by Jan McMurray

There are so many good stories to tell about the mining era in the Kootenays, it’s no wonder a TV show is being produced about one of them.

The story of the shipwrecked train that sank to the bottom of Slocan Lake while it was being barged from Rosebery to Slocan on New Year’s Eve in 1946 has captured the imaginations of former Kootenay miner Jeff Stibbard and his son Clinton, and their film producer friend, Colten Wilke.

“The three of us started a company called Hoghead Media, after the old trainman’s term for an engineer, and this is our first project,” Wilke said in an interview. “Jeff Stibbard lived in New Denver in the 1980s and worked as a miner as a younger man. He’s always loved the history of mining and trains, and he really loves the history of the Kootenay Boundary.”

The production is being funded by Jeff Stibbard’s JDS Energy and Mining Company.

Wilke was the perfect film producer for the job because he also knows how to dive. Part of the project is to find the sunken train. “When Jeff and Clinton asked me to produce a TV show about the sunken locomotive, they also tasked me with finding it,” he says.

The film team was in the area in August on a scouting trip, then came back October 6-9 to interview several local people. They are back now (October 19-23). On this trip, they are sending an ROV (remotely operated underwater vehicle) to the bottom of Slocan Lake to find the shipwrecked train.

“Our team has been researching this for the last two months and we have a good idea where it is,” he says.

One of the high points of the project so far, Wilke said, was a visit to Penticton to interview the last living member of the train crew. Bill Chapman, 97 years old, was the train’s brakeman. Back in 1946, he was sleeping in the caboose along with the rest of the crew when the barge started sinking. The whole crew made it off the barge and onto the tug Rosebery in time.

Wilke says their visit with Chapman in Penticton this summer was “amazing.” They also had some wonderful interviews with people in Slocan, Silverton and New Denver earlier this month. “People need to hear this stuff,” Wilke said. “It would be a disservice to society if we didn’t get these stories out there.”

When Wilke was putting together the production team for the show, he was able to find some Kootenay people to fill key roles. Stephan Berrill, who grew up in Slocan Park and graduated from Mt. Sentinel Secondary School in 2005, is the director of photography. Kaio Kathriner, from Cranbrook, is the director.

Berrill is honored to be part of the project. “It’s a treat to come home anytime, but to bring the cameras and capture the local scenery and history, and to learn more about the history myself, is humbling and exciting – it’s really an experience to cherish!” he said.

Wilke also has ties to the area. He grew up in Kelowna and spent time in the Boundary with his family. His father is the AFD manager for this region and has been travelling through for the last 20 years. “My dad introduced me to Doug [from Glacier View Service in New Denver],” he said.

The team’s objective for October is to shoot an episode, find the train, and produce a ‘sizzle reel’ – an hour-long film to market the show to the networks.

“We want the show to be engaging and educational. We want to change the narrative of what we’re showing people on TV. We want the show to appeal to young people as well as older folk. We’re passionate about the history and that’s why we’re doing this,” Wilke said.
The Kaslo Housing Society will soon begin studying the feasibility of creating new dedicated rental apartments in downtown Kaslo. Kaslo council gave the project the green light at the October 13 council meeting.

The proposed building would be located on A Avenue near the corner of 4th Street and could potentially provide eight to ten studio and larger apartments. The 75 x 100-foot lot behind the Kemball Centre is presently under-utilized as a space for secure bus parking and Kaslo infonet storage.

The housing society and its development partner – New Commons Development – will begin a period of public consultation and will have site assessments done. An architect, Christine Ross from Sanca, has been hired to provide high-level concept drawings that can be adapted in response to community input.

New Commons Development, under its Small Communities Initiative, is already working with several small communities in the region to assist local housing providers solve the challenges of developing housing. They bring a much-needed level of expertise and experience to the work ahead for Kaslo, including securing project financing. The society’s intention is to develop a strong proposal for BC Housing’s Community Housing Fund, due January 15, 2021.
Sinixt hunting case heard in Canada’s top court

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

A Sinixt hunter’s decades-long fight for his rights and the recognition of his people has had his day in Canada’s highest court.

The Supreme Court of Canada heard arguments in the Rick Desautel hunting case on October 8.

Desautel, 68, shot and killed an elk near Castlegar in 2010, then purposely turned himself in to conservation officers so that his prosecution would be handled in BC without a licence and hunting as a non-resident.

Desautel says he was exercising his traditional hunting rights as a member of the Sinixt—a right protected by Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution.

The Sinixt lived in the area for thousands of years, but through various circumstances most moved south of the border to Washington State more than a century ago. About 3,000 people of Sinixt descent live as part of the Confederation. In Canada, the land was declared extinct for the purposes of the Indian Act in 1956.

The trial judge had acquitted Desautel, recognizing the man’s right to hunt. That decision was upheld by both the Supreme Court of BC and the Court of Appeal, landing it before the nation’s top court.

In their opening arguments, the Province of BC’s lawyers said the matter came down to whether non-Canadians could be afforded the rights and protections guaranteed by the Canadian Constitution. “The question before you is, is the Lakes Tribe an Aboriginal people of Canada?” said Glen R. Thompson, the lawyer representing the BC government. “The claimant group...is the Lakes Tribe of Washington State. The respondent wants to broaden that designation, they want to broaden the identification of the group to include the Sinixt people generally. That was not a finding of the courts below.”

“If you go as far as the respondents are suggesting, ...and say ‘Aboriginal people of Canada’ can live in the United States, or really anywhere...then you have effectively said the common law issue of the border, the Canadian nation state does not matter, it does not exist...” Thompson continued. “So what happens is you kind of end up with an erasure of Canadian sovereignty.”

“This becomes an Aboriginal or an Indigenous solution and not a Canadian solution...and we need something that is workable to all Canadians.”

But Desautel’s lawyer, Mark Underhill, said they are seeking a specific protection for a specific right—not seeking sweeping Section 35 protections for all Sinixt living in the US. The person in this case is seeking the right to hunt, has historical connections to the land, people and culture of the members of the collective living in Canada. He also has the support and permission from those members to engage in that practice.

Intervenors said the concept of reconciliation should very much be considered when ruling on this case, including the Sinixt people generally. “If you go as far as the respondents are suggesting, you have effectively said the common law issue of the border, the Canadian nation state does not matter, it does not exist...”

“We urge this court to reject a vision of reconciliation that defines the concept narrowly and ahistorically, and excludes from its purview some Indigenous peoples, with enduring connections to Canadian lands, who are now based on reserves outside of Canada,” said Jessica Orkin, representing the Grand Council of the Cree. “Their enduring connection to Canadian lands must be recognized and ought to be part of the project of reconciliation.”

A lawyer for the Indigenous Bar Association group agreed, saying the government was trying to use the international boundary to “lessen the burden of reconciliation.”

“It’s not as you’ve heard from the appellant...it’s not a question of a foreign rights-holder group asserting rights in Canada,” said Bruce McIvor. “The way I would phrase it, the question is, is a person from Indigenous ancestry, who is a resident of the United States, entitled to exercise an Aboriginal right in their people’s ancestral territory in Canada?”

“Once we keep that question in mind, a lot of the arguments we heard today are for another day.”

The judges listened to arguments from nearly 20 intervenors, as provincial governments, First Nations and aboriginal groups from across Canada and the US outlined their concerns and interests in the outcome of the case.

The judges took the arguments under advisement. It’s not known when they’ll hand down their ruling.

Classes resume October 16, 2020
In person!

Chair Yoga & Feldenkrais

Fridays, 9:30 am - 11:00 am

It is recommended to bring your own mat and a blanket for setting up your space on the floor. If you plan to practice in the chair the whole time, then just dress in comfortable, warm clothes and bring a bottle of water if needed.

For more information about these programs please call Passmore Lodge 250-226-7750.

Programs made possible through the CBT CIP-AAP grants in RDCK Area II and the Slocan Valley Region.
Democracy & the COVID-19 election

I’m not really happy about being dragged to the polls in the middle of a pandemic. I am of the opinion that the supply & confidence agreement between the Greens and the NDP was serving the province well. There was no need for this election.

That said, I’m not expecting any changes in Kootenay West. Katrine Conroy is a fabulous MLA and the best minister of Child & Family Services in the history of the province. She cares about people. I’ve seen it said before, but she reminds me of a younger version of my mom. There is just no way that I’m going to vote against my mom. I expect that most of her constituents will be joining me. The Liberals have parachuted in a 19-year-old political science student from Kamloops to bear the flag. Neither he nor the Green candidate could be bothered to show up for an all-candidates meeting that the Valley Voice organized on October 15. Enough said. A nice field of independents raised a bunch of local concerns and kept the incumbent on her toes.

You can view the online meeting at facebook.com/valleyvoicenewsapp.

The neighbouring constituency of Nelson-Creston is much more interesting. I expect that the NDP’s Brittany Anderson will prevail, but it looks like a much tighter finish. Considering the constituency’s voting history and the NDP’s surging polling numbers, any other result would surprise me. However, with three dynamic young women in the race, and the incumbent stepping out of the job, the potential for an upset is very real. Depending on how the vote splits, folks living in Nelson-Creston could end up with an NDP, Green or Liberal MLA.

Dan Nicholson, publisher

Opinions

versus facts

There are next to no COVID-19 infected people in our area. This explains the letters from Gisela Stein and all others of her ilk. It reminds me of people who preferred not to go air raid bombs (while the bombs were falling indiscriminately. Few survived.

I agree with Ms. Stein that the Valley Voice is a great paper, but I regret that the print letters such as Bruce Freeman’s, in which he totally misrepresented Richard Caniell’s letter. These people don’t seem to understand the consequences of refusing to take safety measures against infections of bugs like COVID-19. You just have to look at France, the Netherlands, India, Brazil, etc.

But as Elsie de Boer said in her last letter: there are too many of us anyway. Richard Eichenauer

Gender equity

I used to be a member of the NDP. Even 35 years ago with one income and a burgeoning family, I found a way to support the party financially, and lend a hand physically. I still believe in the socialist foundations of the party, but I have been unable to support the provincial NDP for the last 3 decades.

In 2009, Michelle Mungall was elected to represent the Nelson-Creston electoral district. She was elected under a new policy that the NDP had adopted which only allowed women to compete to serve as the NDP’s candidate in winnable ridings. In 2009, Michelle was a very young, popular politician who likely would have been given the nod to represent the electoral district without that new policy, but sadly for her she will never know whether she won on her own volition or due to the lack of male competition.

In the intervening years, the party has adjusted the policy to allow other ‘under-represented’ groups to run in winnable ridings.

So now, women, visible minority men, and men with alternate sexual preferences are included in the line-up of first-class members. Everyone except white heterosexual men without disabilities are considered eligible to run in electoral districts where the NDP currently holds power. These white men are, of course, still allowed to run in districts where their chances are slim and none.

The NDP requires that all members agree to and support all party policies, and since I was not willing to relegate myself to be a second-class member of my chosen party, I had to abandon my membership.

This policy is completely undemocratic, unfair, and demeaning to women, who, I believe are perfectly capable of winning a nomination without the leg up. Interestingly, only two sitting MLAs had the testicle fortitude to vote against the policy when it was originally proposed – Larry Lali, and John Horgan.

It is about time the NDP gave up this affirmative action policy, and strive to allow the members in a riding to democratically elect the most qualified candidate, so that the people who live there will be well represented.

I am sure I am not alone in my decision to stop supporting the NDP because of this policy. Elections in this province are usually won by a couple of percentage points. I am not so sure the NDP can win without the support of its second-class members.

Rod Retzlaff

Glade

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: CANADA $54.60, USA $84.00, OVERSEAS $126.00. E-Mail Subscription $22.40 (Prices include GST)

Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement #40021191

Phone/Fax: 1-833-601-1700 E-mail: valleyvoice@valleyvoice.ca Website: www.valleyvoice.ca

The Valley Voice is distributed throughout the Slocan and Arrow Lakes Valley from Slocan/Playmobil Junction to Edgewood and Kaslo on Kootenay Lake.

Circulation is 7,600 papers, providing the most complete news and advertising coverage of any single newspaper serving this area.

Fourth Edition

PRINTED IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

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Published and printed in British Columbia, Canada.
Valhalla Foundation welcomes SLSS to the wetland restoration club

Regarding our article ‘Wetland restoration along the Bonanza Biodiversity Corridor to begin this fall’ in the September 24 issue of the Valley Voice, I believe that those interested in the future of the three wetland restoration projects that will take place in the Bonanza Biodiversity Corridor (BBC) ‘...and go on to explain that the Shushwap Lake Stewardship Society’s plans for work in the BBC, thinking that the wetlands in this corridor to better ecological health. We have received the SLSS’s approval for our wetland restoration projects, we are pleased in the article to make this announcement.

Lorna Visser (Director, Valhalla Foundation for Ecology) Hills

Thoughts on the 2020 BC election

BC has an election coming up on October 24, and polling stations will be open from October 15 onward. 8 am to 8 pm. This is a very important election for BC.

Catastrophic fires and floods, unusually warm temperatures, melting icecaps, rising sea levels and species extinction have shown us that our home, the Earth, is in crisis. For the past eight years, the NDP under John Horgan has put forward an NDP plan for the environment as vocal critics in the legislature.

If you’re an NDP supporter and an environmentalist, please investigate their record. The time for action is now. (Newspaper)

In a matter of life or death

Reading letters to the editor recently gives one the impression there are two parallel universes out there, mutually exclusive in terms of values, beliefs and perceptions of reality. In one universe, all governments are manipulating us, all scientists and experts are deceiving us, all corporations are screwing us – or worse, poisoning us – and like sheep, we are letting it happen! The COVID pandemic is all just a hoax to scare us so governments can steal our civil rights and enable ‘Big Pharma’ to make billions from harmful vaccines.

I’m sorry, but I cannot help but inhabit such a grim universe. In the universe I inhabit, governments of the world are doing their best to deal with an unprecedented situation threatening the lives of their citizens. Those who have chosen careers in science, epidemiology, medicine, etc., are using their knowledge and expertise to guide decision-makers as they grapple with this crisis. Mistakes have and will be made, and there is no roadmap. I will reserve judgement as to what worked and what may prove to have been over- or under-reactions. There will be time to disarm future generations, look or not take when this is finally over.

I have been dismayed in reading some letters these last few issues by the callousness displayed concerning human life. Some get caught up with the relatively low mortality of COVID-19 infections. It has been suggested that a better course would be just to ‘let her rip’ until herd immunity is reached. We should all be working toward herd immunity, but there are two ways to do it. We’ll just ‘let her rip’, we can expect a lot more unnecessary deaths – my understanding of herd immunity, and there is no roadmap. I will reserve judgement as to what worked and what may prove to have been over- or under-reactions. There will be time to disarm future generations, look or not take when this is finally over.

We as citizens earn more revenue from the BC oil and gas industry. That is why I am, quite frankly, astounded that an MLA like Katie Conroy, who was part of a coalition of MLAs re-negotiating the Columbia River Treaty (and whose late husband was displaced by the building of the Hugh Keenleyside dam) has remained silent and gone along with the further destruction and displacement of farmland in the Peace River Valley and the destruction of the Athabasca River Delta.

If we want our youth and their younger brothers and sisters to have any kind of liveable future on this planet, we must end the path of destruction we are on and start to rapidly lower production of fossil fuels in BC, as part of a global search to build an economy for people that brings us into harmony with the very ecosystems on which we depend and which we destroy – those that our predecessors have never valued, and to which our children have 30 years ago: we can’t build a dam on compacted silt, at least, not without spending billions more.

The NDP government is spending almost a billion a year on subsidies to gas and oil, and receiving back a fifth of that in payments. This is a huge handout to an industry which makes it impossible for BC to meet its emissions targets, and at the same time denies money to alternative power generation programs.

I feel that the BC NDP plus become indistinguishable from the BC Liberal Party. The elephant in the room is their support for Site C, LNG, and fracking. It is impossible for me to believe that the NDP understands or cares about the consequences of climate change. For my vote, after supporting the NDP for many years, I have to say that the BC Green Party is the only party that seems to understand about climate change, and is willing to stop subsidizing oil, gas, and fracking (LNG).

Of the candidates running in the Nelson-Creston riding, I believe Nichole Carlough, the BC Green Party candidate, to be the best qualified and best motivated. I intend to vote for her and I hope you do, too.

Harvey Armstrong

Johnson’s Landing

Horgan hopes for a majority

When Horgan announced that he was calling an election, he was breaking an agreement he had made with the BC Green Party that he wouldn’t call an election until 2021. Naked political ambition is always unpleasant to behold. Horgan is known for his impetuousness. Is he going on a campaign by breaking a promise?

Speaking of breaking a promise, in December 2017 the crocodile tears flowed when he (with Michelle Mangell and George Heyman by his side, both looking stricken) proclaimed that, just like Christy Clark said, Site C ‘was too big to stop. The promise was to stop Site C, made while in opposition.

At that time it was thought that it might cost us taxpayers $4 billion, which included an inflated figure of $1.8 billion for remediation. We’re up to over $7 billion now, with no end in sight. BC Hydro is now saying what they knew 30 years ago: we can’t build a dam on compacted silt, not without spending billions more.

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Valhalla Foundation welcomes SLSS to the wetland restoration club

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The Valley Voice   October 22, 2020

Silvertown council, October 14: Arrow Slocan Tourism Association presentation

by Moe Lyons

The meeting opened with a presentation by Megan Chadwick, executive director of the Arrow Slocan Tourism Association (ASTA). ASTA is a non-profit, Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the Arrow Lakes and Slocan Valleys, and is just over a year old. Created out of a partnership between the Nakusp & District and Slocan Valley Chambers of Commerce, ASTA facilitates a cooperative approach to tourism development. The mission of the organization is “to respect community values while being recognized as an important contributor to local economic vitality and community vibrancy.”

“Core funding comes from the Municipal Regional District Tax, 2% on accommodation. Other funding comes from Destination BC, COVID impact grants (temporarily), and from other sources such as the Columbia Basin Trust. The association is developing a presence on social media and is developing a website: www.arrowslocan.com. ASTA is working in collaboration with the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission and the Slocan Lakes Fire Department,” said Chadwick.

For more information, email Megan: info@arrowslocan.com.

Chief Financial Officer Colin McClure presented his report for the third quarter. “Things are quite positive,” he said. Although the closure of Silverton Museum and the reduced revenues by $25,000, the Creekside campground did well ($13,000) and the sale of the logs from Lakeside brought in $4,600.

The provincial government also provided an extra $6,800 in the Small Communities Grant. The Memorial Hall project (windows and building envelope upgrades), funded by a $24,000 Columbia Basin Trust grant, came in under budget. The leftover funds will go towards improvements to the parking lot on the south side of the building.

NO Hillary Elliot’s report covered several topics. The propellor will remain in Silvertown, and may be placed in front of the interpretive centre with signage and historical photos. Staff is working on this with the family who donated the propellor. Plans for the water main upgrade and creek crossing have been delayed, as there is no word yet on the provincial funding for the project. The delay in the funding announcement is due to the election. As this is a high priority, staff are trying to figure out how to proceed, especially since the equipment necessary for the job will be in New Denver soon. Plans to install insulation in the reservoir have been put on hold for the time being.

Requests for quotes for the campground redesign are still in the works and some information should be available by the next council meeting.

The draft Official Community Plan and zoning amendments are hoped to be presented to council in April 2021.

The floodbridge has been resurfaced and 2019-20 sidewalk improvements are complete. Sidewalks on the west side of the highway will be resurfaced in 2021.

The large culvert that had recently become aware that the Province is coming up with money to get people working. She said she would try to get an application in for that, particularly for the installation of HandiPlank siding for the Memorial Hall, the fire hall, and the gallery.

“The village will provide a letter of support to the Slocan Lake Arts Council (SLAC) for a grant application to replace the carpet and wood flooring upstairs at the gallery building with vinyl sheet flooring. Staff recommended the Village put forward a letter of support to SLAC to assist SLAC with this project if necessary.”

• Mayor Jason Clarke said in his report that he’s “pushing hard for the last mile” in the broadband project. Clarke wants community control of the infrastructure that connects the region to the back bone (main fibre-optic cable), and said local governments want to have conversations among themselves about the next steps.

• Mayor Clarke and Councillor Leah Main met with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development on September 17 about the application for a Bull Trout Wildlife Habitat Area on Silvertown Creek. “It is apparently in the pipeline,” Clarke said. “Staff seems hopeful we should have some progress.”

“We’re deeply involved in the industry, both of us have extensive experience in STEP Code buildings,” says Armstrong. “We’re working with the RDCK directors to develop STEP Code standards early in the regional district, and even consider not endorsing them.”

• Armstrong says that would be a mistake.

“There’s a lot of misinformation floating out there,” says Armstrong. “…because at the end of the day, the science is about slow climate change, and the building science is clear, and the economic arguments are pretty clear.

“It’s extremely frustrating to have this misinformation causing a delay to action.”

The delegation provided stats that show the cost of building to the STEP Code adds about $7,000 to the cost of a new build, which can be paid back in seven years in energy savings, they said. The additional cost of professional energy consultants is also offset by rebates, they note.

As a side benefit, they noted that building to STEP Code provides a form of quality assurance on new homes being built.

“Houses built to higher levels of energy efficiency retain their value compared to others,” they said.

They also said concerns about companies putting in new rules adding to contractors’ headaches are just not founded in reality.

• Armstrong says the most effective way to address the concerns of home builders is to effectively address the requirements of the community. “They tell me they haven’t had the practice?” he asks. “And if we don’t have the capacity in the design community, or in the energy conservation community, how can the building community to effectively respond to the mandatory measures? I just don’t understand how the RDCK would allow the decision to not support STEP Code at this point. They’re cutting off their nose to spite their face.”

Dianne Joyce Obituary


Resident of Hanceville, BC for 30 years, Dianne was a devoted Christian and a member of the historic Chilcotin Log Church congregation at Hanceville served by her husband as pastor. She was known for volunteering countless hours at the church’s free store, generously distributing items to families in need. Dianne was a woman of hidden talents, including petit-point embroidery, custom handmade quilting, and home decorating. Her children are fortunate to own two of her original quilt designs, each a one-of-a-kind design that Dianne was proud of for 62 years. Prior to retirement she worked in the Alexis Creek Library. Her many friends in the Hanceville area will miss her dearly.

Memorial service to be conducted by Pastor Paul Lomovato at the Chilcotin Log Church in Hanceville at a date to be announced. “I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me shall not perish but have everlasting life.” — John 11:25-27

RDKC Board encouraged to ‘STEP forward’ with building code

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

“The Regional District of Central Kootenay shouldn’t fear new provincially mandated energy-saving rules for house construction, a delegation told the regional government’s board of directors.

Energy inspector Gerry Hawkins and architects from the local lakeside appeared before the board at its meeting last week to lobby directors to adopt the STEP Code as soon as possible.

“We’re deeply involved in the industry, both of us have extensive experience in STEP Code buildings,” says Armstrong. “We’re working with the RDCK directors to develop STEP Code standards early in the regional district, and even consider not endorsing them.”

Armstrong says that would be a mistake.

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As a side benefit, they noted that building to STEP Code provides a form of quality assurance on new homes being built.

“Houses built to higher levels of energy efficiency retain their value compared to others,” they said.

They also said concerns about companies putting in new rules adding to contractors’ headaches are just not founded in reality.

“80%-plus of local industry construction members are in support of Step One implementation immediately,” they said. “We strongly recommend the adoption of the existing resolution 390 for now on Step One implementation,” the pair concluded, citing the long delayed STEP Code resolution.

Armstrong says the most frustrating part for him is that this is coming to the region in two years, no matter what the RDCK’s politicians think.

“What do we do then? How is the Regional District as a building department going to have the capacity to effectively address the requirements of the STEP Code, if they haven’t had the practice?” he asks. “And if we don’t have the capacity in the design community, or in the energy conservation community, how can the building community to effectively respond to the mandatory measures? I just don’t understand how the RDCK would allow the decision to not support STEP Code at this point. They’re cutting off their nose to spite their face.”

Woman not seriously injured after driving car off ferry ramp

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

A woman had to be rescued from the water at the Silverton Bay ferry terminal early this month after she drove her car off the end of the dock into the Upper Arrow Lakes.

Police say she got a call just after midnight on October 13 that a car had driven off the loading ramp at the terminal, on Hwy 23 between Revelstoke and Nakusp. Ferry workers had spotted the woman in the water and launched a rescue boat to retrieve her.

Investigators believe that the woman was alone inside her Ford Fusion, which was discovered fully submerged below the ramp.

The ferry couldn’t land at the terminal due to the high water, and service was cut for more than 12 hours.

Police say they don’t think drugs or alcohol were involved, but that the woman, 51-year-old Elk Valley woman taken to hospital in Revelstoke “to ensure her physical and mental well-being.”

A commercial dive team and town employees pulled the vehicle from the water that day. The investigation continues.
by Kathy Hartman

• “There is a general lack of affordable and available rental housing in the Slocan Valley.” This is one of the conclusions of the Housing Needs Assessment Report commissioned by the RDCK. The assessment also found that housing affordability and suitability in the Slocan Valley differ significantly between renters and homeowners. Almost half of all owners (48%) no longer pay a mortgage, which significantly decreases their monthly housing costs. In contrast, the majority of renters (58%) pay between $500 and $999 per month in housing costs. Over 80% of survey respondents live in detached homes. No survey respondents reported living in apartments, condos or townhomes – demonstrating a need for more diverse housing options. Councillor John Fykes noted that one of the respondents suggested more tiny homes in the area, and said tiny homes “play a role in the SDCK’s 500 Home Community Plan.” CAO Catherine Allaway said the main barrier to creating a tiny home park would be the sewage system. She said if a solution could be found that satisfied a registered waste practitioner, then a tiny home park could be eligible for a building permit.

A copy of the housing needs report as it relates to New Denver and area is available on the Village website or upon request from the Village office. According to New Denver’s 2019 Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program (CARIP) report, the Village produced 26.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2019. The Village remains carbon neutral by purchasing carbon offsets from Darkwoods, an unmanaged wilderness area owned by the Nature Conservancy of Canada, 45 minutes south of Nelson. A copy of the CARIP report is available on the Village’s website or upon request from the Village office.

• Gary Wright, mayor of New Denver from 1989 to 2011, made a presentation on municipal bylaws and infractions witnessed this summer and his opinion on the best way forward. Wright cited infractions such as the use of public bowling yards for the community composting program, illegal steel containers on private property causing a traffic hazard, and illegal camping on private property. Wright felt that going with a shared RDCK bylaw officer was not the best option. “The RDCK issues a ticket that everyone ignores anyway,” said Wright, and court costs rarely cover the cost of the fine. “I feel it’s best to lay the onus on your neighbours to get it resolved,” he said. He jokingly suggested that, as mayoral advisor, he always sent his Chief Administrative Officer down to “catch the flack” from the people breaking the bylaws. Wright’s final comment was: “I wish you luck.”

• The Village of New Denver has agreed to partner with Silverton and Slocan to apply for a $450,000 grant from the FireSmart Community Funding and Supports program. The funding can be used for community-based FireSmart planning and activities that reduce the risk from wildfire. The Village of Silverton will be the lead proponent on this application.

• Council invited to participate in the Wood Stove Exchange Program again this year. The program provides $250-$400 in rebates when residents replace old, inefficient woodstoves with new, efficient, EPA-certified heating appliances. The Village will contribute $100 per stove to the rebate program, for up to five stoves replaced in New Denver. Most years, one or two New Denver residents take advantage of the program.

The Silverton Community gym is being repaired, but will probably not reopen anytime soon because of COVID-19 cleaning protocols. There is no funding currently available for regular cleaning between user groups. That may make it difficult to open Knox Hall as well, according to CAO Catherine Allaway. However, the Reading Centre membership program has continued because the COVID protocols are controlled by only one user group.

• The Village of New Denver’s 2020 Annual Report and 2019 Financial Statements were received for information. Mayor Leonard Casley spoke highly of the office and public works staff in the report. Council staff are able to write an impressive amount of grant applications and were very successful in receiving funding from that hard work. Mayor Leonard Casley also continued to bring much needed revenue, and the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre also remains open. He thanked council staff for “the hard work on the Silvery Slocan Museum…. and the Knox Hall… clean up the public spaces after a very damaging winter, improving maintenance in the parks, the cemetery, and the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre.” Both reports can be found on the Village website or requested from the Village office.

WIDE SPOT

Playing with transformers

My grandson, Noah, is captivated by transformers – those toys whose sentient robots that captivated by transformers – those toys whose sentient robots that transform. We’re incapable of transforming by the provincial health officer. Reason doesn’t tell us how to do this, because reason ‘makes things right’ by placing things in their correct categories: ‘This is good, that’s bad.’ But the wisdom of the heart is infinitely wide. It can hold both deep moral indignation and great compassion. We don’t lose our moral compass by being respectful toward those with whom we disagree, by refusing to apportion blame. Heart-knowing contributes a spacious generosity and calm to the ‘open-loop neural system’ that is our shared moral awareness.

If solutions are possible, they will be found in the wisdom of the heart. So move over, Optimus Prime: human transformers have the real genius about them.

VILLAGE OF NEW DENVER

PUBLIC NOTICES

ARBOUR DAY

In order to reduce open burning and divert organic material from the landfill, the Village of New Denver will once again hold a fall Arbour Day on Tuesday, November 10, 2020 to collect yard waste, branches and leaves that are bundled or bagged and placed curbside. Please ensure that the branches are not more than 3 feet long and bound with string or twine. Collection is free for residents, so please do not affix garbage tags to bags of leaves, garden waste. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact the Village Office.

GARBAGE REMINDER

Municipal garbage collection takes place every Tuesday starting at 8 am for residential properties in New Denver. A reminder that solid waste must be bagged (in a manageable size and weight), tagged and placed in a garbage can before being placed curbside for collection. Please DO NOT include yard waste, recycling, construction materials, hazardous waste, broken glass, or any items that might tear the bag and cause injury to the garbage collector.

OPEN BURNING REGULATIONS

All residents and visitors are reminded that outdoor burning is regulated within the Village of New Denver and permits are required for all outdoor fires except cooking fires. Burning permits for small fires (less than 3 feet high and 5 feet wide) to burn yard and garden debris are available at no cost from the Village Office from September 30 until November 15th. If wind and weather are keeping smoke too close to the ground and affecting your neighbours, please wait for a better day to burn.

PREPARING WITH WINTER SNOWPLOWING

The Village of New Denver reminds residents that snow removal is a priority over the winter months. The Village requests your cooperation in removing items from the lanes, alleys and boulevards so that plowing can be done efficiently and safely.

REC 6 REPRESENTATIVE

The Village is currently seeking a resident to sit on Recreation Commission, which is a representative of the Village of New Denver for 2021. If you are interested in the position, please contact the Village Office.

115 Slocan Avenue  P.O. Box 40  New Denver, BC V0G 1S0  (250) 358-2316  office@newdenver.ca  -  www.newdenver.ca

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Support for your spirit

Bi-weekly book study, bi-weekly services,  Tuesday 8 am meditation, monthly Contemplative in the Kootenays  For information & links, contact descamp@heartswest.com

Turner Zion United Church of Canada is alive and welcomes you online—and in person.
Work progresses on man-made wetland near Burton

by John Bozin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Officials say a project to improve wildlife habitat on the lower Arrow Lakes is already seeing some modest results.

Bird life was spotted nesting on top of one of the mounds, one of the newly created features,” says van Oort, who is the senior environmental co-ordinator. “The ultimate goal of course is to attract a diverse and productive wildlife community. “We could thrive because they’ll plant more of those successful species. The landscape is also being designed so birds won’t be attracted to building nests in low-lying areas. This will prevent egg loss when the lake levels rise.

Human interference is the biggest danger facing the newly created wildlife site may not be flooding, but rather humans recreating at the site. That will be added to the $30,000 secured from the District of Central Kootenay Board of Education, the Arrow Lakes School District and RSTBC. Neufeld referred to the proposed repair as a “bandaid” and said she was hoping for a solution to the sloughing above this section of trail. Neufeld replied that fixing the poor shape of the outfall, install automatic irrigation, restore the infill, renovate the dugouts and install new fencing. Neufeld said the outfall would be complete in time to play ball in June 2021.

Nakusp rail trail repair project contingent on Village licence of occupation

by John Bozin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

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Calling for memories of Slocan Valley schools

submitted
Did you know that Mt. Sentinel once had an extracurricular Calculus Club? Or that the current band room at WE Graham used to be the School District 8 school board office? The 2020-2021 academic year marks the 70th anniversary of both secondary schools in the Slocan Valley. Mt. Sentinel and WE Graham will be celebrating this milestone year, and the school district is looking to the community for stories and tributes to commemorate education in the Slocan Valley since the 1950s. Are you a former or current student, parent, or teacher of one of the valley schools? Did you play team sports, act in a drama production or have a memory of a school competition? If so, please visit www.sd8.bc.ca/slocan-valley-school-memories to share an anecdote or special memory. The school district is looking for photos (both historic and contemporary), stories of celebrated events, multi-generational connections and quotes. Community submissions will be collected for consideration in a special commemorative publication to be released in 2021. If you wish to submit a photo, please email directly to Glen. Campbell@sd8.bc.ca
Nakusp council, October 13: Milk wagon display plans presented

by Jan McMurray

The Centennial Building Committee brought council up to date on plans for the historic milk wagon. The plan is now to restore the wagon, house it in an attractive structure at the community park near the Rail Society’s display, and make it the focal point of a new display highlighting local dairy history.

With $15,000 in funding from Inwood said that with the beach, waterfront walkway, rail display and milk wagon display in the same area, it creates “a bit of an economic sniff” when you put these things out in your community in a professional way.”

A rough estimate of the cost of the milk wagon project, including interpretive signage, would be $20,000. Paula Rogers, library board chair, acknowledged council’s wish for the completion of the Official Community Plan before relocating the wagon. She explained that the Centennial Building Committee would like to relocate the wagon to make way for an open air gazebo in front of the Centennial Building. The gazebo would be a public gathering space and a venue for events, attracting people to the library, museum and archives in the building.

Rogers said the gazebo project is possible because of a large bequest to the library from Betty Walton.

• The Village will submit two applications for funding under the provincial Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program: one for a biomass plant at the arena ($252,000), and the other for the second phase of the breakwater project ($100,000).

• Plans for a project to build a wheelchair ramp with handrail at the entrance into Save On Foods were approved by council. The project will improve safety and accessibility at the entranceway to the store. The estimated cost of $15,950 could come from the Village’s general surplus, but council agreed that it was worth asking Save On for a contribution.

• Council agreed to provide a letter of support to the Nakusp and Area Community Trail Society for a project to replace the Dinner Creek bridge on Peter Ridsdon Trail. The society is applying for a CBT Trail Enhancement Grant for the project.

• An interim report on the Village’s water supply from 9dot Engineering and Aqua Diversities says they have initiated preliminary engineering design work for the installation of a third well and water treatment plant before relocating the wagon.

• The Village has initiated plans for a new display highlighting local dairy history.

• The Centennial Building Committee presented plans for the historic milk wagon display, and make it the focal point of a new display highlighting local dairy history.

Remains of missing man discovered along Arrow Lakes

The body of a Nakusp man who went missing in August 2019 has been found.

RCMP say the remains of Christopher Sanford, who was reported missing in August 2019 has been identified as 35-year-old Christopher Sanford, who was reported as a missing person to the Nakusp RCMP on August 5, 2019. Sanford’s GMC S-15 pickup truck had been located abandoned, in nearby Fauquier, shortly after his disappearance.

An extensive search of the area surrounding the abandoned pickup truck was conducted. The ground search was supported by local Search and Rescue personnel and an RCMP canine team. Boats were utilized to search nearby waterways and an RCMP aircraft was brought in to scour the area from the skies above, but no sign of the man was found.

“Sanford’s family has since been notified of the latest developments in this investigation,” said S/Sgt. Scott Rogers, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.
Considering Development?
Residential, Commercial, Industrial?
In the Village of Nakusp?
Contact Investment Ready Nakusp Today.
James, 250-870-6261, James@InvestmentReadyNakusp.ca, www.InvestmentReadyNakusp.ca

Local food movement gains strength with online marketplace

by Jan McMurray

An online marketplace for local farmers, food producers and specialty food stores in the West Kootenay has been launched at www.ballasters.com.

“Ballasters is a one-stop shop that supports everyone,” says Geoff Austin, co-founder of Ballasters. “It gives people easy access to fresh and sustainable food, keeping grocery money in the community and good food on their tables.”

There are 70 vendors and 185 products so far on the site. Hundreds of people have visited the site, and people are buying, Austin says.

It’s free to sign up as a vendor. The three people behind Ballasters have funded the entire project and will continue to do so until the end of the year. In the new year, Austin says they will charge a 5% commission based on sales to ensure that the business “stands on its own two feet.”

Austin is also co-owner of the Fisherman’s Market, where the idea started. “It’s hard for farmers and fishers to compete with the big companies, so we were trying to find a way to market directly to customers,” Austin said.

“There are hundreds of specialty food producers and vendors in the West Kootenay, so we’ve ended up creating a multi-vendor platform where local small businesses can access big business tools.”

The Ballasters platform provides vendors with links to their social media sites, product control, e-commerce — “everything a vendor needs to run a good business. We will bring the customers to them. All they have to do is run their business,” Austin says.

Over the past year, the three co-founders of the project have been working with vendors to make sure the platform has all the tools they need. “We have programmers who have been working steadily for the last year. We’ve had to learn about every business because every business has different requirements. The platform has the flexibility to customize exactly what they need for their business.”

Customers pay with their credit cards, and each vendor sets up their own shipping options.

Austin says the pandemic “spurred the project into overdrive” with online shopping becoming more and more popular.

“We started promoting it through Facebook and the response from people in the area has been so positive!” he said.

“It’s a 100% positive rating from people. They are saying that this is exactly what we need. We’re hoping we’re really on to something here.”

The site explains where the name “Ballasters” comes from: “The ballaster’s job in days of old was to add or subtract weight called ballast in the bottoms of ships to improve their stability. Today, the online food platform, Ballasters facilitates people purchasing directly from food producers bringing balance back to the local food system.”

To register, visit the website ballasters.com or contact Natalie for help getting set up at natalie@ballasters.com.

COMMUNITY
Nakusp Elementary School annual TRY-athlon

submitted by Katelyn Hughes

On Tuesday, September 29, NES held its annual TRY-athlon.

In this friendly competition, each team is made up of three members: one person bikes through the forest, one jogs around the trailer park, and one runs an obstacle course.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, not many people could help set up the trails and courses, so the grade 7 class took on a lot of the responsibility. They helped set up, and after their teams crossed the finish line, they rushed to look after the younger students.

Grades 4-7 students participated in this event, and everyone was fantastic. In the grades 4-5 cohort, the third place winners were Jayme, Paityn and Elliot. Second place went to Jasper Isla and Kaia. First place rightfully went to Nate, Jonah, Hudson and Brianna with a time of only 10 minutes 54 seconds. What an amazing run!

In the grades 6-7 cohort, third place was won by Sophia Ballard, Holly Hughes, and Katelyn Hughes. Second place, only seven seconds ahead of the third place team, went to London, Hunter and Kate. In first place, faster than any other team in the school, were Kate Watt, Vanessa Sing, Rowan Vibe-Coleman and Gabe Offerman with a stunning time of 10 minutes 31 seconds.

Congratulations to all the teams!
Jan Thomas is the winner of the Kootenay Lake Angler Incentive Program’s September draw for a $1,000 gift certificate.

The program encourages anglers to harvest rainbow and bull trout in the main body of Kootenay Lake and then turn in the heads to local depots. When anglers turn in the heads, they can enter to win the monthly draw, and to win the grand prize of an 18’ Kingfisher boat with a 115 hp Yamaha engine.

Thomas entered the draw at Woodbury Resort, one of four depots on the lake. “We bought a home on the lake four years ago and I heard that the fishing was amazing,” she says. “Our fishing has been successful, but I have noticed that the big fish that I heard about are not there. I am hopeful that the Angler Incentive Program will bring the big fish back and I’m grateful that these types of conservation efforts are in place for future generations.”

The goal of the program is to increase rainbow and bull trout retention from 50% of the fish caught to 90%. The trout are suppressing the survival of the kokanee, the primary food source of these predators. Encouraging anglers to catch and retain Kootenay Lake trout will give the juvenile kokanee a chance to grow.

As the lake begins to cool in the fall, rainbow trout begin to move towards the surface once again and become very active. Experienced anglers know this is the beginning of great fishing at or near the surface waters and it carries on well into the winter months. “The chance of catching a large trout or char especially in the winter months has always made Kootenay Lake famous throughout North America,” said BCWF Past President Harvey Andrusak, a professional fisheries biologist and West Arm Outdoors Club member who is assisting with data analysis and collaboration with local ministry fisheries biologists.

The Kootenay Lake Angler Incentive Program was made possible by a grant from the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF) to the BC Wildlife Federation, and many supporting partners: Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC, Jones Boys Boats, Ultradeck flooring, Kingfisher boats, EZ loader trailers, Yamaha Motors, Scotty Fishing Products, and the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources Operations and Rural Development.
Take an adventurous paddle down the Yukon’s Snake River!

 Adventures on Yukon’s Snake River. Join intrepid Kaslovian Rob McClure for this engaging multimedia presentation featuring stunning slides and intriguing stories about his month-long canoeing and hiking trip along the Snake River in the Mackenzie Mountains, a very remote part of northeastern Yukon. Grizzly bears, alpine flowers and amazing views are featured.

Two show dates and times: Saturday October 24 at 7 pm and Sunday October 25 at 3 pm. Advanced tickets $5-$15 at Sunnyside Naturals or Willow Home Gallery in Kaslo – 22 seats/show. COVID protocols will be in place. Approximately one-hour show. No intermission/concession.

www.thelangham.ca
New program helps Kootenay businesses enter and expand into the digital economy

Small- and medium-sized businesses in the Kootenays do not need to navigate the digital world alone, thanks to a new program that launched today by the Kootenay Association for Science and Technology (KAST).

In response to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, KAST, in partnership with Innovate BC and Western Economic Diversification, is pleased to introduce the new Digital Economy Resilience (DER3) program. This service is designed to help small- to medium-sized businesses, in any sector, adapt to these new circumstances and enter or expand into the digital economy. Best of all — there’s no cost or obligation.

DER3 will help Kootenay businesses shift their business approach to be more profitable, expand into new markets or opportunities and respond to new challenges associated with COVID-19. DER3 will provide personalized advisory services, coaching and when required, also match businesses with Kootenay tech consultants and digital service providers who can deliver contracted solutions.

“We recognize that these are challenging times for many businesses in our region. Adapting to the changing economy by encouraging the adoption of digital tools and platforms is a clear opportunity for our businesses to recover, but many businesses either don’t know where to start or need help finding the right solution,” says Kailyn Skuban, KAST’s Director of Operations and Programs. “DER3 is really about connecting with clients, meeting them where they’re at on their digital journey, and working collaboratively with our experienced advisory team to find the best path forward for their business.”

KAST’s DER3 advisory team will assess the digital needs of businesses; recommend technology tools and solutions that will save businesses time, money and energy; create a technology action plan so businesses can implement new technologies; connect businesses with local digital service providers to deliver contracted solutions; provide guidance, tools and best practices for digital transformation.

In accordance with its mission to create local jobs and stimulate the local economy, KAST recently hired four new contractors to help deliver DER3 to the Kootenay region. The program will also result in an increase of work for Kootenay digital service providers, consultants and subject matter experts.

“KAST has always supported the region’s tech entrepreneurs, startups and businesses and now we’re thrilled to support our region’s non-tech businesses through the DER3 program,” says KAST’s new executive director, Sean Smillie. "DER3 is one of many programs offered at KAST. Our Kootenay Pitch Competition, Venture Acceleration Program, Tech Resiliency Program, GLOWs youth program and the Nelson Innovation Centre all serve to support our communities, drive economic growth, create jobs and foster resiliency in the Kootenays.” To register for this no-cost, no obligation program, visit www.kast.com/der3 or email der3@kast.com.

This program also needs digital service providers and subject matter experts in the Kootenays. If you provide online services to help others enter or expand in the digital economy or have experience or expertise in relevant areas, KAST is also looking for you to apply to be part of the program.

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**THE SLOCAN VALLEY HAS AN ECLECTIC NETWORK OF RETAILERS, ARTISANS & EATERS TO DISCOVER.**

**SHOW YOUR SUPPORT AND SHOP LOCAL!**

FIND OUT MORE AT THE NEW SLOCANVALLEY.COM - WHERE VISITORS GET INSPIRED, LOCALS CONNECT WITH THEIR COMMUNITY AND BUSINESSES FIND SUPPORT.

**SLOCAN VALLEY BUSINESS OWNERS - Check out the website’s Valley Directory and input or update your business listing!**

Brought to you by the Slocan Valley Economic Development Partnership.
The Valley Voice

SMALL BUSINESS MONTH

The Impact of Rural Living on the Labour Force

Submitted

How does rural living impact the labour force? The Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (RDI) recently completed community profiles for each of the electoral areas in the Columbia Basin-Boundary region, including data related to the labour force.

This research shows that most rural areas in the Columbia Basin-Boundary region have a higher percentage of self-employed workers than the provincial average of 14%. The same is true for the percentage of people working from home. Most electoral areas in the Columbia Basin-Boundary region are above the provincial average of 8.3%. Kootenay Boundary Electoral Area E is the highest with 35.5% of the employed population working from home. Central Kootenay H (Slocan Valley) is second highest at 32%. D (North Kootenay Lake) is seventh at 26% and K (Arrow Lakes Valley) is tenth at 22%.

Local Credit Unions Bring Small Business Gift Certificate Program to the Region

Submitted

The Slocan Valley Chamber works on video project to attract new residents, businesses needed. Many business opportunities are available within the valley, either through new ventures or through acquisition of existing businesses. Over the course of the four seasons, approximately 12 business owners will be interviewed about what they love about life in the valley, and also what businesses they feel would be a welcome addition. These cameos will then be included within an introductory video presented on the Chamber’s website: www.slocanvalleychamber.com.

The Chamber is very excited about this project – an opportunity to promote the villages and communities within the area, to encourage new businesses, and to share why we think Slocan Valley is a wonderful place to live, to raise a family and to operate a business. This project is being funded by a provincial Rural Dividend grant.

Businesses wishing to participate in the program can visit www.supportlocalbc.com/pages/support-your-business to get started. Gift certificates are available in $10, $25, $50 and $100 denominations. Anyone wishing to make a purchase can do so anytime by visiting https://supportlocalbc.com/

The labour force is also affected by population demographics. Labour shortages are an issue across Canada, in large part due to the baby boomer generation beginning to age out of the workforce. This is true for all of the electoral areas in this region as well. Each community profile contains a labour force replacement rate, an estimate of the number of people who will be entering versus leaving the workforce in the next 15 years.

The Labour force is also affected by population demographics. Labour shortages are an issue across Canada, in large part due to the baby boomer generation beginning to age out of the workforce. This is true for all of the electoral areas in this region as well. Each community profile contains a labour force replacement rate, an estimate of the number of people who will be entering versus leaving the workforce in the next 15 years.

Data from each community varies slightly, but all electoral areas in the Columbia Basin-Boundary region have a labour force replacement rate of less than 1%, indicating that the size of the current labour force is unlikely to be maintained solely with local replacement workers.

Rural areas experience unique challenges and opportunities—the labour force is just one element. The RDI’s series of Community Profiles is intended to share area-specific data with local governments and other organizations to help build a better understanding of local conditions and trends to assist in making evidence-based planning and management decisions. These reports may also be useful for supporting communications with current residents, prospective residents, and for business and workforce attraction. The community profiles contain a wide variety of data related to demographics, infrastructure, housing, income, education, civic engagement, businesses, local government and environment.

Community profiles are part of the State of the Basin Initiative. To find out more visit: cbri.ca/Research/State-of-the-Basin.
North Kootenay Lake to build a thriving economy in the face of the pandemic

submitted

Resilient. Self-Reliant. Thriving. These are some of the keywords that were highlighted time and again as the Kaslo and Area D Economic Development Commission rolled up their sleeves and dug into the fabric of what makes North Kootenay Lake the fantastic place so many remarkable people call home. In September 2019, the commission launched a Rural Revitalization Program to build an economic development strategy for North Kootenay Lake.

As the commission began engaging with community and business leaders, the world was hit with the pandemic and the momentum shifted to recovery and support tactics. This didn’t slow the momentum, and the momentum shifted to recovery and the Kaslo and Area D Economic Development Commission. Highlighted time and again as the Kaslo and Area D Economic Development Commission. The strategic planning project continued to hold all the planned milestones along with additional priorities, including sector roundtables and recovery plans. In doing so, the commission forged excellent relationships with the businesses and non-profits that make our communities the best places to live. Recently, an economic visioning session was facilitated to engage a broad range of community leaders in the development of a high-level strategy for the local economy, bringing to the forefront the goals, aspirations and values at the heart of North Kootenay Lake. The next step is to crystallize a strategy to bring a resilient, self-reliant and thriving vision to life for years to come.

Through all of this, one thing has become clear: what makes North Kootenay Lake special is the people. During this year’s Small Business Week, we take our hats off to the entrepreneurs and business leaders that have made North Kootenay Lake a wonderful place to live, work and play. Their hard work and dedication to serving our community through unprecedented challenges have been critical to the health and well-being of residents and the community as a whole. Let’s show our local businesses how much they mean to us, by shopping local this week, next week, and every week after. That is how we can work together to build a resilient, self-reliant and thriving local economy. Happy Small Business Week, from the Kaslo and Area D Economic Development Commission.

Kaslo and Area D Chamber of Commerce

Nakusp tourism plan to be completed by spring

by Jan McMurray

The Nakusp and Area Development Board (NADB) has hired local residents Mike Riediger and Melissa Johnson to produce a destination management plan for Nakusp. The plan will be completed by spring 2021.

“Recognizing that tourism is one of the major economic drivers of the area, the NADB decided to apply for CBT Community Initiatives funding this year to create a position to help with tourism planning,” said Riediger.

Riediger says the first step will be to engage with the committee that is overseeing the project. The committee will have representation from the NADB, Nakusp and District Chamber of Commerce and the Village of Nakusp.

“We want to get everyone talking and get everyone on the same page for marketing destination development,” Riediger said.

He added that the project includes some social media marketing and one-on-one learning opportunities for businesses.

Riediger says he will be meeting with the executive director of the Arrow Slocan Tourism Association (ASTA) soon to discuss collaboration. “ASTA and our project have the same goals, so we’ll discuss how we can bring our resources together,” Riediger said.

“Being on the ground here, we may be able to deliver some things that ASTA doesn’t have the capacity for right now.”

The NADB applied for $30,000 from the CBT Community Initiatives Program, and received $15,000. Riediger says they can manage with this budget. “With COVID, we won’t be spending as much on travel and networking as we originally planned,” he said. “Some of the peripheral deliverables won’t happen, but the important ones will get done.”

Feedback wanted on Lardeau Valley community development ideas

by Wendy Booth

The Lardeau Valley, situated on the north end of Kootenay Lake, is comprised of a number of small communities, including Lardeau, Argenta, Cooper Creek, Howser, Meadow Creek, Johnson’s Landing, Duncan Dam Estates and Hamill Creek. In 1966, Duncan Dam was built as part of the Columbia River Treaty, destroying homes, businesses and valuable ecological land. The forestry sector has seen a drastic decline in recent years. The area experiences hydro outages due to its remoteness, and cell coverage is limited. These factors have contributed to a loss in population and a mean income for the area that is $10,000 less than the provincial average. However, the residents of the region are resilient.

Columbia Basin Trust is supporting this project in response to a request from the region for assistance with undertaking this process. The outcomes of the project belong to the community and will serve as a road map for the region.

There has already been action on some ideas. Hydropower continues to be a challenge and has surfaced as a foundational piece to the future of the area. The result is the ongoing work of the Lardeau Valley hydro stability feasibility. Columbia River Consulting will submit the final report on the project in early 2021.

Wendy Booth is a former elected official in the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK). She has extensive experience in community development, board governance and strategic planning. She has a keen passion for community development and working with communities throughout the region. She has the ability to listen intently, understanding that a problem well defined is easier to solve. Her knowledge of working with different sized and geographically located communities enables her to be creative and realistic in providing direction.
Optimize your operations with a business strategy that includes technology
submitted
The Basin Business Advisor Program (BBA) is now offering business advisement services around adopting technology such as ecommerce, digital marketing and implementing technology for best business processes.

“It is easy to get overwhelmed by all the possibilities and not know where to start,” says Alison Bjorkman, Basin Business Advisor Program Manager. “Together, we can assess your best course of action and guide you as you implement it. We help you create a clear technology strategy that supports your business, not only to weather the storms, but also to remain competitive and positioned to capitalize on opportunities.”

Consumer behaviour changes, supply chain stresses, the ongoing effects of the pandemic all point to online activity being a key component of remaining viable. Being visible and effective online is one aspect to future-proofing your business. Future-proofing your business is about anticipating the future and developing methods and strategies to minimize the effects of stress, like a pandemic.

When considering future-proofing, the advisors look at the whole picture of your business — what resources you have, what industry you are in, where you’ve been and where you want to go.

“When we suggest online activity, we could be talking about improving the visibility of your business, using digital marketing effectively to drive sales, having a making of making sales online that are local or more widespread. There is not one solution for all, and we will speak directly to your situation,” adds Bjorkman.

As the pandemic continues, business must adapt to a new reality of the business landscape. BBA offers you strategies to help you transform and prepare your business, so you don’t have to go it alone.

During the pandemic, the advisors supported hundreds of businesses navigate government supports, consult loan options, pivot to new markets and resources you have, what industry you are in, how you can remodel now for a competitive future.

The Building Resilience to Thrive program, supported by Western Economic Diversification Canada, will focus on the three key themes of Strive, Build, and Create. The curriculum will help SMEs be the best they can be, build a strong team, and create value with their customers. Weekly seminars will be supplemented by facilitiated Resiliency Roundtables to bring local SMEs together in smaller groups online and offline to anchor and support the curriculum.

“We are excited to share the leadership knowledge and tools as well as build the emotional resilience to overcome the current unprecedented economic and socio-demographic challenges,” says Dr. Mark Colgate, Professor of Service Excellence at UVic’s Gustavson School of Business.

The six-week program will be offered to businesses, helping to mitigate the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic by teaching them how to adapt their business models, re-engage customers, and adjust workplace cultures.

“We are eager and excited to get this program off the ground at a pivotal stage in this pandemic,” says Dan Baxter, BC Chamber Director of Policy Development, Government & Stakeholder Relations. “Building Resilience to Thrive will equip SMEs with the tools needed to strive, build, and create in their COVID-19 recovery effort, and support them as they remodel now for a competitive future.”

The program was born out of a recent survey conducted by the BC Chamber of Commerce and C19 Task Force. The Chamber Check-In Survey identified that 59% of Chambers in the network ranked a grant-related function or service focused on COVID-19 recovery as the best help their organization could receive to stay viable through the regional Chamber for serving SMEs in BC.

The program offers no cost business advisement and agriculture business advisement services in the Columbia Basin. Local advisors have supported over 2,000 businesses to assess resources, cash flow, human resource issues, growth plans, marketing plans, and so much more. The local advisors are also connected to several organizations offering support to the business community. Learn more and hear how the BBA Program has helped businesses at www.bbaprogram.ca.

Funded by Columbia Basin Trust, the BBA program is administered and managed by Community Futures Central Kootenay. Delivery of the program is done in partnership with other Community Futures offices in the Basin.

BC Chamber Network launches ‘Building Resilience to Thrive’ Program

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The Valley Voice
October 22, 2020

October 22, 2020   The Valley Voice
Slocan council, October 13: CAO to look into feasibility of reopening Fitness Centre

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

• A request to reopen the Fitness Centre for use by Slocan firefighters prompted the only extended discussion of the evening. Firefighters said they need to be in top form to do their work, and the closure of the gym due to the pandemic has made that harder. They asked that they be granted access to the facility, promising to adhere to strict COVID-19 protocols.

While sympathetic to the suggestion, councillors felt the idea of letting a handful of the centre’s 900 members use the facility didn’t seem right.

“It feels odd to open only to one group of people,” said Councillor Madeleine Perriere. “We have people in Slocan who are on the committee, who are committed to the facility and are waiting for it to reopen… I suggest we don’t limit it.”

But council did do that remains the sticking point. The CAO was tasked with approaching the local Recreation Commission to take another look at the centre, and to see if enough community volunteers could be gathered to reopen the facility according to provincial regulations.

In September, council asked Telus to take down some community banners that have been hanging from their poles on Harold Street. After five years in the weather, the art banners were pretty beaten up. But on hearing of this, the WE Graham Community Service Society Youth Network Council made a proposal: they have some money, and can engage local youth to create new banners. Council jumped on the offer, and approved a project with the theme ‘what Slocans are thankful for’– the upcoming 120th anniversary of Slocan. Telus said when the new banners are ready, they’ll help install them.

“Slocan’s skateboard park is getting an upgrade. Council voted to contribute $2,800 to the WE Graham Community Service Society’s application to build an extension to the park. The extension would ‘make the park more accessible to all skill levels. It would also provide a space to practice a variety of other roller sports including a practice space for rollerblading, biking, and scootering,’” said a report to council. With the money from council, the RDCK and its own funds, the WECSSC will go to the Columbia Basin Trust for $17,000 to start the job.

• Council is hoping it has put an end to problem camping with a new bylaw limiting where recreational campers can set up within village boundaries. Councillors passed its new camping bylaw at the meeting, allowing any camping to designated areas within the village boundaries (that means the Springer Creek Campground).

“The impacts of camping at unsanctioned public areas result in an increase in wildlife and animal attractants, wildlife risk, and waste management impacts including the improper disposal of human waste and garbage,” a report to council reads.

But without a bylaw in place, there was little civic officials or police could do to force campers to move. Now, however, campers that are unwilling to relocate to an authorized camping area could be fined up to $10,000, or could be towed. The bylaw passed unanimously.

• The Village is going to continue to partner with New Denver and Silverton in making the community a little safer from wildfires. Council approved a plan for an application for provincial funding of $450,000 for the three Villages. If successful, Slocan’s share would be just over $140,000. Next year’s work includes building community awareness of wildfire danger through information campaigns, cleaning and weeding work to reduce potential wildfire flashpoints, and building local inter-agency cooperation in emergencies. It’s the third year the three communities will have worked together to Firestart the area. The project is managed by the Village of Silverton.

COVID-19 support program brings faster internet to rural communities

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Residents of the West Kootenay are enjoying faster internet service these days thanks to support from the Province to improve their connectivity.

Business and non-profit internet service providers in the Slocan and Arrow Lakes Valleys received money from the Connecting British Columbia program in April, as part of the province’s COVID-19 response. The providers were able to apply for grants of up to 90% of their system improvement costs, to a total of $500,000.

Columbia Wireless, based out of Nelson, received about $35,500 from the program. “We decided to upgrade some key locations and transport points which allowed us to bring faster packages and also introduce our very first unlimited data package with up to 30Mbps transfer speeds to the whole existing network coverage area,” says Ben Leslie, CEO.

In Burton, the local community Internet Society got $3,000; Edgewater Community Internet received $42,800; and the Trout Lake Internet Society about $9,800, says the Northern Development Initiative Trust, the organization responsible for administering the Connecting British Columbia Program.

Like Leslie’s company, the other ISPs used the money for equipment upgrades to electronics, antennas and other equipment that directly supports and enhances capacity, performance or the range of the network. The Province says its COVID-19 response intake was a success, with 47 projects approved for grants of up to 90% of their costs. Province to improve their connectivity.

“We are receiving many positive responses from people actively working from home,” says Columbia Wireless CEO Ben Leslie. “Families with students are benefiting from the increased speeds for taking online classes and working from home for homework assignments.”

Columbia Wireless and Cordwood are offering an extra $2,800 to the WE Graham Community Service Society for improving the Village of Slocan’s internet service this fall.

Leah Main, Silverton councillor and RDCK Director, has been re-elected as a board member of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to serve on its national board of directors. As the national voice of local governments, FCM is playing a critical role in supporting cities and communities through the COVID-19 pandemic—while advocating for federal funding to improve internet connectivity.

“Just like here in the Kootenays, frontline local governments across the country are working hard to keep people safe through this pandemic,” said Main. “FCM’s advocacy has helped secure the federal support we’ve needed to protect essential services, families and local businesses. As the pandemic progresses, and as we gear up for Canada’s recovery, we need municipal voices from every corner of our country to be heard at the federal level. As an FCM board member, I’ll be working hard to keep our local priorities front and centre.”

Main is among the elections concluded on October 15 at its first-ever virtual annual general meeting, attended by local leaders nationwide. In addition to Main’s re-election as their president for 2020-2021, he succeeds Halifax Regional Municipality Councillor Bill Karsen, as he completes his term and moves to the role of past president.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) is the national voice of local government, with nearly 2,000 members representing more than 90% of Canada’s municipalities.
Kaslo council, October 13: Millions in projects planned, or underway

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Kaslo City Hall is a hub of activity these days, with more than a million dollars’ worth of projects underway, and more than $5 million in the planning stages.

From the $304,000 Kaslo River Dike to $300,000 for restoration of the Kemp Creek Water Intake to the half-million dollar Fort St. Park development, contractors and engineers are busy designing, building or repairing infrastructure all across town.

Then there’s the really big stuff.

Library fees

Council made a major commitment to the new library project. The building, which will cost $3-3.7 million, will be located on an empty lot downtown, on Front Street. In real terms, however, only $1 of that cost is covered by the federal funding program application. The Village had to commit to support the project for the other $2 of that project cost to cover the library. The project could be on the hook if the library’s funding committee falls short on gathering the other $1-million-plus needed.

The application is being submitted to the Invest Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP).

Sewer expansion

Council deferred making a decision on a second ICIP grant, for upgrades to the sewer system. That project could cost anywhere from $2-5 million, depending on how much of the project cost the Village wants to take on, and how much the higher governments will cover. The project will include renovations at the wastewater treatment plant and extension of the sewer main to a portion of Lower Kaslo. The Village’s engineering consultant has been working on a technical brief to a portion of Lower Kaslo. The Village’s engineering consultant has been working on a technical brief to a portion of Lower Kaslo. The Village’s engineering consultant has been working on a technical brief to a portion of Lower Kaslo. The Village’s engineering consultant has been working on a technical brief to a portion of Lower Kaslo. The Village’s engineering consultant has been working on a technical brief to a portion of Lower Kaslo. The Village’s engineering consultant has been working on a technical brief to a portion of Lower Kaslo.

Village land behind the Kemball and expansion in Kaslo. With the $3.5 million sewer expansion project being considered, the committee members would review the submitted plans and help prepare for a formal application and consultation on the expansion in anticipation of successful grant funding.

“By this committee is to provide further sewer light fixtures were switched from high-pressure sodium to LED earlier this year, which resulted in a 70% reduction in power consumption,” CAO Ian Dunlop told council in a report.

“Higher governments will cover. The Village wants to take on, and how much the project cost the Village will commit to support the project for many of families and children we can serve. The failure of the application rejection, Periwinkle does plan to go ahead with some improvements to its 100-year-old building. Reeg-Smith says they will add a new cubby room to the space, using about $53,000 they have socked away from other funding sources. They also plan to expand its outdoor play space with some of that money.

“Just be happy you are comfortable to offer care to 16 children per day, and since many families in our community request part-time, rather than full-time care, this would allow us to accommodate a considerable increase in the number of families and children we can serve,” the soon-to-be new daycare in a letter looking for support for the scaled-down improvements.

Reeg-Smith says Periwinkle would be happy to come up with the best options for getting work done with the money they have. They hope to have improvements completed by September 2021.

Kaslo daycare’s expansion plans fail to meet funder’s test

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The head of Kaslo’s daycare facility says they’re disappointed not to have received funding from the Provincial government to replace fixtures with flat lamps where glare and glint are concerns.”

Periwinkle could not provide space for infants or school-age children, even with the expansion. That would likely take a whole new facility, and another group to rent it, says Reeg-Smith. A report commissioned by Periwinkle would find the community needed at least 125 spaces to meet growing demand for childcare. The failure of the application is a blow to the community on many levels, says Reeg-Smith.

“Just means long wait lists, and people not being able to get the child care they need,” she says. “And of course that trickles down to families being able to work, and from there it goes down to the economy. So it hits Kaslo quite strongly.”

It also makes it harder for the daycare to attract staff – they were hiring a larger central area would mean hiring new child care workers, and building up capacity for the service.

Despite the application’s rejection, Periwinkle does plan to go ahead with some improvements to its 100-year-old building. Reeg-Smith says they will add a new cubby room to the space, using about $53,000 they have socked away from other funding sources. They also plan to expand its outdoor play space with some of that money.

“The would ideally allow us to comfortably offer care to 16 children per day, and since many families in our community request part-time, rather than full-time care, this would allow us to accommodate a considerable increase in the number of families and children we can serve,” the soon-to-be new daycare in a letter looking for support for the scaled-down improvements.

Reeg-Smith says Periwinkle would be happy to come up with the best options for getting work done with the money they have. They hope to have improvements completed by September 2021.

VILLAGE OF KASLO INTENTION TO LEASE PROPERTY

It is the intention of the Village of Kaslo to lease a portion of land known as Lot 22 Plan 9499 District Lot 209A and improvements thereon, at 517 Arena Avenue, to the Kaslo & District Arena Association for a 10-year term beginning 1 September 2020 for a lease cost in the first year of $1,127.22, with annual increases of 2% in each year of the term thereafter, for the purpose of operating an arena. For further information, contact the Village office, 413 Fourth Street, Kaslo, BC at (250) 353-2311 or visit the Village’s website. If you have any questions regarding this proposal, please contact the Village office.

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The Valley Voice, October 22, 2020

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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The Valley Voice
The Horse Association of Central Kootenay held the Youth Polish Shine & Show horse clinic September 25 and 27 at the horse grounds in Slocan.

It was social distancing at its best, and participants had so much fun finally being able to get out for a horse event. A spectacular weekend it was! Twenty Kootenay youths were guided by this year’s knowledgeable instructors. Jacki Smolinski rocking the riding. Joy and Mona Ferguson made a tremendous team mastering Mountain Trail. Anne Gibbons gave a wonderful weeds and feeds lesson. Sherilammare Sanders beautifully covered the blanketing, and Shannon Hicks shared a recipe for trendy treats for your trusty steed. Carla Card went above and beyond to ensure everyone’s health and safety.

So much knowledge was gained, and friendships built, both familiar and new.

Pilar Portela has been appointed to the board of the Women’s Enterprise Centre.

Women’s Enterprise Centre welcomes Kaslo resident to board of directors submitted

Pilar Portela is the president and CEO of Astra Smart Systems and 4C Innovation. She has over 20 years of experience in enterprise business applications, technology startups and economic development and is focused on helping start-ups and minorities in rural areas thrive and grow as part of her larger vision of global rural economic development.

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The Silverton Community Club has chosen Kathy Provan for Citizen of the Year 2019. Kathy has been a dedicated volunteer with Friends of the Memorial Hall, Communities in Bloom, the July 1st Celebrations, and the Silverton Community Club. Congratulations Kathy!

Mail-in ballots could delay election results

by Jan McMurray

The results of the upcoming BC election on October 24 may not be known on voting day because of the huge number of mail-in ballots this time around.

Mail-in ballots are not counted on election night, but rather in the final count two weeks later. With about 700,000 mail-in ballots requested by voters in this election, there could be enough mail-in votes to change election night results – at least in some ridings.

In the last BC election, there were only about 6,500 mail-in ballots to count.

Andrew Watson of Elections BC explained that on election night, votes cast that day and in the advance polls are counted. Then there is a 13-day preparatory period where mail-in ballots are sent to the voter’s electoral district, where they go through integrity checks to make sure that multiple voting did not occur.

Voters can send their mail-in ballots to Victoria or hand deliver them to any returning office or polling station, so the ballots must make their way back to the voter’s district during the 13-day period.

After the 13-day preparatory period, the final count takes place.

Watson says the final count usually takes two to three days.

“In this case, both those time periods could take longer,” Watson said. “We want to do that as fast as we can, but we have to see how many mail-ins we get and how fast our teams are able to process them. We’ve never done this before. The main focus is accuracy and that the requirements under law are being met.”

Watson says extra people will be hired to count the mail-in ballots but he doesn’t know how many. “We’ve told officials to make sure they have the number of people they need. Some districts will have a lot of mail-in ballots and some not so many.”

Watson also said that the physical distancing rules at polling stations may mean less staff and scrutineers than usual in some locations. “We’ve tried to find spaces that accommodate the usual number of people, but there are capacity limits depending on the space available. The returning officers are sorting this out, and arranging opportunities for observation and scrutineering.”

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