SD 10 superintendent Terry Taylor announces her retirement

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

After nearly four decades helping students in the Arrow Lakes area learn, Terry Taylor is calling it quits.

The School District 10 superintendent announced her retirement at the board of education meeting on December 8. Her last day of work will be July 31, 2021.

“It has been the most incredible learning journey and privilege to work alongside such inspiring students, teacher and support staff colleagues, district leadership teams, the board of education, parents and community members in the most amazing little school district ever,” she said at the meeting.

The news came as a surprise to many people, as Taylor has been a mainstay in the organization since the 1980s. But speaking with the Valley Voice a few days later, Taylor said she just felt it was time to go.

“I’ve had a really amazing career here, where I feel I have been able to contribute what I can to make a difference to kids and the community, which has always been my foremost driving mission and desire.”

She says there was no specific event or decision that made her pull the plug – just a feeling the work was becoming too much.

“The job is an incredibly rewarding position, but it’s also a position that involves long hours. My slow days might be a 12-hour day; 18-hour days are not uncommon,” she said, adding that her friends and family are looking forward to seeing more of her. “So it’s about being able to have weekends. To have a more balanced kind of life. That’s tempting at this stage in my life.”

Taylor has served as teacher, counsellor, principal, district principal, and superintendent/secretary-treasurer of the district in her decades of service.

Most recently she guided the district through the COVID-19 pandemic, shepherding the set-up of remote learning and other alternative teaching arrangements for the region’s roughly 520 students. She also spearheaded the successful campaigns to get the Province and the Columbia Basin Trust to fund child care centres at Lucerne School in New Denver and at Nakusp Elementary School. The New Denver project is completed, and the Nakusp project should be completed by 2022.

She says she feels she’s leaving the district in good form.

“We have amazing teams in the district; we have fantastic teachers; enrolment is increasing – so we’re in a really good place,” she says. “The hard work of everyone in this entire community of learning has got us in a place where it’s okay for me to step away now.”

Still, she says she’s now coming to terms with her decision.

“I have never been actually ready to retire before this moment,” she says. “I never really planned it. I kind of knew it was going to be in the next few years. It just kind of came together, a couple of opportunities presented themselves for the next piece in my life, so I just kind of thought ‘this is the right time.’”

But just because she’s leaving the district doesn’t mean she’s ending her career as an educator.

“I’m really excited about the future, not only for the district but for some of the opportunities that are coming my way,” she said. “There’s still seven months of work to do to make the district the best it can be, and I remain committed to that to the very last day.

“It’s also exciting to think about having another chapter in my life.”

Taylor will be supporting the board in its hunt for her replacement in the coming months.

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Zincton proponent reaches out to Kaslo council

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The developer behind the Zincton ski resort proposal between New Denver and Kaslo met with Kaslo Village council last week to talk about the project.

David Harley said he was making a ‘good neighbour’ visit to talk about Zincton, now in the earliest stages of the approval process. He said his visit was informal, and he was speaking as a local person trying to create economic and recreational opportunities for the area and its youth.

His message throughout the 15-minute presentation at the December 8 council meeting was consistent: Zincton will not be a business-as-usual ski resort.

“The ski industry is an old industry, from the 1950s and 1960s, and it hasn’t changed very much except becoming increasingly commercialized,” he said. “Our philosophy is to try to turn to a much quieter, much more rural and much less urban experience, and try to step away from the impact, congestion, exclusion and carbon that comes with intensive development.”

Instead, Harley says, Zincton is from its bones built with the environment in mind. “The Zincton village footprint is about 70 acres – 1/5 the size of New Denver, 1/10 the size of Kaslo,” he said. “It’s tiny, and the brand new infrastructure means all impacts will be exceptionally low.”

In terms of energy use, Harley told council Zincton will be ‘climate neutral.’ He noted they have access to ‘green energy’ in the form of the run-of-river hydro plant in Sandon, and they plan to install solar panels on some buildings.

“Zincton will be powered by sunshine and gravity, climate neutral from opening day forward,” he said. The provincial government recently released its report on public feedback to the preliminary proposal, made last spring. It received more than 3,000 comments from the public (see story elsewhere in this issue). In his presentation, Harley addressed some of the concerns raised in that report, including environmental impact, safety, and freedom of access.

Besides green power generation, he noted that sewage waste was going to be treated in high tech “modular bio-reactors,” claiming Zincton will have “vastly lower waste impact than anywhere in BC.”

For those concerned about humans impacting the ecosystem with their presence, he noted that Zincton was, unlike the doomed Jumbo project to the east, hardly untouched wilderness.

“Much of this tenure near Retallack is best described as an “unmediated mining district” with toxic water, open mining shafts, and lead/arsenic contamination,” his presentation said. “It was mined for close to 90 years before cleanup was ever considered.”

Even after mining closed, the site that will contain the main village operated as a sawing station for local loggers. And he also noted that logging continues near the property, and would “impact this area far more than backcountry skiers ever could.”

Instead, the resort plans to actually keep people away from what remains of the best wildlife habitat in the area.

“Our summer exclusion zone removes all Zincton-related commercial activity from huckleberry montane zones, alpine meadows, and the wildlife corridors area,” he said. “Our bike trails will be low-elevation rail trail or wagon road links to the villages and surrounding valleys.”

As for economic impact, he reiterated the resort would create up to 150 jobs for locals during construction and many high-paying ones for skilled operators after it’s built. Other low-paying jobs would provide entry-level experience for youth.

“Roughly half the on-hill jobs will be high-value jobs including marketing, mountain safety and guides, product design, millwright, heavy equipment operators, maintenance,” he said in the presentation.

As for people concerned about losing access to the popular backcountry areas that are now free to use, Harley said Zincton will allow local walk-in users in the area to continue to access the backcountry zone for free. He noted they have even offered ski passes for frequent users.

He countered concerns about increased safety pressures on local emergency crews and health facilities.

“Zincton will initiate safety hubs and heli-evac pads, avalanche mitigation, and safety protocols,” his presentation noted. “This area will become a much safer place to backcountry than it ever was before.”

Ultimately, it’s about the skiing, and Harley pointed out locals who love the slopes will benefit greatly from Zincton’s presence.

“We want to provide opportunities for young local families to enjoy a lifetime of skiing without the four-hour return drive in the dark on winter roads to other regional ski areas,” he told council.

“It’s a deliberate attempt to be a departure from the status quo, and it’s something we hope West Kootenayites can be proud of.”

Harley didn’t ask council for a letter of support for the project – something the Village declined to do last spring when the project was first unveiled. Council received his materials for information.

Sending you all warm wishes of health and happiness through the holidays and into the New Year!

Thanks for all your support.

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Feedback shows wide range of concerns about Zincton ski resort proposal

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

A proposal to build a ski resort in the backcountry between New Denver and Kaslo has generated more than 3,000 comments from the public, a new government report says.

The provincial government’s Mountain Resorts Branch (MRB) has released its “What We Heard” document, summarizing the comments, concerns, questions and suggestions received on the Zincton Ski Resort project, first announced last spring.

The comments were made during the month-long public feedback period on the ski resort project, and compiled by the Zincton Project Review Team in the MRB, a department of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

“The input received will ensure that all values and expressed interests are considered in project planning, process review steps and decision-making,” says a summary from the MRB.

The department says it received 3,392 letters, emails, and phone calls during the comment period last May-June.

The comments are wide ranging, covering issues such as economic development, wildlife, water, public access to lands, and the dangers presented by abandoned mines in the area.

The MRB does not indicate how many letters received were for, against, or neutral on the project.

Some respondents said they regard the proposal as balanced, and feel the project takes into consideration sustainability of the area and environment while providing the opportunity to enhance or improve social and economic conditions locally and in the region.

However, the MRB said others felt that the “proposed project development area is too large,” “will result in environmental degradation” and asked questions on the need for the project and market saturation. “The area should be left for locals and free of motorized public access to backcountry,” says one of the comments in the report.

Public access concerns

MRB notes in the report that the area surrounding Highway 31A between New Denver and Kaslo has been experiencing steady growth in public and commercial, motorized and non-motorized recreational activities.

Some people were in favour of more accessibility to the area, noting that the lift access proposed at Zincton would allow more people to enjoy backcountry recreation.

However, the MRB says “many” respondents expressed concern with the possibility of “losing” access to land that is currently regarded as an area with easy and free public access to backcountry recreation (skiing, mountain biking, hiking, snowmobiling), specifically, for London and Whiteman Ridge.

Impacts on local community and economy

The report says MRB heard from some people that the area and region is going through a period of economic and social transition which will see the tourism sector play a much larger role in diversifying the region’s economy.

Some people felt the Zincton project could play a beneficial role in this transition, bringing employment opportunities, new businesses, and more visitors to the region.

However, others felt that only a few people would benefit financially from the project, while the general public would get low-wage jobs, and have to put up with greater strains on resources.

“The proposed development will put additional pressure on already scarce resources and services (e.g., it will create housing crisis, grocery and gas shortages due to influx of visitors),” was one comment.

Commenters also raised issues like the probable increase of human-wildlife encounters, an increase in traffic accidents, more work for search and rescue and other emergency services, and protection of drinking water.

More study called for

The MRB says people wanted environmental concerns addressed through an environmental assessment, detailed species surveys, and a wildlife management plan.

There were also a wide variety of safety concerns, including the area’s frequent avalanches, abandoned mine shafts, and increased possibility of human-caused wildfires.

“We also heard, due to heightened tourism sector interests expressed through multiple applications for land use in the Highway 31A corridor, that cumulative effects/land use planning should be a part of the planning and permitting process and considered in decision making,” MRB says in the report.

Next steps

The final decision on Zincton may not come for quite some time. MRB will now determine the feasibility of the project based on all comments received and through the identification of any land use conflicts.

If the Expression of Interest is found to be feasible, the proponent will be invited to submit a formal proposal. If accepted, the ministry would initiate a more intensive and detailed review and planning process.

MRB says it will continue to engage with Indigenous peoples, communities and stakeholders to understand their interests and how they may be impacted by this proposal.

The proponents say they hope to have the project started by 2022, building the ski village and associated structures over the following eight years.

Project summary

Built on a bench with 12,000 acres of skiable area, the project is bigger than Whistler and Blackcomb combined, the company’s Expression of Interest (EOI) says. It notes a 7,000-foot difference from the parking lot to the peak of Whiteriver, with terrain of varying difficulty. The area gets up to 60 feet of snow in winter.

The project would produce more than 200 local jobs and a $20 million annual payroll in the region, according to the EOI. Resort users would take a gondola to a mountain village designed to be walkable and eco-friendly. The village will have private cabins, B&Bs and bunkhouses – but no hotels or condo.

It won’t have a day lodge, but rather a developed commercial area with restaurants, bars, spas, general store, and other resort-related business.
 NEWS

20 good things that happened in 2020

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Yes, there was a global pandemic and sadly, many people got sick and many people died. And yes, it caused an economic and social shutdown, the ramifications of which we’re just beginning to understand.

But even in the darkest of times, there’s light.

And that’s true here in the Slocan/Arrow/Kootenay Lakes region. Here at the Valley Voice, we’ve gone through our files and have asked you for ideas, and collected 20 of the best things — big and small — that made 2020 at least a little brighter.

So, between the meth alligators, toilet paper shortages and murder hornets, here’s some good news that might have gotten lost in the general uproar that was 2020.

We would like to say thank you to all of our customers for your support this first year in our new business.

We wish you all the best and look forward to doing their work – new exam bays, more space for doctors and nurses to do their work – new exam bays, a triage area, and a multipurpose room. The $2.1 million project was funded by the Ministry of Health, regional hospital district, and the hospital auxiliary.

2. Birthday gift for bookworms

The Kaslo and District Public Library is getting its own home, after a century of operations in borrowed space. This fall the library’s board announced it was working towards a new $3 million library downtown, with the help of a big grant from the Columbia Basin Trust.

The news came on the eve of the library’s 100th birthday. The new library building will be on the corner of 5th Avenue and Front Street, across from Front Street Park.

The site purchase was made possible with a grant from the Columbia Basin Trust. If a federal funding application is successful, two-thirds of the building costs will be covered. The Village has set up a reserve fund for donations from community members and can issue tax receipts.

3. New future for Slocan

When Springer Creek Forest Products in Slocan closed down in 2013, it left behind an environmental mess, a damaging economic wound and an empty 8-hectare lot in the middle of town. But that’s all going to change.

The Village took a dramatic step in September, buying the 20-acre property outright for $1.5 million. It was a huge step, but only the first one in what will be a massive effort to remediate the land and develop plans for it. What happens to the property will unfold over the coming years. The first step is community consultation. But citizens will likely look back at 2020 as the year when the town’s fortunes changed.

4. Village green

The West Kootenay took a few steps down the path to making a greener human world in 2020.

A plan to cut fossil fuel use in the West Kootenay to zero by 2050 was signed, sealed and delivered this year. It’s the first of its kind in Canada—a renewable energy transition plan that includes a regional district and small towns, cities, villages and rural communities.

The West Kootenay EcoSociety spearheaded the effort, which saw nine villages and local governments agree to explore how the three-decade-long effort might work. Kaslo became the first community to adopt the plan in December. More are expected to follow.

Our regional government was also recognized for its work to reduce its impact on the environment. The Regional District of Central Kootenay was selected as a winner of a 2020 Sustainable Communities Award for the Accelerate Kootenays project. The Accelerate Kootenays project was the first community-driven project in Canada to build a clean transportation network by installing public EV charging stations throughout the region.

5. Public housing makes a comeback

For decades, senior levels of government ignored the looming housing crisis, as more and more Canadians found it harder to keep a roof over their heads. That finally changed this year, with projects to provide affordable housing getting underway or finding funding from more favourable federal and provincial funding agencies.

In Nakusp, two major housing projects were constructed. The Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services Society built ‘Arrow Heights,’ as the 10-unit project came to be known, while the Arrowarians built a three-storey, 19-unit senior’s housing complex.

In Slocan, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation provided funding for the Village to begin planning an affordable, 5- to 10-unit housing project.

In New Denver, the local housing society has had preliminary plans done for a 10-unit building and is preparing an application for BC Housing funding as we speak.

Progress is being made in Kaslo, too. The Kaslo Housing Society has received the go-ahead and land from the Village for an 8- to 10-studio apartment block on A Avenue. Their proposal goes to funders in January.

Welcome the Koots

Walking trails in the Koots got a little more whimsical this year. A trio of artists from the Argenta area, the Koots Artist Collective, have spent the last few years creating ‘Koots,’ oversized forest ‘elementals’ — creatures that peer out of holes in the ground, knots in wood, or hide among groves of trees. Two big installations in 2020 included a series on the Kaslo River Trail, and along

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20 good things that happened in 2020

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the Slocan Valley Rail Trail near Slocan. The artists’ goal is to create a world-class outdoor sculpture circuit in the Kootenays. Their work is getting recognized, too; they won the People’s Choice Award for their installation ‘Steppin’ Out’ at the 2020 Castlegar Sculpturewalk.

7. Caribou maternity ward

People worried about the future of the tiny, endangered Selkirk caribou herd were given a chance to help save the herd this year. The Arrow Lakes Caribou Society’s Caribou Maternity Pen Project was given the go-ahead in September. About a dozen females will be captured and housed in the pen in the new year, being built on a bench above the Nakusp Hot Springs. The cows and calves will be cared for and monitored over the spring by one or two shepherds under the direction of vets, and released back into their natural habitat in July. The society will work with biologists, researchers, Indigenous groups and others to try to improve the animals’ survival and reproduction rates.

8. Future for Winlaw School

Parents in Winlaw shed tears when the board voted in favour of the installation of a modular building on the community’s school property to house the kindergarten students, provide space for services such as speech pathology, and, in time, for before- and after-school childcare. There had been talk of reconfiguring Winlaw down to a K-3 or K-4 school to deal with its ongoing desk crunch. Stay tuned for news about the installation in the new year.

9. Paperback writers (and hardcover too)


10. Daycare for New Denver and Nakusp schools

2020 saw an easing of the daycare crunch in one community and the promise to solve it for another. In New Denver, the Goat Mountain Kids Child Care Centre opened at the end of November. It will provide 16 full-time spaces for 0- to 5-year olds, and 24 additional childcare spaces for its before- and after-school program. In Nakusp, a project to build a $3-million, 95-space day and after-and-before school program was approved in September. It should be open in May 2022.

11. Ninja Fairies

Here’s one of those small stories that made us smile in 2020. Worried about the impact of pandemic-mandated isolation on her neighbours during the height of the spring lockdown, a Nakusp woman started a kind of Secret Santa campaign to bring some joy to the village. “It’s basically somebody

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Season’s Greetings
from Columbia Power

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KODA O’HARA

THE NINJA FAIRIES

Nearly 120 people signed up to give or receive small gifts from one another, to show they still care about their friends and neighbours during the pandemic.

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

Some well-timed renovations brought several communities pride this year.

In Nakusp, the main street revitalization project replaced sidewalks, created seating space, improved accessibility and lighting. The work was finished in late October. The work came in on budget, and best of all, didn’t cost taxpayers a thing – the $290,000 project was paid for by the community-owned NACFOR Legacy Fund, the CBT and federal gas tax funds.

Also in Nakusp, Mayor Tom Zeleznik began working on saving the marina breakwater – and succeeded. Using some well-timed grants and community reserves, he managed to secure the $320,000 needed for the project. The marina’s restoration means one of the community’s most important tourism assets is protected for at least 20 years, quite possibly longer.

2020 also saw St. Andrew’s United Church in Kaslo initiate an ambitious and much-needed restoration project. The goal was to bring the grand, century-old building up to modern fire and safety standards.

In November, the church celebrated the installation of sprinkler and fire alarm systems, the installation of a new cedar ceiling, upgrades to the heating system and electrical fixtures, the resurfacing of the concrete stairs and wall, the installation of Wi-Fi, and the completion of the restoration and painting of the exterior of the building. More than a quarter million dollars was spent on the necessary upgrades.

Residents of Winlaw have a brand-spanking new boardwalk system along the Slocan River, thanks to an $800,000 project to replace and restore the aging infrastructure. The Kootenay Adaptive Sport Association oversaw the project, which provided about 10 jobs and training for a dozen local workers over the summer.

The project cost a little over $400,000, with support from the Columbia Basin Trust.

Slocan Valley artists Barbara Brown and Frantisek Strouhal were juried into the Healing Power of Arts and Artists (HPAA) exhibition from Manhattan Arts International and received Awards of Excellence.

Kyle Kusch of Nakusp won a $500 Lieutenant Governor’s Historical Writing Award in the continued on page 7

LOCALS HONoured

Several West Kootenay residents were recognized this year for their community work locally, regionally, and beyond.

Two Nakusp residents received honours for their years of caring for their community. Janis Dahlen received the Lifetime Achievement Award for her years of service to the community as a foster parent, Village councillor and RDCK rep. Ernie Knecht was the Citizen of the Year, in recognition of his work with the Nakusp Secondary School’s scholarship committee, the Arrow Lakes ATV Club, the Arrow Lakes Caribou Society and more. These awards are sponsored by the Nakusp Rotary Club.

Carol Koenig was named Kaslo’s 2020 Citizen of the Year. When presenting Koenig with the award, Mayor Suzan Hewat noted her many years of contribution to seniors’ groups, the Legion, Red Cross, the hospital auxiliary thrift shop, and many other community organizations and activities.

Slocan Valley artists Barbara Brown and Frantisek Strouhal were juried into the Healing Power of Arts and Artists (HPAA) exhibition from Manhattan Arts International and received Awards of Excellence.

Kyle Kusch of Nakusp won a $500 Lieutenant Governor’s Historical Writing Award in the continued on page 7

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20 good things that happened in 2020

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Community History category for Our Coloured Past: The Arrow Lakes in the Age of Colour Photography.

And Kaslo’s Dr. Don Hunt was selected as one of six recipients of the 2020 provincial Public Safety Lifetime volunteer awards. “I was just amazed and shocked,” says Hunt. “It was very nice to be recognized.” The awards, which are granted annually to people who have made “exceptional contributions to emergency and disaster response” in the province.

14. Municipal finances fixed

It was a rollercoaster year for the people who manage the finances of the villages and towns of the West Kootenay. Local governments, although feeling the crunch caused by COVID-19, froze tax rates or kept them low for their residents.

“We adjusted the budget and council approved a zero-net-change budget,” says Village of Nakusp CAO Ian Dunlop, Kaslo’s chief administrative officer. “Overall, revenues were around $700,000 less than expected. What was planned at the beginning of the year.”

But things were looking a lot different by the year’s end.

Senior levels of government have offered local governments millions for infrastructure projects, ‘shovel-ready’ as they say, that can begin next year.

But civic administrators got a little more sugar at the end of the year – in the form of a ‘use-as-you-will’ grant from the Province. Councils can use the money to pay for everything from plexiglas dividers in public spaces to training staff in case of an outbreak.

And the numbers were significant, at least for these tiny municipalities, where a 1% property tax hike only raises a few thousand dollars. New Denver is getting $262,100; Silverton $231,000; the RDCK, $761,000, among others.

All that money will, if not solve the long-term impact of the pandemic, at least allow some of the few thousand dollars we thought they would have at the outset of the crisis.

“Overall, [Kaslo] fared fairly well in 2020, but the long-term impact of what we’re going through is yet to be realized. Upper levels of government were generous with their support to local governments, businesses and individuals but we know that level of support probably can’t be sustained.”

15. Blowing the whistle

Another human story that reminded us the world was good was when a piece of Nakusp’s history came out of hiding this fall. The son of an old time memorabilia collector returned the whistle from the SS Bonnington, a paddle wheeler that plied the Arrow Lakes the first half of the last century, to the local Rail Society.

“My dad was a pick up before there were pickers,” says Shaun Pollard, the collector’s son. “He was one of those guys, if you’d see an old shed he’d go in and see what was in there.” The whistle was found in Galena Bay a half-century ago, and remained in the man’s collection for the rest of his life. As the end drew near, he asked his son to bring it back home, to Nakusp. “It was one of his last wishes,” recalls Pollard.

16. NACFOR dividend

A decision by Nakusp municipal leaders nearly a decade ago paid off in spades for the Village of Nakusp when times got tough this year. In November, Nakusp and Area Community Forest officials brought a cheque for $400,000 to the Village council. The Village is the sole shareholder in the corporation, and has received more than $1.5 million in dividends from its operations since 2014. The dividends are put into the NACFOR Legacy Fund and used to benefit local projects in the Village of Nakusp, rural Nakusp and RDCK Area K.

17. Sports improvements

While many sports and tournaments were cancelled this year, it was a rebuilding year, as sports coaches like to say. Several communities took the opportunity to improve their facilities.

In Nakusp, the Jackie James Memorial Park started out as a homage to a local sports hero, but over the years the diamonds had become a bit of a derelict eyesore. That ended this summer when volunteers from the Nakusp Recreation Society collected nearly $100,000 to restore the ball park to its former glory. With help from the Columbia Basin Trust, NACFOR, and other sources, the volunteers ended the project work building fences, the irrigation system, the infield, dugouts, and other parts of the old diamonds. Work went quickly with all the financial support, and organizers hope ‘Play Ball!’ will be shouted on the renovated fields by next spring.

Skateboarders in Nakusp also got some good news this year when Village council supported the WE Graham Community Service Society’s application to build an extension to the park and pledged a contribution.

And residents of the south Slocan Valley began a consultation process on what to do with the large Campbell Field at the junction that was donated to the RDCK.

18. Tires to Trees

A stretch of the St. Slocan River got a little cleaner this summer. The Slocan River Streamkeepers completed a massive cleanup along the banks of the old river with the help of Wildsight’s Youth Corps. A large pile of tires left near the river by a previous landowner was finally disposed of, and trees were planted in their place.

The landowner passed away before completing his riverbank stabilization project, leaving the used tires in the floodplain. For years it seemed that nobody would take responsibility and dispose of the tires properly, until the Streamkeepers stepped in. With funding from the RDCK, the slightly-toxic tires is now rehabilitated riparian zone, with planted trees, shrubs and bird nesting boxes in their place.

19. Campgrounds boom

Travel restrictions over the summer could have spelled doom for local businesses, as the usual tourist flow of tourists turned into a trickle. And by June it was ugly… the Village of Nakusp reported it was more than $100,000 behind in income for the first half of the year.

The Village of Nakusp, rural Nakusp and RDCK Area K.}

Part Time Executive Assistant – SD 10 (Arrow Lakes)

SD 10, in the beautiful West Kootenay region of southeastern BC, seeks a Part Time Executive Assistant to join our fast-paced and innovative District team.

For a complete job description, including required qualifications, please visit the SD 10 Website: https://sd10.bc.ca/employment/resourc.../t&3. Interested applicants are asked to submit a resume and cover letter with supporting documentation, together with three current professional references, no later than Friday, January 1, 2021 to: Ms. Michelle Grenier, Sr. Executive Assistant/HR Manager by email to michelle.grenier@sd10.bc.ca or by mail to PO Box 340, Nakusp, BC, V0G 1R0.

The successful candidate will be subject to a Criminal Record Check. Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.
Words of wisdom from local 10-year-old

Life is like a ball. Three quarters of the ball is red. The other quarter is blue. You roll the ball. If you see a bit of blue, it basically means that you just got a job. When you see red, it’s not too good. Even when the worst is coming, try and hope for the best. When something bad’s coming, think of it as something good coming.

Carmie Restrick

Winlaw cookbook recommended

I’ve just read A Seasonal Plant-Based Diet. Grown Locally, Sustainably in the Kootenays, a self-published cookbook by Kaslo resident Harue Kanemitsu— for sale at Sunnyvale Naturals in Kaslo, and Ellison’s, Pack Rat Annie’s, and Otter Books in Nelson, for about $20.

According to the introduction, its purpose is: “...to help the reader select which path to take in helping the world by eating healthy, seasonably, sustainably, with a conscience, and with pleasure.”

Healthy ingredients, attainable locally, are listed according to seasons when they are available, and the recipes include: liquids, grains, vegetables, sauces and spreads, desserts and snacks.

I like the alphabetical organization of the recipes, and the author’s simple and useful illustrations. I recommend this book and plan to try recipes like Rose Hip Drink, Duał and Winter Salal.

Gail Bauman

Kaslo

Truly a wonder

Who could have ever imagined that ‘Donny the Dumpster Diver,’ when successful with his MAGA myth, would be having the Republican elite lining up to support him when successful with his MAGA myth, that ‘Donny the Dumpster Diver,’

truly a wonder to behold, this self-proclaimed American Genius, gifting his people through a pandemic, leading from behind.

Ken Willie Robson

Response to Catherine McGrath (Spitting caused heart attack? VV Dec. 3)

I take issue with Catherine McGrath’s letter. Yes, studies have shown the effects of wearing masks, such as headaches, and hypoxia. However, they were conducted on surgeons who were wearing N95 masks for extended periods. The studies were inconsiderate as to the actual harm the surgeons encountered. None of the studies could come to any conclusions claiming that there were health risks. I could not find any studies done on surgical and cloth masks. We are not told to wear N95 masks, so there is no danger to the general public. Let’s all try and use some common sense. If you go into a coffee shop, wearing a mask, you will be able to remove it when your beverage is delivered, to your table or at a distanced table, in 5 or 10 minutes. Where is the risk?

McGrath quotes Dr. Russell Blaylock, an American neurosurgeon, who claims masks are a health risk. Wikipedia says about Blaylock: “He claims that Obama’s health-care reforms were masterminded by extra-governmental groups that wish to impose euthanasia.” Dr. Blaylock has also been promoting the chemtrail conspiracies, claiming that there are cancer-causing nanoparticles in airplane exhaust.

I think that using Dr. Blaylock to back up your belief on the health of mask wearing doesn’t instill any confidence in me. Let’s see some legitimate science and much more common sense too.

Peter Martyn Nelson

Industrial logging continues

The outrage continues. Week in and week out, fully loaded logging trucks rumble past, driving through Kaslo, from the west and from the north, in the continuing race to cut down the last pockets of old growth left in the area, and in the province. Our extraordinary temperate inland rainforest here in the Kootenay is being rapidly decimated. And this certainly isn’t the only area where raping logging is happening in BC. Does anyone care that over 90% of the original forests are gone, replaced by denuded and monoculture zones prone to terrible fires and bed insect infestations? I remember as a young child, the first time my family and I drove through Vancouver Island on the road to Long Beach, being amazed and horrified at what I saw: the massive industrial clearcuts. These terrible practices are now larded up as more selective. The truth is that industrial logging continues, in fact is accelerating in the race to cut. Just because we have the abilities to build roads into pristine mountainous country to extract the last pockets of original giant trees doesn’t mean we should. And what happens when all these remaining pockets are gone and all we’ve left with are sad pathetic micro remnants like the Sumallo Grove just west of Manning Park? Why is industrial logging such as it is being practiced allowed to continue like this? Where is the provincial leadership on this file? It is beyond an outrage.

Harel Challmie

COVID sheep

On November 18, Bonnie Henry, BC provincial health officer, declared: “Ordering universal mask use in all situations creates unnecessary challenges with enforcement and stigmatization.” Two days later, she flip flopped and mandated masks. Consequently, over the next few days, chaos prevailed. What did you expect? Interestingly, as we follow each province, weeks after mandating masks, we see one thing in common: a skyrocketing infection rate.

According to a recent BBC report, as many as 129 billion face masks and 65 billion plastic gloves are used per month with the majority ending up in our oceans. Multiply that amount of toxic garbage with all the months we’ve already participated in the so-called COVID battle and add in all the usage in the upcoming months. How gross.

Lockdown was a social and economic disaster and the unnecessary closing of schools caused untold harm to single mothers and low-income families, not to mention the harm to the children. We have weak-kneed, frightened politicians making one bad call after another. Our combined federal and provincial deficit will push up a half a trillion dollars this year. Our prime minister is acting like a child in a candy store. With all the money we’ve wasted on fighting this so-called war, we could have had free college and free dental for children well into the future.

Why has Sweden kept their borders open? Why did Sweden choose not to lock down or close schools? Why has Sweden refrained from wearing masks? Why is Sweden so intent on protecting the freedom of choice? Bonnie Henry, take note. Why have more people died in Quebec than Sweden? Quebec mandated masks back in July and has a smaller population.

I would be willing to bet a dollar to a dollar on this one, if we had just practiced social distancing of one metre, covered when coughing or sneezing and stayed home when not feeling well, we would be in the same boat we are in now except a half a million dollars richer... and a lot happier.

COVID-19 will go down as the greatest overreaction in the history of the world.

“You measure a democracy by the freedom it gives its dissenters, not the freedom it gives its assimilated conformists.” (Abbie Hoffman)

The Valley Voice
Conroy's challenge: stand up to corporate control

Conroy's challenge: stand up to corporate control

Offended by Catherine McGrath's letter

I am very offended by the thoughtless, unfounded letter of December 3'sorem from Catherine McGrath. She gives lip service to the fact that the woman in Nelson, while politely doing her job enforces provincially mandated mask wearing in her workplace, was verbally abused and then spit on by a belligerent customer.

The unwarranted verbal abuse is one thing, but what do you give one second to think about it what would it look like if someone spit on you, no matter the reason. Catherine, she would not be a much sought after physician because spitting on each other is not something we do to each other. We don't live in a society where this is an accepted recourse to use when we have a disagreement. That is one reason that I am horrified by your shallow representation of the situation. Another reason is that his spit, filled with whatever viruses and bacteria he is harboring, potentially plus the coronaviruses, could be as fatal a weapon as a gun in another circumstance. This is not inconceivable.

You then introduce a subject switch to make a mask the villain in this situation. Your argument against masks, that they deprive one of oxygen and could therefore be grounds for the heart attack which this man has, is not supported, unconfirmed, and cruel. People in certain fields like medicine have worn masks in the line of their work for a very long time. If they were dangerous for the person wearing the mask, don't you think this would have been observed? The last people we want to see their judgement impaired by a lack of oxygen is a health care practitioner who looks after us. They perform among the most delicate, skilled procedures known to us that we are the general beneficiaries of. Of the nurses who have had to wear masks on millions of collective hours of experience we know that wearing which has been proven to be in the best interest of all to keep us as safe as possible from the virus.

This man knew of the mask regulations before he even stepped into the coffee shop and he had to know that there would be consequences for defying the regulation. Going into a coffee shop isn't a necessity, it's a choice. Anyone who thinks it's dangerous to their health or their freedom to wear a mask should avoid situations where they are required. That's how they can defend their freedom and respect the freedoms of others.

Lastly, I want to thank the woman employee who suffered a heart attack while still at work following a very upsetting encounter with an abusive customer, for doing her part to keep us all safe. May you have a speedy recovery and know that many besides you are thankful to you for your responsible action and wish you well.

Carolyn Parker
New Denver

Bad experience at the Pavilion

While I was in the ER in August this year, my daughter and I were treated with respect and kindness before Nature Matter does it for us.

Rod Retzlaff
Glade

 flyers mock other candidates

Conroy's mandate is to update and modernize forest policy and legislation to ensure a future for forest communities, Indigenous peoples, workers (and communities). The Herb Hammond article lays out how forest company profits have been subsidized by the people of BC for decades (e.g. $365 million a year for the last 10 years) while thousands of jobs have been lost as these same companies close mills, mechanize, consolidate and export raw logs. The job losses caused by green policies have caused the forest giants to be the loss of 45,000 jobs since 2001! As Dr. Phil would say: and how's that working out for your forest communities?

Herb's mandate includes "create new jobs for workers in BC" and she has put aside the tired old NDP tropes of supporting people, jobs, and families. Yet when in power, NDP governments have done anything but! How about it, Katrine Conroy? Do you have the jum to stand up to the corporate oil boys' club? As far as achieving your mandate, as Hammond said: "It would just take a government with a little bit of backbone to stand up to corporate control."

Lorna Visser
Hills

Open letter to science deniers and conspiracy theorists

Just to let you know that your so-called "glass ceiling of facts" in the name of science that they impact my right to health and life. To live as a society, we need certain rules that everyone must follow. For instance, you do not have the freedom to drive on the left side of the road in this country; it could cause a head-on collision. You are not allowed to shout "Fire!" in a crowded theatre when there is no fire; people could get injured stampeding to the exits. When you wear a mask, you are showing that you respect my right not to get sick.

I live in a society built on the discoveries of science. If you don't believe in science, then don't go to a medical doctor next time you get sick or injured. Don't use a computer or phone. Heck, don't even read this paper, since the technology to create it was developed by science. For those of you who slept through grade school science, the "scientific method" means that conclusions can change as more knowledge is gained and built on by more investigation and experiments. We take advice from scientists because they understand the processes of the time or education to find everything out on our own. This terrible disease they have named COVID-19 is not the first pandemic to hit humans, and those experts who study these things have learned from the past as well as current science. It is a nasty respiratory virus, so right now you wearing a mask and keeping your distance helps keep you from spreading it to me if you have the virus without knowing it. Get vaccinated when you are able as that will protect both you and me. And check your sources for information believe the doctors, not your cousin Moe.

Ursula Lowery
Nelson

We need to learn to live within our means

When I was a young man, I took up the bad habit of smoking tobacco. I wasn't an outlier; pretty much everyone I knew smoked. There were no restrictions on where you could smoke... inside, outside, driving, flying, in your hospital bed. It was seen as a human right. Gradually, things changed as people came to realize how detrimental smoking was, and a lot of people, including me, decided that it was not worth the risk. Having cut many times and then being hared back to the addiction, I came to realize that every time I started up again, I would have to smoke just a little more to make up for lost time. Eventually, I did quit by being deathly afraid to have the first one. As a human being, I am very grateful to COVID-19. Before this pandemic came along, the government had the people convinced that keeping the economy steering along was the most important thing, and that we had to keep it growing, at all costs. No scientific evidence, no matter how dire, was ignored. As a result, the economy was steaming along was the most important thing, but did you give one second to even thing, but did you give one second to even think about what it would feel like if someone spit on you, no matter the reason. Catherine! She would not be a much sought after physician because spitting on each other is not something we do to each other. We don't live in a society where this is an accepted recourse to use when we have a disagreement. That is one reason that I am horrified by your shallow representation of the situation. Another reason is that his spit, filled with whatever viruses and bacteria he is harboring, potentially plus the coronaviruses, could be as fatal a weapon as a gun in another circumstance. This is not inconceivable.

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Carolyn Parker
New Denver

Frighteningly blind

Flying Blind: Governments' hasty decisions to lock down Canadians while damaging public health and the economy is an informative analysis of Canada's COVID-19 response measures, recently published by the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms (https://tinyurl.com/58ne6cn). It is a MUST read for all Canadians. “The sad reality is that COVID-19 have been overestimated and mischaracterized; speculation and exaggerated estimates have been used to justify the lockdown measures; the total lockdown infringe the Charter rights and freedoms of all Canadians.”

Based on speculation and fallacious flawed statistical modelling, governments assumed that extreme measures were best and ignored public health evidence. As of November 30, governments still lack sufficient reliable information to justify ongoing violations of the Charter rights and freedoms of Canadians.”

Edda West
Winlaw
Thank you for supporting your local businesses!
The key to a thriving local economy throughout the pandemic and always

NACUSP & AREA
Bon Marche Dollar Dollar
Open daily 9 am-9 pm
For all inquiries, call (250) 265-3654, email: casa@casadelux.net

Crescent Bay Construction Ltd.
Open Mon-Sat, 9 am-5 pm
Phone orders and delivery available. 250-353-2824, crescentbay@telus.net

Kai Tire Nakusp
Open Mon-Sat, 9 am-5 pm
Call or book online for appointment or tire purchases. Emergency and commercial work done as required. Please only one customer in showroom at a time.

Nakusp Glass
Open daily, 9 am-5 pm
Drop in, call or email to make an appointment.

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Pick-up and delivery of anything from licensed food, beverage and retail stores. 250-353-2445

Royal LePage Selkirk Realty
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Shon’s Bike - Ski - Stay
Mon-Sat, 9 am - 5:30 pm
Please drop bike repairs to the rear entrance (in alley) of the shop. No appointments are necessary for bike tune-ups. Our coffee shop and lounge area is currently closed.

Slocan Village Market
Open daily, 8 am-6 pm
Physical distancing measures in effect. 250-353-2205

New Denver Community Pharmacy
Open Mon-Fri, 10 am-5:30 pm
We look forward to serving you!

New Denver Dollar Store
Open Mon-Sat, 9 am-5 pm
Phone orders and delivery available. 250-226-7070.

New Market Foods
Open everyday, 8 am-6 pm
You are welcome to come and shop. Keep your distance as much as you can with others. We have hand sanitizer at the door as well as the till.

Raven’s Nest
Our Holiday Sale is still on – Everything 10% Off in December! Open everyday this month except Christmas & Boxing Day; Monday to Saturday, 11 am – 4 pm; Sunday, Noon – 3 pm. We’ve got promises & cards, and our great gifts include locally made crafts, natural fibre clothes, wool blankets, books, candles, jewelry and more. Happy Holidays and thanks for shopping local!

Silverton Building Supplies
Open Monday-Saturday 8:30 am to 5:00 pm
Hand sanitizer is provided. Please observe distancing.

Slocan Village Market
Open. Limiting number of customers in the store. Providing gloves and masks to shoppers.

WINLAW
Emery Herbals Botanical Dispensary, Healing Suites and Teaching Centre
The Botanical Dispensary Open Thurs and Fri, 12-4. Limit of one client in the shop at a time.

Order requests can be sent to orders@emeryherbals.com or by phoning 250-226-7744 for pick-up using our safe pick-up guidelines. We offer a $10 local shop rate and all local orders over $75 are shipped free. We ship once weekly.

We look forward to serving you!

250-358-2293

Silverton Camp Cafe
Wed-Sat 9:30 – 3:30 • Sunday 10-2
250-358-7271

SLOCAN
Village of Slocan – Office, Library, Clinic, Fitness Center Village Office Open – Masks Mandatory, Library open (Thursdays 1-5pm, Sundays 11am-3pm) – COVID protocols in place; masks mandatory; take out service available. Clinic open – Nurse Pratitioner, Acupuncture – COVID protocols in place; masks mandatory. Fitness Center temporarily closed.

Slocan Village Market
Open. Limiting number of customers in the store. Providing gloves and masks to shoppers.

We are accepting orders by phone for pick-up for those who prefer not to enter the store. We are also offering delivery services on a weekly basis.

250-353-2311, sunkit@telus.net

WHY NOT THE VALLEYS
The Valley Voice December 17, 2020

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Valley Voice
Open 1-833-501-1700; valleyvoice@valleyvoice.ca; www.valleyvoice.ca

SILVERTON
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Our online shop is https://emeryherbals.com/online-aphoterry/ • Colten Emery, RHT (CHADC) is conducting all client consultation online or via the phone. Priority is for those cases, new clients are welcome.

All classes have moved online at this time.

Mama Sita’s
Open for dine-in, take-out and delivery. Outdoor seating. 9 am-7 pm.
Phone or come in. 250-226-7700.
COVID-19: HOW MANY PEOPLE MUST DIE?

by Richard Caniell

The Conspiracy Theories

In her Dec. 3 Valley Voice letter, Lisa Ross claimed to have read “literally thousands of people’s accounts of why they are afraid to be vaccinated” and “three key reasons given that protect... measures are unnecessary and an assault on personal freedom.”

It is difficult to keep hearing these claims again and again as the numbers of people who have died, including 559 people in BC. These statistics stand for actual men, women, children, parents, mothers, fathers, athletes—the whole compendium of the human family. The deaths these victims suffer are not only gruesome in the suffocation that occurs, but they are often endured without family and friends, who are not allowed to be in the room.

One wonders how many people have to die before the conspiracy theorists decide that the pandemic is serious enough to act. Right now, the refrigerated trucks lined up outside US hospitals to take the dead bodies enough evidence that we are in a crisis, with fake body bags stuck up inside.

BC has been having a surge. Active cases in BC doubled between No... 11 lockdowns, in BC are under active monitoring due to possible exposure.

Restrictions on gatherings inside homes, public transportation, and businesses, have been tightened. BC’s Chief Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, explains that the province is trying to save lives. Vaccinations are slated to begin this month, but it will likely take until summer for every person who wants one. With the current rapid spread of Covid-19 cases, it’s clear that some people will get the disease before a vaccine can reach them; how many lives we can save depends on what we do for each other to avoid spreading the virus.

I would like to think that no rational person would fail to see our doctors, hospitals, and government are trying to us to perpetuate a hoax. But given the current state of TV news, no one in Kelowna and Nelson, among other cities, have been protesting with signs such as “Unmask BC” — “False C... in one instance calling Dr. Henry a liar, and in another saying “lock her up.” However mistaken and irrational they may be, conspiracy theories can apparently stir people to feel that they are being deprived of their rights, and victimized by authorities — even when the false claims are proven wrong.

Medical professionals risking their own health are living nightmares, but be the sick have called the protests “a slap in the face,” as has Dr. Henry. In the US, in... violence for the first time, while doubling that for the second. The fine for business venues failing to enforce the mandate with employees and patrons is $2000 for the first offense and court charges for repeated infractions.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) states “Masks are an important, powerful public health tool we have” for combating the pandemic. Its efficacy, however, depends on how faithfully we use it, and where and when we remove it. Wearing it largely protects others (if you are carrying the virus [asymptomatic], and their mask protects us. This interdependence is only another example of the effects of policies, which are directed in each other’s welfare and that concern for others is a major factor in our humanity.

Covid-19 Without Controls

The fact that the majority of deaths occur in people over 65, or in those with a history of underlying health conditions, has led some people to calculate that “I’m young and healthy, I can afford to get Covid-19, ac... success. For some, this calculation would be a big mistake, because 9.6% of Canadians hospitalized with Covid-19 are younger than 40, and many wind up in the ICU. In BC, there has also been observed that young, healthy people with mild or no symptoms may experience effects like blood clots, strokes or heart problems.

Oblivious to these protesters are de... health care system. The virus has been given a scientific veneer with the name “herd immunity” — a stage in which people have become immune... disease and developed immunity, that the virus declines for lack of new victims.

Herd immunity is indeed a goal — but through vaccinations. Most medical experts reject the idea of gaining it through uncontrolled infections. The top US epidemiologist, Dr. Fauci, called it “total nonsense,” that it would make the high percentage of people to become infected — perhaps over 70% — and that would cause a huge number of deaths.

To achieve 70%, 3.6 million of BC’s 5.1 million people would have to get Covid-19. Nationally 26 million would have to be infected, in a population of 37 million, devastating our health care system.

In the US, Atlantic magazine just posted an article about Americans, “How the Pandemic Defeated America.” It reveals staggering dysfunction brought about by President Trump’s Covid denial, the refusal of many states and individuals to accept masks and lockdowns, and the refusal of older people that caused deterioration of the health care system.

Differences in the safety measures required (or not) by each state have provided important data on the relationship between mask wearing and number of deaths. North and South Dakota had no required safety measures. North Dakota at one point had the highest death rate for Covid-19 in the world (Huffington Post). The data of Dec. 4 showed that in every 800 North Dakotans was dead of Covid-19, the governor has now imposed more measures. South Dakota has been called a “national disgrace” in the New York Times because the governor and residents with masks or lockdowns, that allowed large mass gatherings that drew thousands of out-of-state residents and sent them home carrying the virus. New York Times columnist Frank Bruni wrote:

“In resisting the lockdowns, slow... women and sacrifices that many other states committed to, they i... and a twisted concept of individual liberty that was obvious all over the country and contributed mightily to our suffering.” (N.Y.T, Dec. 5, 2020)

Meanwhile states that instituted strict lockdowns, like California, and lifted them when their Covid curve was flat... have had drastic surges of new infections and have returned to tight restrictions.

Put succinctly, the theory that herd immunity will save us if we just do nothing, while saving our kids, and keeping the economy going, is a myth. However, by Donald Trump braggling that 15% of Americans are now immune — a pitiful result at the cost of 300,000 deaths, and a far cry from herd immunity.

Should we call driving while drunk “conscientious objection” to the law? In the US, 66% was d... intoность to those who didn’t use seatbelts and for those who smoked in contained spaces. Violence against Native American... (as is the case) the result, and they want to have the right to not smoke wherever they please, using language—amazingly living — we are 11 years now in resistance to Covid against precautions. Due to enforcement fines, smokers accept that they have to go outside to smoke.

What is so difficult in recognizing that a very real pandemic threatens us, given nearly 300,000 deaths in the US in 12 months, soaring above the death rates from other causes? The answer comes back, it suits their personal convenience to deny the figures as overblown, un-truly, while being unable to present a scintilla of evidence as to why medical authorities, doctors in hospitals in 2100 centres around the world would fake such statistics. Doubt about the existence or extent of Covid-19 removes the question of selfishness from the conversation.

In conclusion, let me state my own viewpoint succinctly. Putting off action during a rapidly escalating pandemic, in order to make money, is an arrogant assertion of personal liberty, is completely unacceptable. For those of us who want an accredited (tested) vaccine, we want in health to gain its benefit. This means I will avoid persons and places with no proof of vaccination, and I request that my precautionary regulations not be used.
Kane’s Landing Corner Store opens tomorrow in Upper Kaslo

by Jan McMurray

A new corner store, at the corner of highway 31A and A Avenue, is opening on December 18 in Upper Kaslo. Kane’s Landing Corner Store will supply locally produced items such as dairy, eggs, coffee, pasta, bread, honey, chocolate and other basic necessities. Specialty coffees and baked goods, plus some unique items such as fishing tackle, will also be on offer. There will be a fire pit and seating outdoors.

Locally produced products such as dairy, eggs, coffee, pasta, bread, honey, chocolate as well as other basic necessities.

Specialty Coffees and Baked Goods
– unique items such as fishing tackle –

Winter Hours
Tuesday - Saturday
8 am until 1 pm
(Subject to change as needed.)

SD 10 superintendent’s report: Enrolment continues to climb; Goat Mountain Kids Centre opens on November 30 to serve children and families in the New Denver area.

• School’s well underway for the year but enrolment continues to increase, Superintendent Terry Taylor told the board in her December report. Five more students joined the district in November, a total of 21 new students since the year started. There are now 519 students enrolled in SD10.

“October is quite remarkable. I’ve never seen this in all the years, since declining enrolment began,” Taylor told the board.

• After months of finishing off the last few details, the Goat Mountain Kids Child Care Centre opened on November 30 to serve children and families in the New Denver area. “It was so exciting to see the nine little cubbies with the children’s names on it,” Taylor said of the opening day of the facility. “This was ‘just’ a renovation, but was a year in the making… so it was great to able to work with the Goat Mountain Children Society to make it come together.”

As for the 95-seat Nakusp Child Care Centre being planned for Nakusp Elementary, Taylor reported that the design and drawing stage is now complete; engineers and consulting contractors have been engaged. Demolition permits are planned, but due to the age of the portables, there was a snag.

• Arrow Lakes School District 10 has set its strategic plans, actions and priorities for 2021. The plan allows educators to develop daily and monthly strategies in a larger context, and gauge those actions. The priorities are: literacy (improve success in reading and writing for all K-12 learners); Indigenous education (improve success for all Indigenous learners; close the equity gap); physical and mental well-being (focus on well-being for all: student learners and staff); environmental education and place-conscious learning (continue growing the ‘deep-learning’ practices to impact appreciation of the environment, locally and globally).

In addition to the actions, the plan contains a detailed list on the steps the district should take to meet those goals, and a list of measurable to help them assess if they are succeeding.

A brochure detailing the board priorities is available online on the district website, under the ‘Strategic Plan’ section of the board page.

The district held an “Indigenous Equity Scan” at Nakusp Secondary on November 19, with both NES and NSS students and parents.

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New Denver council, December 8: Good year for the campground despite COVID
by Kathy Hartman

- The Nikkei calendar and the book Korowaki: Memory and Healing in New Denver are ready for gift giving and available at the Village office until December 22. Published by the Village of New Denver, the book tells the story of the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre (NIMC), the people who created it and the healing it inspired.

- The campground brought in almost as much revenue as last year despite being closed for May and the first half of June. The 2020 Campground Park Management Plan, which showed a net income of $109,711, just slightly less than last year. A review of the campground fees and booking system will be presented at the January council meeting. The Village may want to go to full-payment online bookings to ensure payment, and to reduce interaction with park users of physical distancing is still required. Campground fees have not been increased since 2014 but costs of supplies, wages, cleaning and power have gone up since then. Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre (NIMC) needs work. The Village may want to go to full-payment online bookings to ensure payment, and to reduce interaction with park users of physical distancing is still required. Campground fees have not been increased since 2014 but costs of supplies, wages, cleaning and power have gone up since then. Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre (NIMC) needs work. The Village may want to go to full-payment online bookings to ensure payment, and to reduce interaction with park users of physical distancing is still required. Campground fees have not been increased since 2014 but costs of supplies, wages, cleaning and power have gone up since then.

- The Heiwa Teien garden at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre National Historic Site needs work. Council received the ‘Heiwa Garden Restoration Plan’ by consultants Hiro Okusa, Edzard Teubert and Myles Berner. The report recommends an estimated $81,420 worth of repairs to the garden. The Village has applied for a COFIT Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program grant, and if successful, work on the garden should begin in March or April 2021. The Village is expecting a funding decision sometime in February.

- Council will provide a letter in support of the New Denver & Area Volunteer Fire Department’s application to BC Housing’s Community Housing Fund for the development of a 10-unit affordable rental housing complex at 602 Slocan Avenue, where the recycling depot sits now. The Village is being asked to commit the land for the project at a nominal cost, and to proceed with rezoning of the property to accommodate the proposed development if funding is secured. The land is zoned EU-Environmental Reserve because of its proximity to the Village well #1, and the rezoning of the property is contingent on the relocation of the well. The Village has applied for funding for the water project, and expects to hear back sometime next year. NDAHS is submitting a proposal to BC Housing’s Community Housing Fund program by the deadline of January 15, 2021.

- The Knox Hall restoration inspired the Village to begin a conversation with the Reading Centre volunteers to pursue a possible Municipal Library designation. Councillor Colin Moss was very impressed with the renovation work and wondered if the reading centre could upgrade to a regular library. ‘Potential project for 2021,’ responded Chief Administrative Officer Catherine Allaway.

- The Village has applied for funding to assist with road rescue. The New Denver & Area Volunteer Fire Department provides road rescue services outside the boundaries of the fire protection area when requested by Emergency Management BC. The Fire Chiefs’ Association of BC has received one-time funding to assist out-of-jurisdiction road rescue providers with training and equipment costs related to the delivery of this essential public safety service. The Village hopes to use the fund to cover the cost of its aging items, such as the airbags used in the auto-extrication system and the generator that powers the embankment winch. This will leave more funds in the budget for a much-needed rescue truck without depleting reserve funds or relying on taxation.

- The survey to identify the activities residents would like to see return to the Slocan Health Centre gym this winter is ongoing. Email ACarmichael@rdck.bc.ca and put the subject heading ‘GYM’ in the subject heading if you wish to receive a survey. Once enough data is collected, the RDCK will be asked to use some of its COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant for Local Governments to pay for the supervision and cleaning staff.

- Brought forward from the in-camera meeting of November 24 was a resolution to ask the RDCK for a detailed financial report for 2019-20 and a detailed budget for 2021 for the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission, with copies sent to partner municipalities (Silverton, Slocan, Area H), Columbia Basin Trust and MLA Katrine Conroy.

- Councillors awarded Village staff with a second paid holiday day over Christmas. Typically, all municipal staff are given one paid day off during the week between Christmas and New Year’s Day. In recognition of staff’s tremendous effort at keeping the Village running smoothly in these interesting times, council voted to add a second paid holiday day as a thank you.

Francis Sharon Grace Gustafson 1939-2020

It is with sad and heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Francis Sharon Grace Gustafson (Biedler). Sharon passed on December 7, 2020, surrounded by the love of her immediate family, and the thoughts and prayers from extended family and friends that could not be with her. Sharon touched many hearts and brought joy and love to all of those around her.

Born in Vernon in 1939, Sharon and her seven siblings spent a short part of their childhood in Victoria prior to moving to New Denver in 1945, where she would meet the love of her life and raise four children. Sharon and Al shared an impressive 62 years of marriage with the characteristics of simplicity and family values which they passed on to all of their grandchildren and five of their great-grandchildren. Sharon and Al shared a life of adventure with regular trips camping and fishing, but the most important thing to Sharon was always her family. Sharon’s calling in life was definitely to be a Grandmother. She made each of her grandchildren, great-grandchildren and neighbourhood child feel loved and like they were the most important part of her world. Fishing and growing a garden that could sustain the family through the winter were the simple pleasures that Sharon enjoyed, a life lived by doing the best with what she had. Her flowers will grow on in her memory and as a reminder to enjoy the simple and important things in life.

A heartfelt thank you to staff members of the Slocan Community Health Care Centre who showed compassion and empathy to not only Sharon, but to the family that were by her side in her final days. In addition, to the people of New Denver who baked, cooked meals or brought flowers, your kindness and support will not be forgotten, thank you.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to a charity important to Sharon, the New Denver Hospice Society.
Village of New Denver
Public Notices

Holiday Office Hours
The Council and Staff of the Village of New Denver would like to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. Please note the Village office will close at 4:00 PM on Tuesday, December 22, 2020 and will reopen at 9:00 AM on Monday, January 4, 2021. Staff will be checking messages periodically and we appreciate your patience and understanding as non-emergencies will receive a call back in the New Year.

Holiday Garbage Collection
Garbage collection will be affected by the holiday schedule this year. Residential garbage collection will take place on Tuesday, December 22, 2020, December 29, 2020 & January 5, 2021 as regularly scheduled. Commercial garbage collection will take place on Thursday, December 24 and December 31, 2020.

Cancellation of Council Meeting
Please note that the Council of the Village of New Denver has cancelled the December 22nd Regular Meeting. The next Regular Meeting of Council will take place on January 12, 2021 at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers.

2021 Council Meetings
Council Meetings are held at 7:00 PM in the Village of New Denver Council Chambers on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. The schedule for 2021 is as follows:

- January 12 & 26
- February 9 & 23
- March 9 & 23
- April 13 & 27
- May 11 & 25
- June 8 & 22
- July 13 & 27
- August 10 & 24
- September 14 & 28
- October 12 & 26
- November 9 & 23
- December 14 & 28

Winter Plowing
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.

Kyowakai Book Published
The Village of New Denver has just released a new historical book titled Kyowakai: Memory and Healing in New Denver written by local author Anne Champagne and designed by John Endo Greenaway. The book tells the story of Japanese Canadian internment in New Denver, the creation of the Nikkei Interment Memorial Centre (NIMC) by the Kyowakai Society, and the healing it inspired. The books can be purchased at the Village Office and at the NIMC in 2021. NIMC 2021 Wall Calendars are also still available for purchase. Both books and calendars are $20 each plus applicable tax and would make wonderful gifts for the holiday season! Proceeds from both will go towards the NIMC. Thanks for your support!
submitted by the Waste Reduction Committee Kaslo Climate Action Team (KCAT)

Every year Canadians throw away over three million tonnes of plastic waste.

We take up resources – make products – then toss them as waste. It is very challenging to avoid all petro-plastic. So much of what we buy is wrapped in it and we’ve grown used to its convenience. We toss it into landfills, with an out-of-sight, out-of-mind attitude. We love plastic. We think it strong, useful, cheap, and something we can throw away. But there are good reasons we should stop using single use petroleum plastic:

• It’s made from fossil fuels, a non-renewable resource that contributes to climate change.
• Waste from single-use petro-plastics is everywhere on the planet, on our land and in our water.
• Single-use petro-plastic lasts forever, breaking down to microscopic pieces in waterways and soils entering the food chain.
• Petro-plastic particles are found in human feces. Micro plastics are in our water and in the food chain and so can be tracked in our bodies.
• Animals on land and sea eat plastic, which clogs their systems and can lead to infections, disease, blockage, starvation or death by suffocation.
• Petro-plastic is not easy to recycle. It is costly and, when produced or burned, the emissions and fire hazards are significant.

The provincial and federal governments are working to mitigate our contribution to climate change. Part of the strategy bans plastic straws and cutlery, foam cups, and packaging.

Kaslo has signed onto the West Kootenay EcoSociety’s plan to make the region be ‘100% Renewable by 2050.’ Please help us take action to make this goal real. Let us stop using single-use petroleum plastic products, require the industry to be responsible for the end life of their products and put in place a circular economy where we reuse items.

Green Burial project in New Denver runs into temporary snag submitted

The Carpenter Creek Last Wishes Society (CCLWS) is no longer able to accept donations for the Green Burial project due to complications with rules about its charitable status.

The organization, which is trying to secure a plot of land to allow people to be buried in an environmentally friendly way, was receiving donations through Canada Helps, an online crowdfunding site.

“CCLWS is in the process of obtaining charitable tax status, and will create the opportunity for supporters to donate and get a tax receipt as soon as possible,” says a release from the society.

Although it is not currently possible to make a tax-deductible donation, the society says people can still contribute to this worthwhile endeavour by going to the GoFundMe site (https://gf.me/u/yz6hb3); sending funds by etransfer to carpentercreekgreenburial@gmail.com; donating directly by making a deposit in the Green Burial bank account at the Kootenay Savings Credit Union; sending a designated cheque directly to the Carpenter Creek Last Wishes Society (Attention: Green Burial), Box 231, New Denver, BC V0G 1S0.

In September a local resident offered a piece of land for the future Green Burial cemetery, giving the initiative a big boost. However, the society warns it may take up to two years to complete the necessary legal requirements – subdivision, tests, permits – to allow for natural burials.
monthly Polar Plunge fundraiser is going digital for 2021

Submitted

New Year’s Day Langham Polar Plunge aren’t going to let something like a pandemic put a stop to the popular community event.

But it will be a little different this year.

For the last 15 years, the Polar Plunge saw a crazy dash by locals into freezing Kaslo Bay, followed by being warmed from the outside with a hot fire, hugs and blankets – and being warmed on the inside with hot dogs, hot cider and good cheer all around.

And it is all to support the Langham Cultural Centre and its programs.

“It’s a real bummer,” says Langham board member Harel Challmie. “I was really looking forward to manning the barbecue again, expanding the offerings, keeping our plungers well fed with good hot food.”

When it was clear the plunge would be cancelled, Challmie and a Langham committee got together to brainstorm. As with so many events this year, the sharing capacity of social media became the answer. The Great Pandemic Polar Plunge for 2021 would happen – and it was going digital.

The idea is that pluggers will again collect pledges from those who will financially sponsor their plunge; the plunger plunges in any way they choose, and has their plunge filmed in a short video; videos can then be posted on the Langham Facebook page by January 2, 2021, where they will be shared with everyone.

“The idea is that everybody be as creative, fun and whacky as they want to be with their plunge videos,” says Langham Executive Director Paul Grace-Campbell. “Plunge into any cold water – have somebody dump a bucket of freezing water over you – family plunge, bubble plunge, pet plunge, costumes, songs, chanting, drama, whatever works for you.”

“Also, of course, be safe – don’t plunge alone – have your bubble support team ready nearby with blankets, fire, warm drinks, hugs, etc...” he said.

“And don’t forget the hot dogs!” Challmie adds.

With the video evidence of a successful plunge accomplished, pledgers then send their donations to the donation page on the Langham website https://thelangham.ca/donate, or by mail to Box 1000, Kaslo, BC V0G 1M0.

Prizes offered

For the first time, prizes will be awarded – one prize each for Most Creative Plunge Video and Largest Pledge Amount Gathered. The prize is a $75 gift certificate to Front Street Market for each winner! Winners will be chosen by Langham board members during the week after the plunge deadline.

For pledge sheets, questions or more info contact langham@netidea.com or 250-353-2661. You can also check our website www.thelangham.ca and Facebook page www.facebook.com/thelangham.
The Valhalla Foundation for Ecology has launched its first website, which aims to keep the community informed and be a resource for students and supporters.

“It’s a great resource for students working on a science report, homeschoolers, or anyone looking to learn and explore online during this COVID stay-at-home time,” said VFE Chairperson Wayne McCrory.

Key features of the site are an introduction to each of the foundation’s conservation properties and stewardship work, a link to VFE information on the Canada Revenue Agency site (Charities Branch), a selection of recent media coverage, inspirational blog posts, recognition for partners, links to the VFE Facebook page and other social media, and links to more sites where readers can explore conservation, Indigenous issues, and environmental protection.

For those who wish to support the Valhalla Foundation’s work financially, there are links to giving portal CanadaHelps.org with options to donate cash or securities.

A ‘Let’s Talk’ contact form invites readers into conversation. “We would love feedback on the website so please take a look and use the “Let’s Talk” feature to send us your comments,” said McCrory.

You can visit the site at www.valhallafoundationforecology.org

For those wishing to donate or communicate using a more traditional method, the Valhalla Foundation for Ecology has a new postal address: PO Box 207, New Denver, BC V0G 1S0.
Season’s Greetings to all
Thank you for your support!

250-777-3789
Downtown New Denver

Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year
from
Crescent Bay Construction

Holiday Hours:
Dec 24 closed at noon
Dec 25, 26, 27 & 28 closed
Dec 31 closed at noon
Jan 1, 2 & 3 closed

Nakusp • Ph. 250 265-3747 • Email cresbay@telus.net

Poverty reduction strategy sets a solid foundation

TogetherBC: British Columbia’s Poverty Reduction Strategy 2019 Annual Report was tabled by the legislature on December 10, and is available to the public. TogetherBC is the Province’s first poverty reduction strategy. It is a cross-government approach to reducing the overall poverty rate by 25% and the child poverty rate by 50% by 2024.

The 2019 annual report has been reviewed by the Minister’s Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee. The report includes the committee’s commentary, describes actions taken and contains a comprehensive listing of all government programs implemented during the 2019 calendar year that contribute to poverty reduction.

Key actions include increasing the minimum wage, increasing income and disability assistance rates, and removing policies in order to make it easier for people to access assistance, supports and services. The 2019 report outlines a strong foundation for helping people break the cycle of poverty and access better opportunities and better services.

While the report shows positive signs during 2019, it does not reflect the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which will be addressed in future reports.

The 2019 annual report is available online at www.gov.bc.ca/TogetherBC
by Jan McMurray

The Nakusp and Area Bike Society (NABS) had another productive year developing the Mt. Abriel Recreation Site on Hwy 23 just north of Nakusp.

Two large gazebos (20’ x 20’) were constructed, dirt jumps were created, two work stands with bike tools and pumps were installed, and 15 kilometres of trail were built.

“There are now 40 kilometres of trail open at Mt. Abriel,” said Adam Balls, project manager, in an interview on-site. “It was super popular this year. We had thousands of users. It’s extremely popular with people from Nelson, Revelstoke, Rossland, and other places within the West Kootenay, and with people from the coast who come for two weeks, specifically to come to Mt. Abriel.”

Balls explained that NABS collects the trail use data online. Trail users use an app to track their rides, and the data is available on the internet.

“We have 28 accessible campsites. We have adaptive trails. We have destination trails to bring people in,” Balls said.

The society also held kids camps and social rides at the site in the summer, as well as volunteer build days. Another exciting development is a mountain biking team at Nakusp Secondary, with 14 members. The team trained at Mt. Abriel this fall, and will be back in the spring, Balls says.

In 2021, the group hopes to further develop a skills park and a climbing trail to the top of Mt. Abriel – but Balls promises the trail won’t be steep. “It’s a really low grade. You could cross-country ski up it,” he said. “We want to make it accessible for everybody.”

NABS is also looking into avenues for more community engagement in 2021.

The project employed 20 people this year, and all the materials were locally sourced where possible. Balls says the project has “amazing local support” and has received a lot of in-kind donations from local businesses.

In addition to the JCP program funding, which was supported by Arrow & Slocan Lakes Community Services, NABS has received funding from the Investing in Canadian Infrastructure program (ICIP), RDCK, and CBT.

“A big thank you to everyone who has been involved this year,” Balls said. “We really appreciate the volunteers who maintain the trails, local businesses that support us and our funders – and all our staff.

“For me, it’s the people. It’s all about the people,” Balls said. “Getting community buy-in makes things happen.”

Check out nakusbikesociety.ca for more information.
COMMUNITY

Kootenay Freedom questions mainstream narrative on COVID-19
by Jan McMurray

A new group called Kootenay Freedom has been holding vigils and rallies in communities throughout the region “to show that we question the mainstream narrative on the pandemic,” says Kootenay Freedom member Nadine Podmoroff.

The next rally takes place in Castlegar on December 21, from 10 am to 2 pm. The rally will start at Millennium Park at 10 am.

“We’re taking a stand in our communities, leading by example,” she said.

The group started up in early summer, and now has over 400 members. “More and more people are signing up now – we’re getting 60-100 new members a week,” Podmoroff reports.

The group provides educational materials at the rallies and vigils, and distributes a newsletter regularly to members. Rallies are larger, with speakers and musicians, while vigils typically have 12-24 people, Podmoroff says.

Vigils are held every Saturday and have happened in Winlaw, Kaslo, Nelson, Castlegar and Trail so far. Podmoroff says vigils are expected to start up soon in New Denver and Nakusp.

“We are an emotional support group that is questioning why a lot of doctors, health care workers and scientists are not being allowed to speak,” Podmoroff explained. “We’re also questioning why our rights are disappearing – our rights to have a job, to go to work and make money to feed our families, our rights to breathe fresh air, to come together and pray in a church, to come together for a funeral, and the rights we have to choose what kind of medical interventions can occur in our own bodies. We stand for medical freedom and informed consent when it comes to vaccinations. We support transparent science and unbiased journalism and privacy rights and free speech and democracy. We’re questioning why we are still on lockdown, especially when there are so few deaths globally and in Canada.”

Podmoroff says many Kootenay Freedom members are health care workers and social workers. “Several of us are social workers who are happy to meet with other members who feel they could benefit from this expertise,” Podmoroff said.

Kootenay Freedom is working in alliance with similar groups in the Okanagan and the Lower Mainland, as well. Podmoroff said she went to a rally in Kelowna on December 12 that was attended by 2,000 people.

Kootenay Freedom is run strictly by volunteers and there is no charge to become a member.

Contact the group by emailing kootenayfreedom@protonmail.com.
Queens Bay author releases new book, Mary's Secret
by Jan McMurray

Queens Bay author Claudette R&D Burton has written a delightful story called Mary’s Secret, offering an account of Mother Mary that is different from the norm.

Burton was inspired to write the story last fall while she was hiking in Andorra, a tiny country between Spain and France.

“In Andorra, I started understanding Mary as a whole other entity than what the Catholic Church portrayed her as,” Burton said in an interview. “Once or twice I felt intimidated because I was going against the mainstream, but I kept having dreams encouraging me to carry on.”

Burton explained that there are very old Roman churches in Andorra, and many of their frescoes had been plastered over because of their Pagan content.

“It was interesting to realize that the Roman Catholic Church felt it was necessary to rearrange the artwork to suit the story line that they wanted to tell,” she said.

The image on the front cover of Mary’s Secret is of a carving of Mary and Jesus that is legendary in Andorra. As the story is told, ages ago the original carving was found under a white rose bush when the church it had been displayed in burnt down in the town of Meritxell. Although taken to another grander church in Camillo, it disappeared again with no footprints left in the snow – only to be found back under the same rose bush down the valley.

This was considered miraculous and a new church was built for Her near the rose bush in Meritxell. Our Lady of Meritxell became the Patron Saint of Andorra.

“It was the first time in my life I had ever met a Mary I could relate to,” Burton said. “She looks so burnt out, with this special two-year-old on her lap. I chuckled to myself when I saw the carving.” A couple of days later, Burton saw a shopping bag with her portrait on it winking, which made her laugh out loud.

“These two images of Mary in very different moods sparked fresh insights for me that became this story,” she said. “It was just delightful, so liberating, that I had to write it out.”

Burton says there are various layers to the story, and grandmothers will find something different than a teen in its pages.

“We are storytelling creatures. Why do we accept some stories and reject others? The whole storytelling process is fascinating to me. You can see it today. When you have a powerful person like the pope or Donald Trump tell stories that some people think is a crock and others swallow hook, line and sinker – how does this happen? Politics and reality can be changed because of one powerful person’s stories being repeated over and over again.”

Burton has lived in Queens Bay for over 40 years. She has written articles for magazines and other periodicals, and a book, The Porcupine who Would, a children’s story about local landscape ecology issues.

New Denver residents Art Joyce and Anne Champagne were involved in the early editing of Mary’s Secret.

Kokanee eggs planted in shore-spawning kokanee habitat restoration project

by Jan McMurray

After two years of researching and providing education about the genetically distinct shore-spawning kokanee in the west arm of Kootenay Lake, the Friends of Kootenay Lake Stewardship Society (FOKL) has launched a pilot project near McDonald’s Landing Regional Park at Six Mile.

This fall, the society chose a site between Six Mile Beach and Kokanee Creek Provincial Park, deposited gravel (ideal nesting material for kokanee), and buried kokanee egg capsules and data temperature loggers in the gravel. In the spring, they’ll see if the eggs hatched and will have data on water temperature.

“Our work complements about 17 years of fisheries researchers raising kokanee eggs in the pilot, so the eggs buried here are important to their habitat,” says LeBlanc. “In the spring, we’ll assess the eggs to see survival rate, and compare it to the temperature data.”

The pilot site is below the low water mark. LeBlanc explains, to see if a lower elevation habitat will be favourable to kokanee development. The society has created a control site, as well, above the low water mark.

She explained that there are not enough shore spawners to use their eggs in the pilot, so the eggs buried in the pilot project are from stream spawners, from Lussier River, a tributary of Kootenay Lake in the East Kootenay. If there are fry in the spring, they will be euthanized because the Lussier River stream spawners are not native to Kootenay Lake.

LeBlanc says there are many reasons why kokanee are important. A keystone species, they are important to the entire food network. They feed bears, osprey, eagles, and predator fish, and when they decompose, they feel the water. They are also important to the sport fishing industry.

Kokanee are not doing well in Kootenay Lake; there was a ban on the kokanee harvest last year, and there are currently incentives to catch predator fish in an effort to bring back the kokanee.

“The pilot project pursues potential solutions for shore-spawning kokanee – it’s not necessarily a solution,” Camille says. “The solution is to keep the water levels higher and to reinervate the nutrients in Kootenay Lake.”

FOKL is working closely with many different agencies and sectors, including provincial fisheries, environmental groups and hydro operators. “FortisBC has been a huge supporter of this project,” she said.

The project involved a lot of community support, as well. The society has created a control site, as well, above the low water mark.
Visits to long-term care must balance health risks with quality of life: Seniors Advocate

submitted

British Columbia Seniors Advocate Isobel Mackenzie released the results of a province-wide survey on the impact of visit restrictions at long-term care and assisted living homes.

The report, Staying Apart to Stay Safe, reflects the experiences of more than 13,000 residents and their family members over the course of the current pandemic.

“This is one of the most challenging issues we face,” Mackenzie said. “Visit restrictions were imposed in long-term care and assisted living homes because we care about the seniors who live there, and we want to keep them safe. But as we enter our ninth month, British Columbia seniors and their families are seeking a better balance between preventing the transmission of COVID-19 and ensuring quality of life.”

Calls, letters and emails on the issue of visit restrictions have dominated the Office of the Seniors Advocate more than any other single issue in its history. Many of the stories detail the negative impacts of limited visits or no visits, with some residents and their family members expressing more fear about loneliness than contracting COVID-19.

The report highlights that when COVID-19 first struck care homes, the Province acted swiftly and decisively, bringing in a number of prevention measures that have seen BC perform relatively well in managing COVID-19 in long-term care and assisted living.

“The Provincial Health Officer and the government of BC have my profound gratitude for their quick and comprehensive actions at the beginning of this pandemic,” shared Mackenzie. “Many lives were undoubtedly saved. However, residents and family members now recognize the pandemic will continue for many more months, and the survey makes it clear they are asking for more time with their loved ones.”

“When we started visit restrictions, the goal was to ensure residents in long-term care and assisted living were kept safe from COVID-19. Eight months later, we need to ask the question: What are we keeping them safe for if it is not to enjoy the time we care about the seniors who live there, and we want to keep them safe. But as we enter our ninth month, British Columbia seniors and their families are seeking a better balance between preventing the transmission of COVID-19 and ensuring quality of life.”

The survey generated over 13,000 valid responses from all parts of the province. In a series of questions covering visits before the pandemic, during the first phase of visit restrictions, and currently, the survey found:

- Before the pandemic, 35% of families were visiting long-term care and assisted living residents for an hour or more several times per week and even daily.
- Prior to COVID-19, the majority of visitors were performing essential care for residents, such as personal care, grooming, assistance with feeding and mobilization.
- Most family members were not aware of the possibility of essential visits during the first four months of visit restrictions, and almost half of the people who did apply for an essential visit were refused.
- Under the current visitation policy, the majority of visits are only once a week or less, and half the visits in long-term care are 30 minutes or less.
- 30% of current visits are outside only.
- Currently, 65% of visits are observed by staff for some or all of the time.
- Only 21% of visits are in the privacy of the resident’s room (75% of long-term care residents and almost 100% of assisted living residents live in private rooms).
- 70% of visitors are not allowed to touch their loved one.
- Most visitors are washing their hands, wearing a mask, having their temperature checked, and answering health questions prior to each visit; and
- Most family members and residents support some visit restrictions during the pandemic, although they believe visits should be more frequent and that at least one more visitor for each resident should be permitted.

The report also highlights data that points to signs of negative health impacts on residents. Of concern to the Seniors Advocate is the substantial increase in the use of antipsychotic medication during the period of visit restrictions and clinical assessments completed in the first quarter that show an increase in unexplained weight loss and worsening of mood or symptoms of depression.

The complete report is available at https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/reports/
We, the family of Johnny Shkuratoff would like to announce his sudden passing. On November 21, 2020 John lost his life in a tragic motor vehicle accident at the age of 58 years old. He was born in 1962. He may have lost his physical being then but through his family lives on. Because of the Covid virus, there will be no public funeral service. We wish only that you take this time to enjoy your own pod of loved ones.

Thank you for all the support that we received, it being food deliveries, counseling phone calls with memorable stories or just a quick visit off the deck. We appreciate you all!

Johnny has been predeceased by both parents John and Irene Shkuratoff and will be missed by twin brothers Ken and Carey along with many other family and friends.

Thank you to the staff of the Castlegar Funeral Chapel, all medical staff throughout the process, and community members throughout the Doukhobor community.

Family Shkuratoff
Ven and children – Shauna, Johnathon and Angie

Johnny Shkuratoff
1962-2020

Happy Holidays!
Everything 10% Off in December
Open Every Day except December 25 & 26
Free Gift-Wrapping

Raven’s Nest
Manna Garcia Rice wraps a gift at Raven’s Nest on New Denver Merchants’ Night, December 4.

Happy Holidays!
Happy Holidays!

Everything 10% Off in
December
Open Every Day except December 25 & 26
Free Gift-Wrapping

Raven’s Nest

Happy Holidays!
Everything 10% Off in
December
Open Every Day except December 25 & 26
Free Gift-Wrapping

Raven’s Nest
Morgann Black at Touch of Fashion & Trendy Treads won the Ugly Sweater Contest at the Nakusp Celebration of Light, December 4.
Kaslo Front Street Antiques a natural for Neil and Cassandra Morrison

by Jan McMurray

Kaslo Front Street Antiques opened on Kaslo’s main street in summer 2019, and owners Cassandra and Neil Morrison are loving it.

“A lot of things had to fall into place to make this dream happen,” said Cassandra. “We’re very grateful for the opportunity to keep our dream alive, and for being where we are in Kaslo on Front Street, surrounded by such a fantastic community.”

The couple met while they were both working in aviation a decade ago. Neil was in aircraft maintenance and Cassandra was in customer service. They have both been hobbyist antique collectors since they were children.

“Neil’s private collection was getting a bit out of hand,” Cassandra says. “I used to joke with him that he needed to open his own antique store, and that evolved a bit serendipitously into the shop we have today!”

A few years ago, the pair followed some family friends to Kaslo and fell in love with the area almost immediately.

“The rich history of the Kootenays inspires us and fuels our passion for antiques,” says Cassandra.

Most of the items in the store are from estate sales and auctions, as well as from private sellers and the Morrison’s own collection.

“Neil goes out of his way to find unique items to strike every collector’s curiosity,” Cassandra says, “and we’ve been blessed to have over a dozen different consignors come to us – individual collectors from around the area that all specialize in their own thing. The wide variety of vintage, collectibles and antiques they bring to us regularly helps to make Front Street Antiques sparkle.”

The store also carries a small selection of Canadian-made retail products from other Canadian and BC businesses that the couple loves and supports.

Cassandra says they’ve been “absolutely blown away” by the support from the community, especially this past year. “The best part of the store is that it’s brought a great many people into our lives that feel like family to us now. A special thank you to all our consignors and regular customers in the area for their support throughout this past year. We appreciate all of you and the infinite amount of wisdom you share with us daily! We’re hopeful we can continue to bring Kaslovians and the Kootenays some simple nostalgia and joy into the 2021 season and beyond.”

Neil and Cassandra Morrison have brought their passion for antiques to Kaslo’s main street.

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The Wild Connection campaign launches to challenge Zincton proposal

by Jan McMurray

A new group from the Slocan Lake area has launched a campaign to protect the New Denver-Kaslo corridor, where the proposed Zincton ski resort would be located.

“Concerned citizens are launching the Wild Connection campaign in response to proposed industrial recreational developments in the New Denver-Kaslo corridor,” says a news release by the group. “The area is being targeted for commercial ski operations, including the Zincton All-Season Village proposal.”

Spokespeople Nicky Blackshaw and KL Kivi say the Wild Connection is a group of local and KL Kivi say the Wild Connection is a group of local citizens – young people, families, seniors, indigenous and non-indigenous people, hikers, mountain bikers, skiers, ATVers, snowmobilers, indigenous people, hikers, mountain bikers, skiers, ATVers, snowmobilers, and landscape artists – who care about having healthy communities and ecosystems, and a strong sense of community.

The group cites the crucial importance of this habitat as a connectivity corridor between adjacent Goat Range and Kokanee Glacier Provincial Parks, calling it “Piq ki7láwna7,” the Sinixt word for the white grizzly bear.

“Piq ki7láwna7, so named after the sacred and rare white variation of grizzlies who live there, represents an incredible diversity of ecosystems including mountain slope, alpine, wetland, valley and old growth forest,” notes Kivi, who represents the Autonomous Sinixt on the committee and also worked on the Jumbo Wild! Campaign. “There’s a magnificent place at stake here, both ecologically and socially. The news release notes that the area provides essential terrain for the survival of large mammals like wolverine, mountain goat and grizzly, and for smaller creatures like toads. It’s also an area that’s extensively used by locals for a huge range of activities, such as skiing, hunting, fishing and harvesting berries, plants and roots.

Kivi says the cumulative impacts of the existing and proposed developments in Piq ki7láwna7 are “under-researched,” pointing out that the area already hosts multiple all-season resort tenures as well as logging, mining and a broad range of recreational use.

“Zincton was the catalyst for our group, but the corridor encompasses a broad area that has both the Zincton and Mount Brennan Backcountry Recreation applications pending, as well as an expansion proposal by Stellar Heliskiing,” said Blackshaw. “We want the whole picture considered before decisions are made.”

Although the group is deeply concerned about the cultural impact of a resort community like Zincton, Blackshaw says, “Zincton is a symptom of a larger issue, so we’re looking at addressing those larger issues. We want ecological landscape-level planning that takes into account all users and the cumulative impacts. We want to make sure the community’s vision of economic development is honoured. All our regional Official Community Plans and surveys confirm that locals want right-sized development that attracts full-time residents and protects the land and water. We don’t want to put all our eggs in the tourism basket.”

The group is also asking that the Sinixt be included in all decision-making and that their interests. The news release states that the area offers “Piq ki7láwna7, the Sinixt word for the white grizzly bear.

“We want the whole picture considered before decisions are made.”

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Cornucopia

“Cornucopia”

422 Front Street, Kaslo, BC

Marilyn James of the Autonomous Sinixt is quoted in the press release. “Through our traditional governance system, Smum’iem, we continue to uphold our unceded rights and responsibilities in this nam squash’um (homeland),” she says. “The entirety of the Piq ki7láwna7 area must be preserved with no further incursions by development.”

The Wild Connection collaborative team is asking the provincial and regional governments for transparent and community-based planning processes and for developers to respect community vision and interests.

“Ultimately, we want to define our future for ourselves,” says Blackshaw.

For more information, visit: www.thewildconnection.ca.
Nakusp’s Jean Hewat works to preserve community’s mushroom bounty

by Anna Lamb-Yorski

Jean Hewat is a mushroom picker, buyer and ambassador from Nakusp. She has been involved in the mushroom industry since 1978 and is the owner and operator of Jean’s Mushroom Station, one of a handful of mushroom-buying operations nestled in the idyllic British Columbia mountain town of Nakusp.

When they were children, Hewat and her two younger siblings would spend their free time roaming the woods surrounding Nakusp. Amidst the golden tufts of larch needles and the bell-shaped scales of hemlock cones, they would scour the forest floor for mushrooms they could eat or sell. In the spring they would hunt out spongy morels, and in the fall, they went after lobster, chanterelle, and prized pine mushrooms.

Nakusp has been home to a small and seasonal commercial mushroom industry since 1978. “Many local people go out on weekends or after work,” Hewat explains. “Some even take their holidays during the season, and they use the money as a supplemental income.” The money earned by local pickers often goes towards buying something that normally they couldn’t afford – a coveted household appliance, a set of new winter tires, or a family vacation might be the goal.

“In the beginning, I picked so I could pay for my three kids to play hockey,” Hewat says. “It sort of spiralled from there.”

Business aside, Jean is at heart a mushroom ambassador. She willingly educates those curious folks who stop in to find out more about her business and the wonderful world of mushrooms. And while she could easily dismiss them and keep her information secret, she’s friendly and helps them learn instead.

“A good third of the people I see are new and interested,” Jean admits. “I teach them the proper picking techniques.” She stresses the importance of foraging properly so that no harm comes to the mycelium, the webby life force that is buried beneath the mushroom bodies.

“If the company did not take all of the tree species out, and left the smaller larch and hemlock trees, I am sure the mushrooms would still continue to grow,” Jean affirms.

In recent years, Jean has seen first-hand how one person’s actions can make a difference. If she knows that an area slated to be logged contains a pocket of sought-after mushrooms, she picks up the phone.

“You might have to go out with a forester and explain where they are,” she says. “A lot of people are under the assumption that if an area is going to get logged, there is nothing we can do about it. As long as you inquire, maybe there is a chance.”

Jean hopes other pickers will start to share the location of some of their mushroom patches with local forestry companies to help protect them. She believes that such efforts could mean that her two grandchildren will be able to continue the family tradition.

Most pickers would agree, Jean assures us, that the relationship they have with a patch is not purely commercial.

“When you go to find a patch, you get to know your route – where the mushrooms are and where they should be – which log, hump, ridge they are on,” Jean says. “So you do form a kind of a bond and you look after your area to preserve it.”

Anna Lamb-Yorski is a reporter for Living Here, a journalism project to share local stories about people finding positive solutions that help build healthy, safe & strong communities. Learn more at livinghere.ca
by Moe Lyons

Silverton council had a fairly brief meeting, partially due to technical difficulties. Councillor Leah Main was elected chair in the absence of a mayor. Councillor K. Gordon was not present.

• The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) presented a document outlining the requirements for calling and conducting a byelection for the position of mayor. As the Village is not required to call a byelection immediately and a number of things need to be sorted out – including adequate notice to the electorate and arrangements for mail-in ballots – it was decided to instruct staff to do all the necessary preparatory work and revisit the issue in January. As the CAO said, “Once we appoint a Chief Electoral Officer, we are on the clock,” and the byelection must be called within 80 days. In view of the need to ask the Ministry and Elections BC for further guidance, particularly regarding current health concerns, the Village decided to take advantage of the fact they have, as Councillor Main said, “a fair amount of leeway.” Councillor Yofonoff stressed that in her opinion, “The sooner the better, we need a mayor,” but agreed to go along with this decision. The byelection is expected to cost about $6,000.

• In CAO Hillary Elliott’s report, she announced the completion of the CBT-funded Silverton Memorial Hall project. The project included new windows, an extended roof, and paving of the south-facing parking lot. The CBT has published an article online about the project (stories.ourtrust.org). She also informed council that New Denver’s application for a wood waste disposal project was not successful. She has been busy with the Lakeside Campground project, the gallery building insurance claim, the byelection and COVID-related matters. The two proposed draft plans for Lakeside Park will be available to council soon. Work is ongoing on the Water Main Replacement Project. There are ongoing discussions among the three Villages about a bylaw officer. Elliott said she had a very good meeting with Chris Johnson, the RDCK’s emergency program manager. Work has been stalled on the Official Community Plan and the Zoning Bylaw.

• Council voted to provide the New Denver and Area Housing Society with a letter of support for its project to build a 10-unit affordable housing complex in New Denver, on the property where the recycling depot currently sits.

• A detailed report by Galena Environmental Ltd. was submitted on behalf of Silverton property owners Chris and Louise McEwan as part of their request for permission to rebuild a failing retaining wall and two old breast walls at their lakefront property at 821 Lake Avenue. Councillor Yofonoff asked if all the necessary permits were in place from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the BC Ministry of Environment. It was unclear to council whether Village approval needed to be in place before these permits could be issued. Attempts to sort this out with the applicant and the CAO were hindered by technical difficulties with the meeting’s digital platform. The item was deferred until these questions could be answered. Councillor Main as chair indicated this might be a matter to be brought back to a special meeting.

• Councillor Yofonoff reported that the Healthy Community Society has hired a new compost manager and said he is doing a great job.

• Councillor Main turned in her usual extensive report. She has been very busy with the RDCK and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), whose AGM she attended. As part of FCM, she is about to attend a meeting with the Federal Liberal BC Caucus. She also will attend a briefing with the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

• Council agreed to defer the discussion of a revised grant-in-aid policy to the next meeting.

• Council confirmed the meeting schedule would remain the same – the second Wednesday of every month at 7 pm.

• Council approved various appointments. Councillor Arlene Yofonoff wondered if the appointments could or would be revisited once a new mayor was elected, and Main said that was a distinct possibility and quite likely, but they don’t have to be.

Appointments: RDCK director - Leah Main, Tanya Gordon alternate; Chamber of Commerce rep - Arlene Yofonoff, K. Gordon alternate (provisionally, if she accepts); Emergency Management Officer – K. Gordon (provisionally), Tanya Gordon alternate; West Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital Board - Leah Main, Tanya Gordon alternate; Columbia Basin Broadband Corporation Liaison - Tanya Gordon, alternate; Recreation Commission #8 - Arlene Yofonoff, Tanya Gordon alternate, Eva Shandro community member; Rosebery Parklands and Trails Commission - Leah Main, Tanya Gordon alternate, Hank Hastings community member; Invermere Water Main; Slocan District Chamber of Commerce Health Committee - Tanya Gordon, Leah Main alternate; Ktunaxa Kinbasket Treaty Advisory Committee - Tanya Gordon, Leah Main alternate; Columbia Basin Broadband Corporation Liaison - Leah Main; Flood Mitigation Corporation alternate - (provisionally), Leah Main alternate; RDCK alternate (provisionally) - Arlene Yofonoff; alternate Arlene Yofonoff.

• Acting Mayor appointments: January-March - Leah Main; April-June - Tanya Gordon; July-September: K. Gordon; October-December - Arlene Yofonoff.
by John Bonin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

• Kaslo has begun the long journey to cut its fossil fuel use by 2050. Council voted to adopt the West Kootenay 100% Renewable Energy Plan, the culmination of a region-wide initiative to develop a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions throughout the area, and to support local government’s transition to renewable energy.

Council first began working on the plan a year ago with the West Kootenay EcoSociety, the group that initiated the project. Eight other local governments are also taking part, making it a unique initiative in the country.

Over the coming months, staff will go over the plans and recommend to council how best to incorporate specific initiatives to meet Kaslo’s goals – things like buying more electric vehicles for the Village fleet, building EV charge stations, lowering speed limits, promoting geothermal and green energy, encouraging better building methods, etc.

But they also warned it won’t always be easy.

“A challenge for local implementation, aside from individual actions, is the local capacity and funding to assess, plan, educate and implement the recommendations, which was already underestimated in August 2020 about the renewable energy planning process,” says a report to council.

Funding is available for many of the initiatives, the report also indicates.

In public comments after the meeting, online viewers from the EcoSociety praised council for taking the step.

But staff also warned it won’t all be smooth sailing.

“In sustainable development, there are always gaps, and on-site guidance to Village crew to assist with planting the first trees. The project will be completed by the end of next April and will cost about $5,000.

• Council approved the conceptual designs for Front Street Park, done by Heritage Consultant Bob Inwood. The Park Design Committee met in November to consider revisions suggested after the public got a chance to review the designs of the stage and washroom.

CAO Ian Dunlop reported that the new stage design will help improve sight lines, bring the front of the stage out with a protruding roof and steps, enlarge the entrance to the washrooms to improve accessibility, and situate the buildings on the property to maximize the open space.

Inwood will now commission proper architectural plans for construction, and council will get a chance to approve those in January. If all goes well, construction should begin in the spring and the park ready for events by market season. This project is being funded through a Columbia Basin Trust Community Outdoor Revitalization Grant, which covers 80% of the design and construction costs.

• Plans for restoring and repairing earthworks that keep the Kaslo River within its banks in town cleared another hurdle. The Kaslo River Dike Remediation project revised scope was approved by the Union of BC Municipalities and Emergency Measures BC, the two agencies funding and overseeing the project.

The Village applied first in 2018 and got $304,000 in funding for the project in 2019. While work began in fall 2019, CAO Ian Dunlop says they received $265,000 in August 2020 that the project needs a Department of Fisheries & Oceans (DFO) authorization, which could still take months.

“This was unanticipated when the project was originally budgeted because DFO regulations became more stringent in 2019,” he says. In October 2020, the budget for the project was updated and increased to $461,000 to include all of the additional engineering, archaeological, and fish protection work required.

Since the 2018 funding could not be increased, the Village was advised to submit a revised application with a reduced project scope that would fit into the approved budget of $304,000. They could then apply for a new grant for the rest of the project and funding.

“We received word last week that our revised 2018 application was accepted, so we can resume working on the project and permit approvals,” Dunlop told council.

Work on that first phase could commence in late winter or early spring 2021. Council expects to hear about the extra funding for the second phase of the project by this February.

• Homeowners will see a slightly higher charge for sewer services when they get their annual utility bill in January.

Sewer rates in 2020 were, for the first time, based on the recommendations of the Liquid Waste Management Plan and on the actual cost of operating the system. Last year the charge for residential sewer service was set at $370. But that’s going to go up.

“This year was also the first year we implemented new payroll tracking of the hours that public works staff devote to the sewer system,” says a report to council. “Their tasks include day-to-day operations, repair, maintenance, shadge pressing and training.”

But it turned out that staff time was underestimated, and was about $12,000 higher than budgeted. So this year, there’s an increase to compensate. The residential rate is climbing to $382, a 3.2% increase in fees.

Sewer fees will now be included on the annual utility bill to be issued in January, instead of separately. Though you’ll get your bill in January, you have until the end of the year to pay.

• Council approved an increase in fees for seasonal temporary/ mobile vendor business licenses, back up to $200. The fee was $200 in 2015 but was reduced to $75 in 2018, which is the same amount that local businesses pay for their business licenses.

“There are different types of temporary and mobile vendors, such as food trucks, carts and fruit stands,” says a staff report. “But local ‘bricks and mortar’ businesses may not feel they are being treated fairly, as taxpayers, so we recommend reinstating the higher rate until business license fees and the licensing bylaw can be formally reviewed.”

The new $200 rate, which comes into effect next year, does not impact the farmers’ market, which pays $100 per day to cover all vendors.

Council also approved increasing the business licences rate for temporary mobile vendors (think a T-shirt seller who comes in for a weekend) from $0 to $25.

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Slocan council, November 30: Affordable housing project

by Barbara Curry Mulcahy

An affordable housing project that is in the planning stages in Slocan was the focus of a special council meeting held November 30.

Representing the 28 people who had signed a petition in opposition to the project, Steve Baal outlined the “strong concerns” of the Springer Street area residents.

The project’s proposed location is on eight lots bordered by Griffen Avenue, Slocan Street and Springer Street. Six to ten units targeting low-income families, in a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, will potentially be built there.

“We know there’s a need for housing,” Baal said in his presentation. He stressed that he was “not concerned about who’s going to live there” but rather that the site was “not adequate.” He listed four problems with the location: too small an area for the septic system; a neighbourhood that already struggles with low water pressure; dense housing that would change the quiet character of the neighbourhood; and the danger of dense family housing in a high traffic area.

The septic system struck a raw nerve for many. “Nobody wants the smell of an outhouse,” Baal said. He said there’s going to be water issues.” Councillor Joel Pelletier assured residents Baal’s concern about having children living on a busy corner at the entrance to town also met with some public approval. One resident called the intersection of Griffen Avenue and Slocan Street “dangerous,” saying that the issue “has been brought up… and nothing’s been done.” CAO Gordon pointed out that new septic systems at both of the multi-family developments in Slocan – the Slocan City Suites seniors housing and the condos – emanated odours.

During public participation, Cheryl Fredrickson said that at times the condensed curling club stands; the former mill site; the land leased to the Slocan Valley Outriders Association; and the 60 lots south of the cemetery which, it was suggested, could be bought at a reasonable price from the Slocan Valley Community Complex Association and rezoned to be inside the Village limits. Mayor Lunn said that changing the site “would mean starting from scratch.”

Fourteen members of the public attended the meeting; most were part of the Springer Street area delegation. At times, some clapped or shouted “Amen!” and “Yes!” to Baal’s statements and once one person laughed at a statement made by CAO Gordon. Largely though, Baal’s quiet, forthright, and thoughtful manner and the CAO and council’s sincere concern kept emotions reined in.

“We don’t want to build anything that’s not feasible,” said Mayor Jessica Lunn, adding that council’s “intent is to have a conversation with the community” at a public meeting in 2021, where draft plans could be presented. She said she recognized some people were concerned “that we’re moving ahead no matter what” but she pointed out that council had not made a final decision and was holding off on completing the rezoning of the site.

Most comments during public participation were against the project, though some residents thanked council for trying to fill the need for affordable housing. Rose Petro said she thought the housing project was an “awesome idea” and that “a lot of people are looking forward to it.”

“I love the hard work you’ve done making this happen,” she said.

Before hearing from the residents, CAO Gordon introduced a PowerPoint presentation showing the process the Village had followed in planning the project. Slocan struck the Affordable Housing Advisory Commission in 2017 in response to a community request. The commission studied Village-owned land and identified two preferred sites. The top choice was this one. Both power and water are adjacent to the site and the land is evenly sloped and partly cleared. It is located right across from another multi-family condo development.

The second choice, 12 lots north of the Springer Street site, after the commission realized Springer Creek cut through many of the lots at that site. Provincial regulations on setback distances from right across from another multi-family condo development.

In 2019, the Village contracted M’akola Development Services to analyze the feasibility of the site. “M’akola have been great project managers,” said Councillor Pelletier, council representative on the commission.

In March 2020, the Village was awarded a $13,000 grant and $16,000 from the Ministry of Transportation and Housing Corporation. That same month, council directed staff to prepare to rezone the preferred site to Multi-Family Residential.

In April and May, council put out a request for proposals to hire an architectural firm, and Cover Architecture in Nelson was hired and is now working on the preliminary design.

In July, council passed a resolution to support the rezoning was holding two readings of the Zoning Amendment Bylaw, the OCP Amendment Bylaw, and the Lane Closure Bylaw. At a public hearing on the proposed bylaw in August 10, area residents first brought up their concerns. Council then passed a resolution to table third reading of the amendment bylaws until the Village had more information to provide to the public about the project.

Once the draft preliminary plan is ready, Gordon said the Village will hold a public meeting. CAO Gordon emphasized that the draft plan would only be a starting point. A municipality “can go back and forth with BC Housing multiple times” before getting approval for a submission for funding. CAO Gordon also pointed out that new construction typically increases the appraised value of neighbouring homes.

HOLIDAY HOURS

All regular days and hours of operation apply with the following exceptions:

RDCK NELSON, CRESTON AND KANUSP OFFICES

December 24-January 1

Closed

Offices will reopen on January 4

COMMUNITY RECREATION COMPLEXES

Castlegar, Creston, Nelson & Sando

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BC’s democracy takes a hit by pandemic measures

by Art Joyce

The BC government has been cited by the ombudsperson’s office for issuing unlawful orders during the pandemic lockdown, and is currently ruling by executive order, not representation in the BC legislature. What most British Columbians don’t know is that the passage of Bill 19 in June has created an indefinite state of emergency with sweeping powers that are beyond legislative vote or parliamentary debate.

Bill 19, the COVID-19 Related Measures Act, is an addendum to the Emergency Program Act (EPA), the latter designed to facilitate faster responses to emergencies such as floods, environmental disasters and wildfires. The EPA previously required government to abide by a ‘sunset clause,’ which limited the state of emergency to 14 days. After that, government was required to receive legislation, and either repeal the state of emergency or redefine it for another 14-day period. Bill 19 now extends that time frame to one year, with the possibility of the premier and cabinet extending the period “without limitation,” i.e. indefinitely. Again, no legislative debate or vote would be required; it would be proclaimed by order of the BC lieutenant governor. Sunset clauses are designed to limit the capacity of governments to abuse emergency powers. An analysis of Bill 19 by the BC Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) explains: “Expansive powers should be accompanied by some form of automatic expiry or review by the legislature.”

With the passage of Bill 19, the BC Office of the Ombudsperson issued a new government report, extraordinary Times, Extraordinary Measures, which cited two specific orders issued under lockdown, Orders M098 and M139, as contrary to law because they are not authorized by the governing legislation, the Emergency Program Act. “The rule of law means that all expressions of power must find their source in a legal rule,” explains the report. “It is important to note that the issue here is not whether the content of any particular order is wise or unwise. Without legal authority to amend a statute, the minister cannot legitimately exercise that role, no matter how noble the purpose.”

Order M098 “allows tribunals and other statutory decision makers to waive mandatory timelines. The same order suspends all mandatory limitation periods and time limits related to civil and family actions in the British Columbia Provincial Court, Supreme Court and Court of Appeal,” leaving one to question how this will affect citizens’ pursuit of justice during and after lockdown.

Order M139 allowed municipal governments to exclude the public from open meetings, hold meetings and public hearings electronically, and adopt bylaws more quickly than they could otherwise. It was repealed on June 17 and replaced by Ministerial Order M192, which “limits the circumstances” that allow local governments to exclude the public from attending meetings in person. It also “limits the types of bylaws that can be passed without following the normal process set out in the applicable governing legislation.”

The BCCLA raised the alarm about the worrying implications of Bill 19 with a critique it published on August 11. “Under the Act, the government can temporarily change any legislation during an emergency, without any oversight from the public and without approval from the Legislature. Although emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic require quick decisions by the government, this Act lacks the safeguards required when the government is given such broad powers.”

Although BC’s Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General Mike Farnworth claimed that the government addressed the criticisms in the Ombudsperson’s report, it’s difficult to see how. The minister’s response was simply to transfer the power to issue orders under a state of emergency from the minister to the premier and cabinet. “The issue we investigated,” wrote Ombudsperson Jay Chalke, “is whether those extra powers include the ability for the minister to suspend or temporarily amend BC statutes and we concluded the minister does not have that authority, even in an emergency.”

Besides creating broad new powers for cabinet, Bill 19 limits public accountability and sidesteps legislative debate, thus suspending representative democracy. Although the new changes mean that future amendments will be done through regulations that must be published, regulations can come into effect immediately, explains the BCCLA: “The public won’t be made aware of changes through the traditional law-making process, and won’t have the ability to change the law before it comes into effect. The lack of review goes against Ombudsperson recommendations that the government report any amendments to the Legislature, and they should expire after a fixed number of sitting days.”

Finally, the bill permanently expands emergency powers. “While some of the other changes in the Act are specific to the COVID-19 pandemic, section 9 permanently changes the Emergency Program Act. Future governments may use the new powers in response to new emergencies,” notes the BCCLA. “Cabinet can unilaterally declare a state of emergency, and under this new Act, it can amend any piece of legislation during the course of that emergency.”

Although BC Attorney General David Eby has said the government is in the process of reviewing and overhauling the EPA, with Bill 19 effectively suspending the BC legislature, it will be difficult to hold them to account for such a review.
in 2021 where three digital channels will be added. Eventually all analog TV will be terminated either on April 9, 2021 or later in the Fall/Winter of 2021.

Stage I will be: Channel 3 (Knowledge from Vancouver), Channel 6 (PBS KCTV9 from Seattle – moved from channel 8), Channel 7 (NBC King5 from Seattle), Channel 10 (CTV from Vancouver), Channel 11 (CBC from Vancouver), Channel 13 (Global from Vancouver). Channel 8 (digital) will now carry 4 digital subchannels: Channel 8-1 (Knowledge from Vancouver), 8-2 (PBS KCTV9 from Seattle), 8-3 (CTV from Vancouver), 8-4 (CBC from Vancouver).

Note: Due to the limited number of antennas one analog program will have to be temporarily suspended till the second stage. That is CBS (Kiro). Channel 8 (digital) will no longer be analog but exclusively digital. The remaining six analog channels will stay in place for a few months to give viewers a chance to get used to the new digital TV. Suitable Digital-to-analogue Converter equipment can be purchased fairly cheaply.

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THE NORTH VALLEY MOUNTAIN Film Festival is now accepting submissions of short films and digital showcases for its 2021 event. Visit www.northvalleyfilmfestival.com for event information and submission guidelines or email inquiries to northvalleyfilmfestival@telus.net

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Next Valley Voice Deadline: January 8, 2021

Sharing snow with others submitted by Nadine Raynolds, Y2Y

As recreationists head out into the mountains this winter, we prepare by checking the avalanche conditions, the weather forecast, and packing our bags for a safe and fun time. Another important part of our ‘backcountry basics’ is to understand how to be wildlife wise. We share these forests and alpine environments with some special creatures, like mountain caribou and wolverine.

Mountain caribou spend their winter months up high. With females already pregnant, each animal is eating as much as they can, while avoiding burning any extra calories. Mountain caribou in the Central Selkirks are at serious risk of disappearing forever (a.k.a. extirpation). It’s incredibly important that we do not disturb these animals, adding stress to an already tough life. New snowmobile closures are in place so make sure you check snowmobileski.ca before you head out.

The elusive wolverine can also be found ranging this region.

Females often den on some of the same slopes we like to ski, digging holes many feet deep and living in these dens from February through May. If you see a wolverine or their tracks, usually solitary and taking some crazy line straight up the mountain, please let researchers know at wolverinewatch.org. It’s especially important to report your observations and share photos if you see a concentration of tracks going to and from a hole in the snow, near treeline about a ruler-length wide, as it could be a wolverine den or a food cache. If you see this, please leave the area. Wolverines are very sensitive and may abandon their den and kits if disturbed.

Please tune your eyes and ears out there this winter and make good choices to help these rare and amazing animals. We can play a role to ensure that both snow-loving people and snow-dependent wildlife thrive in these beautiful mountains we call home. Visit y2y.net/wildlife for more information and winter recreation tips.
OBITUARY FOR LYNDA SAUNDERS

It is with sadness that the family of Lynda Jean Saunders (nee Craig) announces her passing on December 9/20 in New Denver, BC after a long struggle with Alzheimer’s. Lynda will be lovingly remembered by her partner in life, Brian Hector, her mother, Jessie Craig, her sister Bernice Allegretto (Peter Keegan), nieces Dawn Allegretto and Shannon Allegretto, their partners and children. Lynda was predeceased by her father CF (Fred) Craig and her brother Robert (Bob) Craig.

Lynda will be remembered as a strong, confident, intelligent woman who lived her life with courage and was always ready for an adventure. There will be no service at this time. For those who wish, donations to the Alzheimer’s society would be greatly appreciated.

Lucerne student Kayden Laybourne loaded all this firewood to help raise funds for the school.
COVID-19 update: More frequent updates promised for local case numbers  

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

While COVID-19 case numbers remain low in the Arrow Lakes, Slocan Valley and North Kootenay Lake areas, the latest statistics give little comfort overall.

The Province reported 2,146 new cases from Friday to Monday (December 11–14), including 250 in the Interior Health region, which includes the Valley Voice readership area. There are 10,039 active cases provincially over the weekend. The Province says it’s changed how it’s releasing data. On December 10, the BC Centre for Disease Control announced plans to start updating COVID-19 data weekly for Local Health Areas.

People are also going to have a better idea of just how quickly the virus is spreading in their area, as the Province says it’s changed how it’s releasing data. On December 10, the BC Centre for Disease Control announced plans to start updating COVID-19 data weekly for Local Health Areas.

Until now the numbers were only updated monthly, resulting in a skewed picture of the virus’ presence in local areas. You can see the latest numbers, which will be updated every Wednesday, by visiting the BC Centre for Disease Control Website, clicking on ‘COVID-19 data,’ and scrolling down to the map section.

Among the big issues Dixon has on her plate are finding a replacement for retiring superintendent Terry Taylor (see story, page 1), and ensuring the newly announced daycares for Nakusp Elementary proceeds smoothly. Though she was opposed to the project, she says it’s now a board initiative.

“As such, my goal is that the board, in its financial oversight role, makes sure that the centre is completed on budget and on time,” she said. “Especially considering the challenges facing the construction industry in terms of COVID restrictions and the economy, which have resulted in a rapid escalation in the cost of lumber products,” she told the Valley Voice.

She says she’d personally like to see the district’s popular K-7 music program maintained or even expanded into higher grades.

“...I wish Christine Dixon the best of luck as chair and hope that she enjoys it as much as I did,” she says.

Danyea Simon, the trustee for the southern zone, was re-elected as vice-chair in the November 17 vote.

New chair for SD 10 Arrow Lakes board of trustees  

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The board of education for Arrow Lakes School District 10 voted for a change of leadership at its November meeting. Christine Dixon was named chair of the board, replacing Lora Lee Brekke, who was chair for four years, and vice-chair for seven.

“This is Dixon’s first term as a trustee.”

“I think that it’s important to keep the education of the K-12 students of SD 10 the primary focus of the district,” says Dixon. “That’s our job – to make sure that SD 10 students get the best education that a rural school can provide to prepare them for the bigger world.”

Danyea Simon was re-elected vice-chair of SD 10 by acclamation.

Christine Dixon won election over Lora Lee Brekke and is the new chair of SD 10.

The outgoing chair offered her congratulations.

“...I wish Christine Dixon the best as chair and hope that she enjoys it as much as I did,” she says.

Danyea Simon, the trustee for the southern zone, was re-elected as vice-chair in the November 17 vote.
A great conjunction
by Gary Boyle – The Backyard Astronomer

2020 will be a year that will never be forgotten. For the past months, the entire world has suffered a high level of stress and anxiety from this pandemic. Normal routines of going to work, school, restaurants, concerts, sporting events and movies came to a screaming halt. Other than reading, playing games or binge-watching TV, people began looking skyward, some for the first time. And why not? Astronomy is the oldest of the allied sciences and the night sky has been the place of deep relaxation for thousands of years. We also have the means of learning science as it plays out in the cosmos.

This year we desperately need a distraction and then came Comet Neowise. It had put on a fantastic show throughout July as it was seen with the naked eye even in the moonlight. This allowed millions of people around the world to observe and photograph this interstellar visitor. Neowise is now on its way back to the icy depths of space only to return about 6,800 years from now.

The first week of October saw Mars at its closest approach to earth since 2003. Our two worlds swing close to each other every 26 months but every seventh return is deemed the closest. Mars is still seen overhead for most of the night, appearing high overhead as a bright orange object. Over the weeks and months, Mars dims ever so slowly as our distance increases with each passing day. We now end the year with two more celestial events that will entice people to look up once again – a grand meteor shower and a great conjunction of two planets.

Like ping pong balls on a table, the planets lie on the plane of the solar system with the sun at the centre. Over months and years, the planets revolve around the sun at different speeds. On occasion, two planets will optically come close to each other in the sky — called a conjunction. Brilliant Jupiter (887 million km away) and Saturn (1.6 billion km away to the upper left) are now visible low in the southwestern sky, will appear extremely close on the night of December 21 which also happens to be the winter solstice. A typical Jupiter-Saturn conjunction occurs every 20 years or so but this year, they will appear as a double planet with a separation equal to 1/5 the width of the full moon. This will give telescope owners a rare treat of seeing these gas giants and their moons in the same field of view. This extreme close approach plays out every 397 years.

Many are associating this to the Star of the Magi which was the close conjunction of the two brightest planets namely Venus and Jupiter. On the night of June 17, 2 BC, they appeared to touch each other, which was deemed a sign. This is the closest astronomical event at the time as Halley’s Comet was seen 10 years prior in 12 BC, as recorded by the Chinese.

Happy Holidays from all of us at Royal LePage Selkirk Realty!


Best wishes for 2021!

Happy Holidays from the Valhalla Foundation for Ecology

We’ve launched our new website, chock full of great photos, information links and good news. Please check it out: www.valhallafoundationforecology.org

This year we all learned we need nature more than ever. Make a gift toward the restoration and enhancement of wild habitat — give before the end of the year to receive a charitable-giving tax break on your 2020 income taxes.

To donate online: https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/valhalla-foundation-for-ecology/
To donate by mail: Valhalla Foundation for Ecology P.O. Box 207 New Denver BC V0G 1S0

Wishing you good health and many outdoor adventures in 2021!

Valhalla Foundation for Ecology
Preserving wild places for wild things

Wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Nakusp artist Kate Tupper’s Carbon Key won People’s Choice second place and Artistic Merit third place (tie). The fifth ‘Discover the Koots’ sculpture, ‘Stepping Out,’ won the Castlegar Sculpturewalk’s People’s Choice Award this year. The sculpture shows “three dryads stepping out of their trees for a dance under the moonlight,” says Spring Shine, one of the three Argenta artists who are creating giant sculptures and installing them throughout the region.

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New leader for Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program

A program that provides millions of dollars in funding for fish and wildlife preservation and enhancement projects has a new program manager. Monique Stevenson began the job of providing oversight and leadership into the management and operations of the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program on December 7.

The FWCP is a partnership between BC Hydro, federal, provincial and First Nations governments, and public stakeholders to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife in watersheds impacted by BC Hydro dams. It delivers $10 million in annual fish and wildlife project funding across its Coastal, Columbia, and Peace regions.

“I have a deep respect for our natural environment and a deep respect for the essential service that BC Hydro provides,” says Monique. “The FWCP’s work is critical to bridging these two areas and I’m grateful to have a role in supporting the FWCP’s vision of thriving fish and wildlife populations in watersheds that are functioning and sustainable.” A BC Hydro employee since 2009, Stevenson is the former senior strategic business advisor to BC Hydro’s senior vice-president of capital infrastructure project delivery. In that job she managed a wide variety of strategic issues, projects, and communications. She has also worked in the company’s Indigenous Relations office, providing strategic advice and services, and acted as a team lead for the group conducting Indigenous consultation assessments for projects and programs.

She replaces Trevor Oussoren, who managed the program for the last six years. He has taken on a new role with BC Hydro’s Indigenous Relations department.

New board member

There is also a new voice on the FWCP Columbia Region’s board of directors. Giles Shearing has been selected as the newest public representative on the Columbia Region board. Shearing lives in Revelstoke, but his work as an environmental consultant and personal interests have taken him throughout the Columbia region.

Giles Shearing is the new public representative on the Columbia Region board of the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program.

Quick thinking saves home from kitchen fire

A Slocan Park homeowner who did “everything right” likely saved their home from a devastating fire earlier this month, says the Passmore Fire Chief.

Peter Kabel says a homeowner was cooking in the kitchen on the evening of December 7 when a grease fire started.

“The owner had a fire extinguisher nearby, and used it to douse the flames. Then they called the fire department as they evacuated the house, closing all the doors on the way out,” says Kabel. “The person did everything right.”

That last action – closing the doors in the house—probably saved the structure.

By the time fire crews arrived, they didn’t even have to put water into the home. It suffered only from smoke and some flame damage in the kitchen.

Because it was a structure fire, two fire departments – Passmore and Crescent Valley – responded to the call. Kabel says about 20 firefighters attended, and five pieces of equipment.

No one was injured in the incident, though the family was forced out of their home for the evening.

Kabel says there’s a lesson to be learned from the incident.

“It’s very important for residents to have an ABC fire extinguisher in their homes,” he says.
West Kootenay group seeks funding to help remote Ecuadorian school

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

A Nelson-based non-profit is asking for the public's help to bring high school classes to a remote Indigenous community in Ecuador.

The Community Ascent Network has launched a crowd-funding campaign to raise at least $15,000 to hire teachers and provide school infrastructure for the village of Piñán, in the northern part of the mountainous South American country.

As of press time, CAN had about $2,000 left to raise on its $15,000 fundraiser, which ends December 18. That's half the cost of the project, which will see the community hire two qualified high school teachers, buy teaching materials and lab equipment, install a new suite of computers, and establish an internet connection for the remote village.

The Community Ascent Network says its goal is to help Ecuadorean communities bring their own development projects to life.

Many of these communities don't have any access to basic needs such as land, work or education, but they do all have a vision," says the non-profit's website. "Our organization takes a community guided approach, following their visions and allowing all of our funds and efforts to meet specific and localized needs shared by an entire community," it continues.

For the last two years, Piñán has been the focus of CAN's work. Located in the remote northern Andes, 220 people from the local Kichwa Indigenous group live there. During the early colonial era, Indigenous families of these mountains were forced to settle on the current site where the village lies to serve as peasant workers to the Spanish ranches, called haciendas. Opportunities have been few for the villagers for a dozen generations, and they see teaching their children as a path to a better future.

"For Piñán their vision is complete education for all of their youth so they can start to bring meaningful work and developments into the community," the website says.

But establishing the school is only part of the benefit that would come to Piñán. The projects also bring work opportunities - building a new teacher's residence, for instance – making the village more sustainable.

The organization works in full co-operation and support of the region's education authority. In 2019, a full-time teacher was hired and that September the first ever year of secondary classes in Piñán began. The current community classroom was also equipped with computers and a projector which CAN sent down in support of the new curriculum.

Plans are also being drawn up for a stand-alone, sustainable high school building in the community.

More information about the project can be found on CAN's crowdfunding page, at startsomegood.com and on their website, www.communityascent.com.
Most British Columbians can apply for $500 BC Recovery Benefit soon

submitted

A majority of British Columbians will get a lift with the launch of the BC Recovery Benefit, enabling many families and individuals to receive the benefit by the end of the year.

“We have worked hard to get the BC Recovery Benefit to people as soon as possible,” says Premier John Horgan. “We are united with the millions of people and families who are wrapping up a difficult year and look forward to a new year with hope and the promise of a continued recovery.”

On December 8, the BC government introduced legislation to secure funding for approximately 5.7 million British Columbians to receive the tax-free BC Recovery Benefit. Passage of the bill will ensure British Columbians can apply for the benefit starting December 18.

The benefit provides $500 to single people earning less than $62,500, and $1,000 to families (including single-people earning less than $62,500, and $1,000 to families earning up to $125,000. Single people earning up to $1,000 to families (including single-people earning less than $62,500, and $1,000 to families earning up to $125,000). The benefit starting December 18.

How to apply

Starting December 18, up to 90% of adults in BC will be able to apply for the BC Recovery Benefit online. Those needing assistance over the phone can complete their application with an agent starting December 21.

To apply and be eligible for the one-time, tax-free benefit, people must:

- be a resident of BC on December 18; be at least 19 years old on Dec. 18, 2020, have filed a 2019 income tax return; have their 2019 income tax notice of assessment, and if applicable, their spouse’s 2019 income tax notice of assessment; have their social insurance number; have their BC driver’s licence. British Columbians receiving income assistance and disability assistance will also be eligible for the BC Recovery Benefit.

As well, people on income assistance, disability assistance and low-income seniors receiving the senior’s supplement will receive an additional recovery benefit at $150 per month from January 2021 to March 2021.

“Coupled together, the recovery benefit and recovery supplement will provide vulnerable families with up to $1,900 during this difficult winter season,” said Nicholas Simons, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.

Applying online

Applying online is the fastest way to receive the benefit, by visiting gov.bc.ca/recoverybenefit starting December 18. British Columbians who need help applying, or who do not have internet access, can apply by phone starting December 21 by calling 1-833-882-0020 toll-free within North America. Monday to Friday, from 7:30 am to 5 pm (Pacific time).

It is anticipated that a majority of eligible applicants will receive payment within five business days.

People have until June 30, 2021, to apply for the BC Recovery Benefit.

Woodbury Resort and JB’s Restaurant

Thank you everyone for an amazing season- Locals supporting local businesses made this year better than any other.

JB’s last week will be Dec.17-20 then closed until February. Woodbury Motel will be closed until February as well. Marina gas and propane sales will be open on call.

Thank you all. Have the best holiday season with your loved ones during these trying times.

From Terry, Dina and our super staff.

250-353-7717/ woodburyresort@netidea.com

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Halcyon Assisted Living Society (HALS)!

Halcyon Assisted Living Society would like to wish you all a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and a PEACEFUL NEW YEAR filled with hope, joy, and happiness. The Society recognizes how difficult this year has been for so many of you, but your persistence and will power has prevailed.

It is with your kindness and blessings that we are able to graciously celebrate the true meaning and spirit of Christmas. Thank you for all that you do.

Wishing each and every one of you a Wonderful Holiday Season filled with Love and Hugs!

The Board of Directors and Staff at HALS

HALS Halcyon Assisted Living Society

Helping People Live Independently

Village of Silverton Holiday Schedule December 2020 – January 2021

GARbage PICK UP REMAINS UNCHANGED!


Season’s Greetings!

Please Cut Me Out and Post Me in Your Home!
Kaslo library celebrates 100th anniversary, December 18, 2020

The Kaslo & District Public Library Association was incorporated 100 years ago, on December 18, 1920. In acknowledgement and celebration of the association’s upcoming centenary day, a proclamation was read by Kaslo Mayor Suzan Hewat at the December 8 council meeting:

“That the Kaslo & District Public Library be recognized as a Significant Heritage Service Organization we can all be proud of; and that all citizens be called on to celebrate this great milestone and recognize volunteers who have devoted their time to this success.”

Submitted

In the last century, there have been so many volunteers, trustees (also volunteers) and staff (sometimes volunteers) that have made the library the welcoming place that it is. All of them deserve a big thank you!

Miss C. M. Fawcett, who circulated books shipped from Victoria out of the Government Office as early as 1912, was the first volunteer librarian from 1920 until her death in December 1938. Losing Miss Fawcett left a gap in library history – with no records for the next 13 years. Then in 1953, when C.K. Morison, Public Library Commissioner, “toiled up the steep stairs leading to the top room of… City Hall, [to find] a faithful and gracious ‘library lady’ (Mrs. Bowker) still holding the fort,” it is confirmed that the library still existed. After this visit, Doris Drayton was instrumental in reforming the Kaslo library. Mrs. Drayton, who passed away this summer at the age of 107, was celebrated in 1972 for serving as secretary-treasurer for 19 years!

The library was mostly volunteer run with some board members also volunteering to be the librarians. In 1971, the Provincial Library Commission established funding requirements: staff had to be paid, staff had to complete the Community Librarian Training, and trustees could hold office for a maximum of eight consecutive years.

Mrs. Joan Matthews was the first paid librarian and the first to complete the new Community Librarian Training in 1971 in Kaslo. In 1985, she was celebrated for 30+ years of service – as a trustee, librarian, and volunteer (sometimes all three). Joan Matthews still holds the record for longest serving community librarian in Kaslo – but it is anticipated that in 2022, current librarian Eva Kelemen will take this honour.

How many volunteers/staff are there to thank over 100 years? Hundreds! There are 195 trustees’ names recorded by decade in the library history book (some duplicates), but many names are lost because 27 years’ worth of reports are missing. There were at least 12 volunteer librarians from 1920 to 1971 followed by 10 directors, 17 staff, and 12 auxiliary staff, and oh so many volunteers.

Just in the last 16 years, there have been over 20 volunteers each year. Twelve of those volunteers have served the community for more than 10 years and some of them continue to do so. During special projects such as the New Library Project 1979-1982 and the temporary move for City Hall renovations in 2011, there were even more volunteers donating hundreds of hours.

In closing, a big thank you goes to the many Kaslo & District Public Library heroes who have brought us to this great milestone of 100 years!