power to the grid in the Kootenays during fall and winter months.

Those who live in the FortisBC service area in the Southern Interior need to know that the company has just applied to the BC Utilities Commission (December 22, 2017) to raise the basic charge from $32.09 to $37.39 per billing period over the next five years. This would make FortisBC's connection fee more than 323% higher than BC Hydro's similar charge, noting that FortisBC's tier 1 and tier 2 rates are already 17.9% and 21.4% more expensive than what residential customers are paying in Schroeder Creek and the Larche Valley in BC Hydro. And yet the power is produced and transmitted from the same stretch of the Kootenay River between Nelson and Castlegar, and even though the power in the Larche Valley is first bought from BC Hydro by FortisBC and then sold back to BC Hydro under wholesale contract, it is still cheaper for residential customers there than for those living in Kaslo and Area D of the RDCK south of Schroeder Creek.

Climate change and nuclear energy

James Hansen, who is now called the father of climate change awareness, says that stopping the flow of CO2 into the atmosphere is not good enough. If it is not stopped, it will become stuck out, too. If we stop emitting CO2 only, the climate will continue to warm and sea to rise.

We’ve known about the greenhouse effect since the 1800s. Swiss physicist Svante Arrhenius even predicted in 1896 that CO2 from coal burning would warm the planet. He saw it as a good thing. Some still do today.

There have been many ideas on how to reduce global warming. Most of them are totally unrealistic. Some are workable but too slow. Nature’s way is by photosynthesis – growing trees. Farming the soil is the other opportunity that decreases the carbon content of the soil. However, the making of biochar is now seen as a good carbon sequestration method.

Pumping CO2 into the strata is already seen to be slow and inefficient.

The US navy is working on manufacturing jet fuel from sea water. Of the three places where CO2 is stored – atmosphere, oceans, biosphere – approximately 93% of the CO2 is bound in the oceans. They want to do this with nuclear power because when the fleet is out on the oceans it could be more economical than transporting and shipping their supply from uncertain sources. Their nuclear powered refueling tanker will be right there with them and protected.

There is a further importance to this method of fuel making. For example, I can’t see the airline industry flying battery-operated planes. How about battery chainsaws?

What is not being discussed and researched enough are the capturing of CO2 and removing the 02 and depositing the carbon into the soil where it keeps very well with no danger. Anybody knows that it will take more energy to do this than was ever obtained from this carbon as a fuel source in the first place. So what? Nuclear energy is so much more abundant than chemical energy that we can be thankful that it has led to that is we can resolve this CO2 threat. So will we?

The real problem is greater than the issue of climate change. Scientific evidence is now indicating that extinction is accelerating at an alarming rate. There are many species disappearing that never come to our attention in the regular news. At the same time, we are becoming more aware of the interconnectivity of life on this planet, even to the extent that our own survival depends on this relationship.

The acidification of the ocean and other ecosystems are only a part of the problem. The real problem is us. As Porgo said, “We have found the enemy and he is us.”

Frank Nixon
Winlaw

Open letter to Premier John Horgan

Without beating around the bush, this is a ‘Dear John’ letter, both literally and figuratively. I know that we have only been hanging out for the past 14 months, but my relationship with the NDP goes back quite a ways, long before you came on the scene. Unfortunately, we have come to a place of irreconcilable differences and I feel that it is time to move on.

This Site C decision has sent our relationship into a tailspin.

No doubt you will raise the issue of ‘We have to stay together because we can’t afford to break up.’ I know why I have to go. Your vision and your vision of the kind of world, and the environmental and economic debt we want to leave to our kids are very far apart.

And talking about vision, John, I feel a little short-changed on that account also. I am not a very bit of a realist, but I was hoping you might come around. Your idea of looking ahead to the future is standing on a hilltop circa 1850 and looking to a point 100 years from there. I need something different. What I need is someone with both feet planted in the present and working towards a world 100 years from now. It is very difficult to see how you are so easily swayed by the yahoos at BC Hydro who cooked this whole up, and put on schedule for completion in 2024 and on budget (recently revised upwards) at $30.7 billion. John, I am turning 67 in the coming year. In all my time, I have never seen one of these mega-projects completed on time or on budget.

Have you?

Oh John, I wish things could have turned out differently between us. But I would like to get together with you for lunch sometime in the future and talk about the good times that we used to have. I am reviewing my newspaper, and 2024 is looking pretty open. I am thinking, if Site C is completed on time and on budget, I will pick up the tab. But if it doesn’t, you have my word. And while we are at it, why don’t we invite Michelle Mungall, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources to join us for lunch sometime in the future.

I am glad to see that finally some attention is being paid to the appalling infection rates at Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital. The Trail Hospital has been notorious for years for infections stemming from surgery. There are a lot of people of this acquaintance will do anything but not to go there, and will arrange to go to Kelowna or Vancouver at great personal cost and inconvenience because of the hospital’s reputation. No doubt there are those who would accuse these people and myself of being alarmist, but I know this story resonates with all kinds of people here in the Kootenays.

So it is good to see that hip and knee replacements have been canceled because they being, supposedly because of a ‘little blip’ in elevated rates of infection. One wonders how bad it must in fact be for this situation to have finally come to light, seeing as many of us believe there has been a cover-up for some time.

Cancelling the hip and knee replacements is one thing, however. What on earth would make anyone think it is good a idea to reassess the surgery time to other surgeries, when there is an infection problem that is not understood?

Why would it be safe to perform other operations, when there is a recognized elevated rate of infection with some kinds of operations? Are the germs really that selective? Clearly no one knows, seeing as they don’t know what is happening.

It is also worth noting that for years there was a dedicated hip and knee specialty in Rossland, probably because Rossland is a ski town and the facility focused on sports injuries. I believe it was called Mater Missericordia. People were very pleased with results from there. The place has since been closed and turned into condos, but I have a good source that says the operating theatres still exist on the main floor, in hopes that one day it would be revived. Perhaps this would be part of the solution?

If there was a public inquiry, I assure you there would be a truckload of anecdotal evidence on the lack of care being done at the Trail Hospital. Not only from hip and knee operations, but from other surgeries as well. Since I have started talking to people about this, just about everyone I know, including doctors and others in the medical profession, has a story to tell, either about themselves or about their friends...
continued from page 5 and family. I have two good friends who experienced life-threatening infections as a result of what should have been routine surgery.

I have personal experience of Traill’s infection problems, having contracted a mysterious infection that nearly killed me when I had a hernia operation. No one knew what the infection was, or what to do about it. The surgeon who was filling in and overseeing my treatment while it was happening was completely baffled and truly alarmed. We decided to ride it out. Fortunately, I have a strong constitution, and survived. Unfortunately, the infection was not completely eradicated and it has returned to haunt me, some three years later.

I wonder if any of this showed up in any records. I suspect there are all kinds of stories like this that just disappear.

Some folks in the know say one reason for the high rate of infection is the contracting out of cleaning in some areas, reduced funding (thus time allotted), and less training everywhere. Certainly I was appalled at how dirty the bathroom was where I was in there, and I have heard the same concerns from others. And I have been told that once upon a time a fresh bucket of soap and water was the norm. This is no longer the case. They do change mop heads, but the mop isn’t renewed.

I am hoping the alarm bells will truly begin to sound, and that more and more people will come forward with their experiences and force the H&A and the hospital system in general to look into these matters and to change the way things are done so that the hospital is not one big petri dish. From what I have heard, the problem is not limited to the Traill Hospital, either – apparently Nanaimo Hospital has a similar reputation. So the problem is systemic, and needs to be addressed.

Only a public outcry will force the system to respond to people’s concerns. Hopefully people will speak out and demand something better.

In closing, I want to say the staff at the hospital are just great. They are friendly and supportive and amzingly together, even when they are clearly overworked. It must break their hearts to know about the problems in their workplace, and not to be able to speak up or do anything about them. It is an outrage that there is no whistleblower protection for healthcare workers, so they are in danger of losing their jobs if they talk about this situation.

Moe Lyons
Winlaw

Rural Youth Matters

Over the past several years I’ve had the privilege of splitting my time between the two wonderful communities of Meadow Creek and Kaslo. During that time I’ve come to know both places quite well – in particular the youth in these two communities. I’ve been well acquainted with me. I’m proud of the relationships I’ve formed, relationships with people who have helped me grow, and have given me so many opportunities.

I’ve learned this generosity of spirit is not always commonplace in rural settings, where pre-existing stereotypes can colour residents’ attitudes toward young people. Kaslo and Meadow Creek are different (a brave is in order for both). These are rural communities that have done a comparatively fantastic job in reaching out to their young people.

Ah, but there is still work to be done.

On that note, I’m poised to start working on a project known as Rural Youth Matters (I know, I know, pretty clever, eh?) Over the weeks and months ahead, I’ll be conducting interviews with local youth. We’ll be discussing everything from youth involvement in the electoral system to a topic I’ve done a comparative fantastic job in reaching out to their young people.

That’s all I can take exception to Ms. Ladetto’s letter is her statement: “Harvests around the world are increasingly failing due to havoc wreaked by pests as our farmers struggle to keep good ranch/farm land under water?”

This is 100% wrong. Crops are NOT failing worldwide. The 2017 harvested world record harvests of almost every grain grown around the world. The markets are flooded with over production of wheat, corn, canola, soybean, etc. These abundant harvests get throughout the whole India. Had such a huge bean harvest that they put high tariffs on imported bean crop products. Russia – up 20% over last year. Ukraine – 45 million tons of grain harvested this year. Record grain crops are at all-time high record levels. (www. rainwaterworld.org/drought/solved/en/).

Even with climate change taken into account, changing food and drought locations world wide, grain and other farm crops are at world-high records. Could the increase in all-time high record levels. (www. rainwaterworld.org/drought/solved/en/).

If you find me wearing in being interviewed, I encourage you to contact me at mammamia907@gmail.com – I want to hear from you!

Jesalyn Tremblay
Kaslo

Sight See

The hot deal to destroy another 83 kilometres of the beautiful Peace River Valley is finally official. I hear a lot of people blaming the NDP for supposedly promising not to vote for them next time around.

The truth is, though, the decision was already a foregone conclusion once Andrew Weaver agreed not to defeat the government on the issue immediately after the Utilities Commission announcement.

I voted for the Green Party because I believed that they would put the environment first, but it seems the Andrew Weaver Greens, while willing to fight to change the electoral system to benefit themselves politically, are not willing to raise a finger to save a river valley.

What kind of Green Party is this then? What kind of environmentalist would agree to such a travesty? With their first real opportunity to stand up for the environment, the Andrew Weaver Greens decide to play politics instead. They want every vote to count, but don’t count on the taxpayer to defend the environment.

The Big Green Frog just turned into a Little Political Pollywog.

Rod Rezof
Glade

Response to ‘Open letter to Premier re: Site C’ by Daniela Gadotti, December 14

Although I do agree that Site C is a terrible mistake, I feel the majority of the Liberal government, as long as the land is not yet flooded, it is not too late to halt the project. Until the land is flooded, it still counts for the flooding and thousands of animals killed by lack of habitat, is not too late.

But that’s not all, comrades. By showing this clip and allowing discussion of the topic without first making clear to the class which side of the argument is right and which side of the argument is wrong, she stands accused of violating the code of conduct regarding the Canadian Human Rights Code due to Bill C-16, violating the university’s ‘Gendered and Sexual Orientation’ policy by committing gender-based violence, of targeting transfolk, of creating a toxic and unsafe learning environment and transphobia.

But this is the life I live, and I hope you’re sitting down for this, her most egregious heresy against Big Brother, was that one of the professors in the debate, in the debate, is that one of the professors in the debate, to hear the unaltered views of, was none other than Emmanuel Goldstein himself….um, sorry no, I mean Hitler, um, no no, I mean Dr. Jordan B. Peterson.

If it is not concerning enough that this has taken place in a Canadian university that should really concern you is that the trans-activists fully support what happened to Lindsay Shepherd at Laurier. This is the future which they are trying to bring about in Canada – where views they disagree with are not allowed to be spoken or heard.

Feel free to email me if you wish to discuss further (kevin.cs@telus.net).

Kevin Shaw
Winlaw

Open letter to Village of Kaslo council and CAO

Re: Village of Kaslo’s new Communications Policy as presented and adopted on December 12, 2017.

I applaud the efforts made to communicate to citizens and the Village, every attempt purposefully misleading, dismissive and online forums.

I would also hope that citizens and the Village also not be defamatory, out of the need for confidentiality, we reasonably expect that any correspondence to the mayor and council will be delivered and seen by mayor and council, in a closed meeting if necessary.

Any communication that the mayor and council choose not to officially receive for any reason will get a written response from the mayor outlining the reason for censure and avenue for redress.

It is important that our communication policy, is, places the onus of responsibility for protecting Privacy Rights on the citizen, for an unambiguous act of access that is beyond their control. The responsibility for properly handling information in their possession with the Village also not be defamatory, threatening, deliberately repetitious, vexatious or grossly inappropriate. I would reasonably expect that any outgoing communication from the Village also not be spurious, purposefully misleading, dismissive or disrespectful of its citizens, businesses or community groups and should encourage dialogue whenever possible. I suggest you consider adding the following clause to address the issue:

• Any communication that the Village receives regarding what may be defamatory, threatening, deliberately repetitious, vexatious or grossly inappropriate. I would reasonably expect that any outgoing communication from the Village also not be spurious, purposefully misleading, dismissive or disrespectful of its citizens, businesses or community groups and should encourage dialogue whenever possible. I suggest you consider adding the following clause to address the issue:

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Slocan council, December 11: Revitalization of north end of Harold Street on the wish list

by Sandy Smith

• Council authorized Village staff to apply for a $10,000 Rural Dividend Grant. The grant would be used to hire a consultant to prepare the application for Harold Street – Conceptual Design Plan. The conceptual design is a plan of revitalization/beautification of Harold Street, particularly the south side of the street between Delany Avenue and Park Avenue. Specifically, the plan will address drainage solutions, public space enhancements and overall beautification, said CAO Gordon in a letter to council.

• Council agreed that a Wellness Centre Advisory Committee will be formed to look into developing a vibrant centre and to report their findings to council. Mayor Lunn and CAO Gordon met with Nurse Practitioner Donna Gibbons and Acupuncturist Brendan Murray-Nellis to discuss the current success of the Wellness Centre and the best way to proceed in the future. Gibbons and Murray-Nellis offered their support.

• Forest Practices Board (FPB) report

by Art Joyce

The Forest Practices Board (FPB) has completed a review of “Professional accountability – reliance on registered professionals in managing forest resources.” The board found a “generally high level of compliance in its audits and investigations.” They identified “gaps in the regulatory framework that need to be filled in order to ensure that professional reliance is achieving its full potential and that the public has confidence in government resource management decisions.”

Forests have always been a public resource, and in the past decades environmental NGOs and retired forestry professionals have been expressing serious concern with the government’s practice of relying on private consulting companies to serve as “hired professional foresters. Prior to recent decades of budget slashing in forest management, government relied on house foresters for objective analyses of forest practices. The FPB’s report offers a series of recommendations to remedy a system many see as rigged in favour of industry.

“One important step the BC Government could take in the short term would be to strengthen the authority of district managers to safeguard the public interest where proposed forestry activities put significant environmental and community values at risk,” the FPB report recommends. It emphasizes that “government must reserve to itself the right to act when necessary to protect the public interest.”

The report further recommends that district managers be given authority over operational decision-making “by giving them conditional discretion over the issuance of cutting permits and road permits.” FPB sees a vital role in district managers applying their expertise in cases of logging on steep slopes, cumulative effects management, and social media are some of the best methods of recruitment. He suggested sharing the video as much as possible and talking to others about the current need for doctors. “I don’t think it’s too late,” he said, “I think it’s too late but it is a dog-eat-dog world out there and we have to fight for everything we get. We have to challenge these current requirements.”

• Residents will see an increase of 2.75% in water fees in 2018, increasing the annual residential rate by $12. Revenues from the rate increase are slated for capital improvements to the water utility system and operating costs. Council agreed that building a reserve fund is a good idea, as the water system is older and parts are becoming non-replaceable. Instead of one part being replaced, whole units are involved, increasing maintenance costs dramatically, said CAO Gordon.

• Garbage rates in the Village will increase by 3% in 2018. The FPB also broached the issue of unwanted dumping at the recycling bins.

• Recruitment and retention of doctors is going to be an ongoing battle,” Moss informed council. “It will be a battle that is not going to be done in a day and it will take two doctors. It will be ongoing.”

Moss said word of mouth and referrals are the best way to attract more doctors to the area.

Slocan area SLOCAN

Coordinated by Brian Major
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BUSINESS LICENCES

Licences are available from the Village Office.

• Council reinstated Corrie Traenengo as the Slocan representative to the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission for 2018. The SVEDC consists of 11 members who are residents and representitive of their communities from Hills to South Slocan.

• Council authorized CAO Michelle Gordon to file a notice of cancellation with the Land Title Office to remove the Notice on Title of the property at 1112 Slocan Street. The property was for a residence, the owners recived the 2012 bylaw contravention last year and further applied to have the notice on title removed in preparation for a sale of the property.

• Council directed staff to write a letter of support to the provincial government for the District of Sicamous’ campaign to bring awareness and education to the prevention of Quagga and Zebra Mussels. Zebra and Quagga Mussels reproduce exponentially and have large impacts on natural vegetation, fish and wildlife.

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Village of New Denver

PUBLIC NOTICES

WINTER PLLOWING

To ensure public safety, please give plenty of space to snow plowing equipment. Residents are asked not to approach the operators while they are working – please direct any questions regarding snow removal to the Village Office instead.

DOG LICENCES

Dog owners in the Village of New Denver are reminded that all dogs residing in the Village of New Denver are required to have a current dog licence, which can be obtained from the Village Office.

In accordance with the Village of New Denver’s Animal Control Bylaw, residents of New Denver are reminded that there is a $15.00 discount on the licence fees, if the licence for the current year is purchased prior to January 31st or within 30 days of the date that the owner first comes into possession of the dog.

BUSINESS LICENCES

Business owners are reminded that a current Business Licence is required for all commercial undertakings of any kind within the Village of New Denver, including professional, personal or other services for the purpose of gain or profit. Business Licences are available from the Village Office.
New Denver council, December 12: Development permit approved for old Eldorado grocery store

by Katrine Campbell

• Council approved a development permit for the old Eldorado building on the main street (402 Sixth Avenue). Owner Patrick Warren plans to renovate, creating four commercial units. He also plans to remove a portion of the building in order to make room for approved wastewater treatment.

• Council received the November 2017 Knox Hall report by Mountain Heritage. The report provides baseline heritage data on the building, to help guide rehabilitation work. Councillor Nadine Raynolds asked if there were any of the all-important “character-defining elements” in the interior. CAO Bruce Woodbury said once demolition of the inside started, some might turn up.

• Council received for information the Well Inspection Report from Kala Geosciences. The water quality is good but Kala recommended a camera inspection to detect worn parts, to replace them if needed and to test the water again.

• Council gave final adoption to Fees and Charges Bylaw Amendment #712, 2017, raising water and garbage rates.

• The Village will submit applications to the Canada Summer Jobs and Young Canada Works federal wage subsidy programs for funding to hire up to three summer students for the Nikkel Internment Memorial Centre’s 2018 season. If successful, the Village will be able to recover up to $18,000 of the $25,000 in employment costs for the positions; if not, the digitization program will not proceed, and staffing levels in the gift shop will be reduced to the minimum.

• Appointments for 2018: Berg Lehmann was appointed as the Village’s auditor, and Kootenay Savings Credit Union as its banking institution, for the 2018 fiscal year. Appointments to the Village’s Heritage Advisory Commission for the term ending December 12, 2018; for council: Bunka (alternate Raynolds); Silvery Slocan Historical Society: Paula Cravens, (judith von Krogh); Koyowaki Society: Gayle Swanson (Tsuneko Kokubo); LACE: Rhonda Bouillet (Katariine Dickerson); community: Tracy Oldham.

Council confirmed its appointments to the RDCK; director, Bunka (von Krogh); to the West Kootenay Regional Hospital District: Bunka (von Krogh).

Council appointed Raynolds as the Village’s rep to the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission; Councillor Heather Fox (alternate Councillor David Hodsall) was appointed as rep to Recreation Commission #6.

Council approved a development permit for the old Eldorado building on the main street (402 Sixth Avenue). Owner Patrick Warren plans to renovate, creating four commercial units. He also plans to remove a portion of the building in order to make room for approved wastewater treatment.

Health care discussed at New Denver council meeting

by Katrine Campbell

and Jan McMurray

The local health care situation

was a popular topic at New Denver’s December council meeting.

Colin Moss, chair of the Slocan District Chamber of Commerce Health Committee, appeared as a delegation to update council on efforts to recruit physicians to the community.

Moss noted that it isn’t IH’s responsibility to find doctors so most small communities have formed committees for that purpose. The local committee has been in touch with many of their counterparts in other communities.

“The feeling is that, country-wide, the system is broken. We’re competing for doctors, and until that is fixed we will be going through this. Doctors want quality of life, they don’t want to be called out in the middle of the night,” Moss said.

He also reported that a retired headhunter has just moved here and volunteered her services, asking only for a small office at the health centre. Mayor Bunka reported that there is one person interested in doing a long-term locum position “to check us out” and, at present, “we are doing fine with locum coverage.”

The local committee hired ICandy Films to produce a physician recruitment video, which has been completed and is up on YouTube, and has put up posters up and down the valley. They’ve also talked with BC Ambulance about improving ambulance service in the valley, and to Interior Health about renovating the house on the health centre property.

Later in the meeting, council directed staff to prepare a draft letter requesting the transfer of housing at the health centre from IH to a local community group. Interior Health did a facility assessment which included the on-site residence; IH’s estimate to bring it up to standard is $200,000. The cost of the recommended renovations is competing for funding with other capital projects at the health centre, and it was suggested a community group might be able to achieve the improvements at a lower cost than IH projected.

CAO Bruce Woodbury said IH’s forte was not managing housing, “and over the years those things tend to deteriorate.” A community group could manage and maintain it better than IH, he said, and could get grants that IH can’t apply for.

Councillor David Hodsall cautioned that any move to take on the house should be done very carefully and the details looked at closely. Mayor Ann Bunka agreed that anything that was done has to support the Health Centre campus.

Mayor Bunka also reported that funding is needed for some upgrades at the health centre. Funding for the sewage disposal unit and field and HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) system will be considered by the regional hospital board, while IH will have a look at the generator.
Slocan Valley senior snowed in December 27-30

Lydia Kania, 92 years old, was snowed in at her property on Little Slocan South Road during the snowfall events December 27-30. Kania has lived there since 1962 and remembers road maintenance being much better before privatization. “We didn’t have this problem when the government was looking after the highways. Since they privatized it, it seems we don’t get the same service.”

Kania lives on the back portion of Little South Slocan Road, a “lower traffic volume side road,” according to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. The first 1.5 kilometres of the road is designated as a school bus route and gets priority attention once Hwy 6 has been plowed. However, the remaining 3.5 km doesn’t get plowed until school bus routes and higher volume traffic side roads have been done.

Kania and her neighbours are frustrated to see the plow come up the road and then turn around at the 1.5 kilometre mark. “We pay taxes, too,” she says. “Why aren’t they prepared with enough vehicles and help? We can get a lot of snow in this area, so they should take that into consideration when they bid on the contract.”

The ministry said that during a normal snowfall, residents who live on lower volume side roads can expect to wait up to two days, and sometimes longer, from the end of the snowfall event for snow clearing to be completed. During the December 27-30 period, with three snowfall events in short succession, operators were continually having to return to highways and higher volume side roads as the storms came through. As a result, snow clearing response on lower traffic volume side roads was delayed. “While we understand the importance of clearing snow on all roads in the area, we very much appreciate the patience of residents on lower traffic volume side roads as we respond to storm conditions in a priority order,” stated a ministry spokesperson.

Emergency Order sought to save mountain caribou submitted

A demand for an emergency order to save BC’s 10 most southerly herds of mountain caribou was delivered to federal Environment Minister Catherine McKenna in mid-December, along with a petition under the Species at Risk Act showing that all 10 herds are in imminent danger of extinction. The documentation was prepared by the University of Victoria Environmental Law Centre, a former Environment Canada biologist, and the Valhalla Wilderness Society.

“We are the third team this year to send the Minister scientific proof of an emergency situation regarding mountain caribou,” says Calvin Sandborn, Legal Director of the UVic Environmental Law Centre. “Each of the two previous petitions documented the case for single herds. This new document shows that all 10 herds face imminent threats to their survival. Now the law requires Ms. McKenna to recommend that Cabinet issue an emergency order to protect their habitat.”

Analysis in the petition shows that BC’s Mountain Caribou Recovery Plan has failed because BC refused to curb most logging of the caribou’s old-growth forest habitat. It also failed to implement all the snowmobile bans recommended by its own team of biologists.

“This is clearly an emergency,” says Dr. Lee Harding, a retired Environment Canada biologist and manager. “Four of the 10 local populations of these genetically unique caribou are extinct or nearly so — and five others are approaching extinction. All 10 populations have declined dramatically since the 2008 provincial recovery plan, and continued to decline after the 2014 federal recovery strategy.”

Harding notes that this is the season when the caribou are migrating down from the high country to low elevation forests that they need to survive. “In many areas, these caribou will not find the mature forests they need for winter forage and to escape from wolves. Instead, they face clearcuts and active logging.”

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This year’s Winlaw Winter Wonderland raised $1,000 for the Christmas Hamper Program of the WE Graham Community Service Society. Jess Duchart (left) and Colleen Emery (right) present the donation to Frances Frobb (centre), community garden manager at WEGCSS, during the event.
Giving Tuesday a success for Slocan Valley Legacy Fund

Following a Giving Tuesday fundraising campaign in late November, $9,500 was raised for the Slocan Valley Legacy Fund, the endowed fund that supports charitable activities in the Slocan Valley.

The society responsible for building the Slocan Valley Legacy Fund, the community foundation for the Slocan Valley, is delighted with the result of the outreach campaign and events.

“...this was the first time we’ve made a major event of Giving Tuesday as a fundraising opportunity for the fund, publicizing it widely and holding four ‘Coffee & Conversation’ events throughout the valley,” said board chair Alex Berland. “We are thrilled with the response from the community. I also think the fact that all gifts were doubled [by a group of donors matching dollar-for-dollar] encouraged people to support the Legacy Fund. We can’t thank the community enough for this demonstration of generosity.”

In the Slocan Valley on Giving Tuesday, the Legacy Society held events at four locations. At each location, Legacy Society board members and volunteers staffed a table where patrons could share a coffee, ask questions, discuss the mission and work of the Legacy Fund, and make their donation.

Society director Lorna Visser reminds readers “if you missed Giving Tuesday, any day can be a giving day,” and welcomes potential donors to contact the Legacy Society at slocanvalleylegacy@xplornet.com or svcls.chair@gmail.com, or by using the contact form on the group’s website: www.slocanvalleylegacy.com under ‘Contact Us.’

All contributions to the Slocan Valley Legacy Fund are invested in an endowment and held in perpetuity, with the interest granted each year to worthy community organizations.

2018 grant program and application deadline

Each year the interest on the Slocan Valley Legacy Fund endowment, plus top-up funds from Kootenay Savings Community Foundation, is granted to charities and community groups for activities and programs that benefit the Slocan Valley.

Previous grants have been made for arts and culture events, environmental stewardship, education and conservation, community development and social support, programs for children, new parents and youth, hospice organizations and those serving the elderly or infirm, seniors’ housing, sports, outdoor recreation and trails, safety and emergency services, literacy, and food security, permaculture and local agriculture.

Grants must be made to a registered charity. Groups that are not a registered charity (such as a community organization or a nonprofit society) may be able to partner with a registered charity to receive funding. The society can provide information on forming a partnership, which must be done well in advance of the deadline. Information and the application form are posted at www.slocanvalleylegacy.com under ‘Apply for Funding.’ Applications must be completed and emailed to the society no later than March 16.

The application process is fully explained on the website. Potential applicants with questions are encouraged to call 1-877-649-5643 to leave a message which will be returned promptly. First-time applicants are especially encouraged to call.
Ice sculptures in Winlaw bring folks together

by Moe Lyons

On Saturday, January 6, the front yard of Sissies restaurant in Winlaw sprouted a number of unusual growths: ice sculptures! People milled about admiring and encouraging their friends and neighbours as they tackled the somewhat daunting task of turning slabs of ice into ethereal wonders. The Slocan Valley Arts Council once more sponsored this fun event.

A good time was had by all!

"Why do we do this?" says Peter Vogealaar, who is here along with David Ducharme and Carl Schlichting, all renowned ice sculptors who live in the Valley.

"We love ice. We travel all over the world doing this. And here’s our chance to bring this home and share it with everyone in Winlaw."

Arts Council representative Laura Tiberti concurs: "This is an opportunity to show off our world-famous ice and snow carvers and let the community meet and greet each other. It inspires all of us to enjoy art and winter and gives us a chance to learn how to do this."

One of the repeat sculptors was Seamus Grey, who usually works in wood. When asked what he thinks about working with ice, he says, "Every medium lives in a different way. The thing about ice is how it reacts with the light. It’s unique. That’s what I like."

Christine and Brian O’Neill, who did this last year as well, were having a great time carving a giant pair of skates, inspired by Sissies’ skating rink. Why do they do it? "Why not?" says Christine. "It’s fun! It’s our community! It’s our family!"

Naomi Lewis, well-known sculptor in stone and bronze, was creating some kind of mysterious animal that might have been a moose. Here’s her reason for joining in. "It was just one of those moments. I was eating at the restaurant and Peter asked me to do it if I can. I saw a mama moose and her baby on the highway so that’s my inspiration."

Back Walker, new at this, wasn’t quite as enthralled. "It’s all about the challenge," he says. "Actually, working with ice sucks! It’s really difficult, because I don’t know what to do. I have never done this before!"

Nonetheless, he gamely approached more than one piece with various tools including a chainsaw, and was clearly having a good time in spite of himself.

Many others also chipped and chiseled and sawed away throughout the day, creating what Peter calls “ephemeral art.” If you hurry, and the weather cooperates, you just might find the remnants still at Sissies. Otherwise you will just have to wait until next year. Start dreaming up what you could do!

Silent Auction returns to Locavores’ Feast

submitted

On Saturday, January 27, the Vallican Whole Centre will be the place to be in the lower Slocan Valley. This is where you can join your friends and neighbours and a bunch of people you never saw before in your life to celebrate the Winter Locavores’ Feast. Come at 5:30 pm to settle in at your table, and dinner will be served at 6 pm.

The Vallican Whole led the way a decade or so ago by holding the Kootenays’ very first 100 Mile Potluck, now known as the Locavores’ Feast. Come at 6 pm to find out why this community gets together to eat heartily, visit, honour our farmers and celebrate local abundance.

This winter being the vigorous beginning.

"Every medium lives in a different way. The thing about ice is how it reacts with the light. It’s unique. That’s what I like.

"Why do we do this?" says Peter Vogealaar, who is here along with David Ducharme and Carl Schlichting, all renowned ice sculptors who live in the Valley.

"We love ice. We travel all over the world doing this. And here’s our chance to bring this home and share it with everyone in Winlaw."

Arts Council representative Laura Tiberti concurs: "This is an opportunity to show off our world-famous ice and snow carvers and let the community meet and greet each other. It inspires all of us to enjoy art and winter and gives us a chance to learn how to do this."

One of the repeat sculptors was Seamus Grey, who usually works in wood. When asked what he thinks about working with ice, he says, "Every medium lives in a different way. The thing about ice is how it reacts with the light. It’s unique. That’s what I like."

Christine and Brian O’Neill, who did this last year as well, were having a great time carving a giant pair of skates, inspired by Sissies’ skating rink. Why do they do it? "Why not?" says Christine. "It’s fun! It’s our community! It’s our family!"

Naomi Lewis, well-known sculptor in stone and bronze, was creating some kind of mysterious animal that might have been a moose. Here’s her reason for joining in. "It was just one of those moments. I was eating at the restaurant and Peter asked me to do it if I can. I saw a mama moose and her baby on the highway so that’s my inspiration."

Back Walker, new at this, wasn’t quite as enthralled. "It’s all about the challenge," he says. "Actually, working with ice sucks! It’s really difficult, because I don’t know what to do. I have never done this before!"

Nonetheless, he gamely approached more than one piece with various tools including a chainsaw, and was clearly having a good time in spite of himself.

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Farm advisory program offers support to farmers

By Art Joyce

With temperatures still below freezing and the growing season still months away, it may seem early to talk about farming. But the planning and preparation on a farm doesn’t stop with the weather. And farmers needing expert advice to help make their operations viable can now go to the Kootenay & Boundary Farm Advisors program for help.

KBA connects producers to relevant programs and services, coordinates field days, and links to opportunities for funding, field trials, and farmer-to-farmer networking. The Valley Voice interviewed KBA coordinator Rachael Roussin about what farmers can expect from the program, still new and evolving in response to the needs of producers in the region.

Is your role primarily advisory, or are there more concrete forms of support, such as help with getting access to funding?

We work with producers to identify their needs and connect them to the most relevant and useful resources in a continually evolving network of agricultural specialists and experts, which include government and university researchers, private sector consultants, and successful producers. Concrete forms of support include technical information for integrated pest management, soil test interpretation, and information about irrigation requirements, for example. However, our program also provides one-on-one support for finding the most relevant information for all farm inquiries and this includes information for available funding resources, business planning, water licensing, farm status and tax information etc.

Does your association have any role in supporting organic certification for farms in the region?

Our program could provide producers with the relevant information and regulations that are required to achieve certification, however the KBA program is focused on providing agricultural extension services to all sectors, conventional and organic, large and small-scale. There is a vast diversity of agriculture in our program region which includes the Boundary, West and East Kootenay, and CBT region.

Will you also be working with farmers choosing to cultivate marijuana for the medicinal or recreational market currently opening up with legalization in Canada?

Our program works with all agricultural producers who have technical issues and information needs.

Does KBA have any role in advocating for the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) in the region or provincially?

The KBA is not an advocacy organization. Our program mandate is to support existing producers with information and support services to grow and sustain their farm business. We are working closely with the Ministry of Agriculture to understand the best resources and information to deliver, as this service used to be delivered by the Ministry. The KBA program is an opportunity to bring in expertise and research on topics such as water management for drought conditions, crop varieties and soil fertility management to producers in our region.

Given the growing gap between retiring farmers and younger people who want to get into farming but simply can’t afford the real estate, we are at risk of falling short of the farms needed to support our increasing appetite for the ‘100 Mile Diet.’ How do you see us addressing this problem?

The agricultural census shows us that the general trend is that less farmland is being being used for agriculture every year. I believe that one of our ‘100 Mile Diet’ challenges is that agriculture in our region is small scale (compared to other regions in BC and internationally) and this means that the cost of production is high and often non-mechanized. When I speak with local vegetable producers, they don’t necessarily feel that there is a lot of room for expansion in this sector as it’s a premium product with a price that reflects that. Even if people have access to farmland, the financial viability of small-scale production (such as 1–2 acres of vegetables) is a challenge. According to the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (RDI), profits were $5,324.94 per farm in 2011 when broken down to an average across the region.

One way that we can help reverse or at least sustain this trend, is to focus on supporting the existing producers so that they keep farming and that is what the KBA program seeks to do. Our program doesn’t ‘fund’ agricultural production, however, we can support producers to identify key issues that may be impacting production or profitability and recommend resources to address those issues. We also want to support new entrants to farming and we are coordinating a one-day new farmer workshop in the spring with the Ministry of Agriculture on the topic of soil management and business planning for small farms.

For more information visit www.kbfa.ca.
The Valley Voice

December 12: Co-work space proposed for Silverton General Store building

by Claire Paradis

Silverton resident Danika Hammond presented an innovative proposal to launch a co-work space in Silverton’s historical General Store. The space would have not only a storefront for Silverton businesses, but also rental apartments on the second floor.

In a nine-page document, Hammond outlined several possible uses for the space once it’s renovated, including co-work space, a brewery, bookstore, printing and graphic design services, commercial kitchen and space for classes. The business plan in miniature listed potential funding sources and partners, as well as a budget and how the new space dovetails with economic development for the community.

Council agreed to have Village staff submit a Rural Dividend grant application for a feasibility study for the project, and to look at what kind of partnerships would be possible between Hammond and the Village.

The $230,194 contract for the mechanical work associated with the Silverton Gallery HVAC system has been awarded to Ventures Mechanical Systems.

Colin Moss from the Slocan District Chamber of Commerce Health Committee updated council on physician recruitment efforts. He said a retired professional recruiter has volunteered to help. The committee has been working with a network of citizens’ groups across the province that are dealing with the same issue of physician recruitment and retention. Moss said one of the key factors in retaining doctors is ensuring their families also want to stay in the community.

The best way to recruit doctors is still word of mouth, said Moss, who believes the video produced by iCanidy Films, now on YouTube, will be a great help in getting the word out. He said the group will be seeking approximately $2,100 in funding from each of the Villages of Slocan, Silverton and New Denver and Regional District Area H in 2018.

Council Main also mentioned that New Denver is pushing for Interior Health to return ownership of the physician’s house situated next to the Health Centre to the community.

The Village of Silverton will be writing a letter in support of the Okanagan Nation Alliance’s Columbia Salmon Reintroduction Workplan. Councillor Main said that the ONA is working with the Colville Confederated Tribes so there was no concern that supporting the initiative might work against the recent ruling that the Sinixt people were not extinct.

A Working Group will be struck to take a look at the remuneration for Silverton’s councillors and mayor. Council approved the Terms of Reference for the group.

Mayor Clarke provided council with an article about the issues surrounding short-term rentals and said it would likely be something council will have to address in future.

Councillor Main said at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ recent Advocacy Days in Ottawa there was some interest in bringing back the Rural Secretariat, which gave rural issues a place at the federal government table. The Rural Secretariat was abolished in 2013.

ASLCS

Arrow & Slocan Lakes Community Services

Men’s Outreach Worker

Temporary, part-time

The Men’s Outreach Worker will provide activities and opportunities for men to develop comradeship and social interactions with other men in the community. As a result of the connections accomplished through non-threatening discussions, the Men’s Outreach Worker will also provide referrals for men who wish to engage in more personal and specific topic areas. He will be responsible for creating a safe positive environment that is conducive for men learning from and supporting each other in a healthy manner.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Plan and organize social activities for men within the community and be an integral part of the activity.
Set guidelines and parameters that complement the operations of the events planned and provide clear and safe boundaries with regards to acceptable behaviour.
Assist men to identify and access referrals to professional services such as legal information, advocacy, training and other self-improvement initiatives.
Make direct referrals for men to obtain counselling services.
Recognize potential crisis or safety situations facing the men involved in the program and help develop strategies to deal with the situation at hand. (i.e. Appropriate referrals)

Qualifications:

High School Diploma or equivalent; clear Criminal Record Check; experience conducting group activities.

ASLCS

Attn: Human Resources
Box 100, Nakusp, BC V0G 1R0
Email: hiring@aslcs.com
Fax: 250-265-3378

Food for Thought: Down the Columbia to the ocean

The Hidden Garden Gallery invites you to a Food for Thought presentation, “Tracing the Columbia” by Val Koenig, Sunday, January 21, 7:30 pm at the Knox Hall in New Denver. Admission is by donation to benefit the gallery.

In 2011, Koenig explored the Columbia River by canoe from Canal Flats to the coast at Astoria, Oregon, retracing David Thompson’s 1811 expedition. His presentation will consist of a video of his canoe trip with commentary; questions and answers will follow.

Koenig is the key Kaslo Trailblazer behind the Kaslo River Trail and its two signature bridges. He has been canoeing and trailblazing for 50 years, originally in Alberta and, for the last 18 years, in the Kootenays.

On November 23, he was presented with the Seneca’s 130th Commemorative Medal for his contribution to his community through the development of recreational opportunities.

www.hiddengardengallery.ca
by Jan McMurray

Mayor Hewat reported that a system is now in place where a Nelson ambulance will be automatically dispatched to cover Kaslo at times when the Kaslo ambulance is called away for an extended period, i.e. the north end of Kootenay Lake or transfer to Nelson or beyond.

The Valley endorsed the RDCK’s application for a Rural Dividend grant for a Farmer Innovation Program. The program includes a farm internship program, funding for feasibility supports, and a feasibility study for a community compost program in Kaslo and Area D.

The new Village Communications Policy was adopted. The policy has sections on electronic communications, correspondence, social media, and internal/external communications.

Joe Johnson of the Kaslo and District Area Association (KDDAA) attended the Committee of the Whole meeting as a delegation. The association is hoping to replace the compost program in Kaslo and feasibility study for a community compost program in Kaslo and Area D.

Where’s the good local beef… and wheat and carrots?

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The Langham welcomes a new curator – Seathra Bell

Seathra specializes in fibre arts and textiles. She has a Masters of Arts in Fashion Design and Textiles from Glasgow School of Art, Scotland; a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fibre at Alberta College of Art and Design, Calgary; and a Diploma in Fibre from Kootenay School of the Arts in Nelson.

She was recently awarded a major arts grant from CBT to research the traditional textile and dye plants used by the First Nations in the Columbia Basin. You can find her website www.seathrabell.com.

Advertise in the Valley Voice
It pays!!!

Call 358-7218 for details
email: valleyvoice@valleyvoice.ca

Energy Tips... if you install a backup generator for use when the utility power goes off, a transfer switch must be installed to prevent electricity from going out onto the utility lines, where linemen may be working, and protect your generator from damage when the power is restored. It’s not safe to simply turn off the house main breaker when the power is restored. It’s not safe and protect your generator from damage.

The Langham Cultural Society is very pleased to announce that it has a new curator, Kootenay native and artist Seathra Bell from South Slocan. She brings her experience as an arts educator, her thriving arts practice, and her boundless enthusiasm and energy to the position. As curator, Seathra will program all the exhibits in the Langham’s two art galleries and produce accompanying events, presentations and community outreach.

The concert is Saturday, January 27; Doors open at 6:30 pm, the music starts at 7. www.AllenSongMusic.com.

Allensong coming to the Langham Theatre

Allenson performs at the Langham, January 27. Petra Allen provides backing vocals for the folk duo, Allensong.

The sweet folk sound is back and Allensong is making it popular again.

Allensong is not a dance band but it will still move you!
Nakusp council, December 11: Council teams up with BACA to make fixed link presentation to MLAs

by Claire Paradis

Council voted to have the Beaton Arm Crossing Association (BACA) join representatives of council in making a presentation to local MLAs. There was consensus that the Village needs to take an active role in the discussion but that BACA has the data that would make for a convincing presentation. It was decided that council would take the lead in emphasizing the importance of a fixed link to the community, and BACA would make the presentation. Council will let RDCK Area K Director Paul Peterson know that they are in favour of increasing funding for the Nakusp Public Library by $5,000 per year. The money would come from both Nakusp and a portion of Area D. In a letter to the Village, Head Librarian Susan Rogers explained that the library has not been given a cost of living increase in its funding and is facing an $11,000 shortfall in their 2018 budget. The librarian and the board will work to fundraise the other $6,000 they will need.

The Nakusp Hot Springs has a skookum new Tourism Action and Marketing Plan that Recreation and Parks Director Terry Welsh presented to council. The Village-run business now has a 28-page report detailing how the Nakusp Hot Springs and Chalets can best be promoted via social media, a strategy that will reduce the amount spent on print advertising, said Welsh. Councillor Mueller commented that she was impressed with the quality of the report.

Although there isn’t enough money in the kitty to start up in 2018, Nakusp Council voted to purchase some of the ‘street furniture’ – benches and waste receptacles – that will one day be used in the Downtown Revitalization Plan. The $5,000 of Rural Dividend funding left after the planning and design phase will buy 17 benches, two garbage containers and two recycling containers for the main street. The ‘furniture’ will be stored until the next phase of the Revitalization Plan can be carried out.

FireSmart Program Coordinator Bree Lillies showed Nakusp council what has been done to get the community smart about wildfire over the past year. FireSmart is a program partnership between the Village of Nakusp and the Nakusp and Area Community Forest (NACFOR) to educate people about wildfires and how to identify and deal with flammable materials they may have on their property. Lillies said FireSmart completed 17 residential assessments. She said homeowners may feel overwhelmed by the daunting task of reducing the risk of wildfire on their property, so the objective was to help them achieve small goals.

Mayor Karen Hamling had kudos for several community groups in her report, in particular for Art Party and the Society for Nakusp Community Events, which put on the Celebration of Light. Hamling said she was selling tickets with Laurie Page at Art Party and that she had heard that accommodations had been booked solid during the event.

Councillor Ulli Mueller told council that she was happy to be part of the Nakusp and Area Bike Society’s tour of the trail that was built this year as part of the Mount Abriel project. “What an amazing opportunity for the town,” she commented.

Later in the meeting, council pledged a letter of support for NABS in their application for another Rural Dividend grant to continue work at Mount Abriel. The project is scheduled to build 50 kilometres of mountain biking trails over the next five years.

NACFOR has partnered with the Arrow Lakes Historical Society to produce a very fine 2018 calendar for their clients, Councillor Bill Tobey reported. An extra 50 copies of the calendar are being sold by the society at $15 apiece as a fundraiser for the historical society.

The NACFOR board was appointed, with Kathy Smith serving as president, Geoff Grout as treasurer and RDCK representative, Tom Zelenik as secretary, Bill Tobey as Nakusp council representative, and John Cam and Walter Posnikoff as directors at large.

Hand-off career fair coming to NSS

by Jan McMurray

Students and community members looking for information about in-demand jobs can find a wealth of information at Nakusp Secondary School on January 16. The WorkBC ‘Find Your Fit Tour’ will be set up in the gym during the day for students, and from 3-7 p.m. for the general public.

NSS principal Peter Gadjia is thrilled. “When we were contacted in November and offered the opportunity, we were all over the idea of hosting the event,” he said, adding that the tour has been on the road since October 2014 and this is the first stop in our area.

CUPE 2450 and Village of Nakusp ratify new collective agreement

CUPE 2450 and the Village of Nakusp have ratified a new five-year agreement after more than 28 months of negotiations. Sixteen of 23 eligible voters attended the ratification meeting December 11, and 75% of members voted in favour of the tentative agreement. “This has been a long and challenging round of negotiations,” said CUPE 2450 President Andy Cruden. “However, we are pleased to finally have a new agreement in place and we are now prepared to focus our attention on rebuilding our working relationship with the Village.”

The five-year agreement runs from August 1, 2016 to July 31, 2020 and includes wage increases of 1.5%, 1.5%, 1.75%, 2% and 2% in each year of the agreement.
**BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES ARE YOU AN ASPIRING ENTREPRENUER?** If so, call Community Futures to learn about the free Business Plan workshop open to anyone! And if you’re eligible, you may also qualify for the Self-Employment Grant where you will receive ongoing business training and coaching and usually financial support while you start your business. To learn more, call 265-3674 ext. 201 or email Nakaup@futures.bc.ca.

**CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS** for the 2018 North Valley Mountain Film Festival are now open and will be accepted until the January 31 deadline. For submission guidelines please visit northvalleyfilmfest.com or direct inquiries to northvalleyfilmfest@gmail.com. **COMING EVENTS** - Cancer Patient Support Group: Every first and third Thursday mornings dedicated to “reading readiness.” Workshop for preschoolers and parents. Join us every Friday from 9:30 am at Arrow Lakes Hospital. For more information, Allan 250-265-4911.

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Provincial partners with CBT for new affordable housing

An expression of interest to communities for projects will be issued this month.

For more information: news.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/bc-government-addressing-housing-affordability-challenges; ourint.org/housing.

Next Valley Voice
Deadline: January 19, 2018
Nelson Library brings library services to Slocan Park

Each month the Nelson Public Library goes mobile, bringing two separate programs to Slocan Park Hall: a roving collection of items to borrow for adults, and drop-in story time for kids.

Circulation Services coordinator Heather Goldik brings a selection of books, audiobooks, CDs and DVDs on the third Tuesday of each month (during adult drop-in coffee time). Folks can drop in to borrow items, register for a card, learn about the library’s online resources, and find out about downloading eBooks and eAudiobooks. Upcoming dates are January 16, February 20, and March 20 from 10 am to noon.

Children’s librarian Avi Silberstein comes to Slocan Park Hall once a month offering a fun, free story time for kids 0 to 5 years.

COMMITTEE

Selkirk Paving recognized for local paving job

Selkirk Paving Ltd. won an Award of Excellence for resurfacing approximately 55 kilometres of highways and roads surrounding Slocan, Silverton, New Denver and Nakusp. The award was presented at the Deputy Minister’s Contractor of the Year Awards ceremony on December 8 in Victoria.

Selkirk Paving developed excellent relationships within those communities, and despite the large project scope and challenges with flooding in the areas, the work was completed on time and on budget,” states the press release announcing the award recipients.
Enrollment in the district as of November stood at 433 full-time equivalent students, down three since September.

The director of Learning Lorna Newman and Superintendent Terry Taylor attended a meeting at Burton School November 30 with a group of parents to discuss children attending Burton next year and into the future. There has been a baby boom going on in Burton due to lower housing costs, meaning more parents are choosing to live in the community for acreage and rural lifestyle.

The parents identified the benefits of not having their young children on the school bus each day or for shorter periods, being able to participate more actively in their children’s education as a result of having a school in the community, and being able to attract more young families to move to the community.

We want to make sure that every vote counts and that politicians can work across party lines to come to the best decisions. We were presented with strong financial evidence that it was in the best interest for the BC Greens to go to a referendum on proportional representation that will give British Columbians a choice in how they vote.

Premier Horgan has also made me an offer I could not refuse. He has said that the best course forward is to work in Trades (ACE-IT) programs, and serving smaller districts (8, 10, 12 & 51) in the Selkirk region like ours. Starting next spring, the new formula will be an extended road test, using the driver’s own vehicle with an ICBC driving examiner.

Family Development, a challenging but rewarding job. As part of a fundamental shift we’re making in our relationship with BC’s Indigenous people, we will do everything we can to keep our roads clean and to ensure that local government care and return them to their families, their communities and their culture.

Another major commitment is creating a universal and affordable child care system. To make sure that we have the best possible outcomes for this Group 1 initiative, it will be done in a careful way with extensive consultation with many stakeholders and professionals in the field. We will be making announcements in February.

Taylor advised the parents that this was a preliminary meeting, that accurate potential enrollment, impact on NES enrolment, and budget implications would have to be considered. Changes in the Ministry funding formula will also be impacted. The Board to consider.

If a property owner is still not happy with their assessment, they may submit a Notice of Complaint (Appeal) by January 31, after speaking to one of our appraisers, or Request a Review of the Assessment by January 31, at the Board meeting.

The properties that have contacted others from the Burton and Eau Claire area to ask if they might be interested in having their children attend Burton School, and are assembling a list of children interested in attending the new Burton School next year.

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complete ski trails now open in hills

submitted

With lots of snow on groomed trails Valhalla Hills Nordic Ski Club has opened its completed ski trail network. Design and major construction was completed in the summer of 2016. Last winter VHNSC directors scoped out final modifications to make the courses ski better and offer more easy trails. The earth work completed October 2017 has resulted in a trail with three loops added that enhance the ski-ability. A new classic ski trail, an easy trail with fewer hill challenges, stays nearer the highway but is still in the forest.

VHNSC is grooming the recently improved BC Hydro access roadway to the southeast from the trailhead/parking lot. This trail, ‘Roulston’s Run’, was named to honour the late Peter Roulston who first wrote in The Valley Voice years ago about this great ski possibility. This is a nice beginner trail once you are past the steep hill at the start.

The most difficult trail now has two extra loops to enable the skier to get a rest interspersed between its playful ups and downs. The club is in the process of getting maps and more directional signs made to assist skiers in trying out the trails. Directors say they are very grateful to funding and support from the RDCK, BC Rec Sites and Trails, Columbia Basin Trust and club members.

Valhalla Hills Nordic Ski Club began its Jackrabbit Sport Development Program for children ages 4-13 on January 6. The club’s volunteer coaches have undergone training to lead a progressive ski skills program that has between 20-30 kids enrolled.

Cross country skiers, both members and non-members, are welcomed. On Saturday January 13 the club offers a guided ski to the public with pointers in how to use the trails. Meet at the trail head – 24 km from New Denver and 24 km from Nakusp on Hwy 6 – a little after noon. There will be a warming fire and hosts to guide you.

LESS Shoe Memorial honoured victims of violence

submitted

The Shoe Memorial on December 8, 2017 organized by Lucerne School’s Social Justice Club was a successful event. This is the second memorial the school has organized. Shoe memorials happen annually in other towns and cities in early December to coincide with Canada’s National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women and the anniversary of the massacre of 14 female engineering students at Montreal Polytechnique in 1989. Students from Grades 4 to 11, staff, and community members placed a pair of shoes in front of The Shoe Memorial on December 8, 2017 organized by Lucerne School’s Social Justice Club.

KSCU, one pair at a time to remember those women who, due to violence, are no longer with us. More than 35 pairs of shoes were donated, as well as handbags with health and beauty products and accessories which will be donated to a local women’s shelter or charity.

Lucerne’s Shoe Memorial was at the end of a week long campaign at school on the elimination of violence against women and girls. The school would like to thank KSCU, the Village of New Denver, the Village of Silverton, The Valley Voice and community members for their support.