Supreme Court of Canada ruling could reset Sinixt presence in West Kootenay

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Two weeks after the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of Sinixt hunting rights, the head of the American tribe that launched the case is still excited.

“I think my feet have finally hit the ground,” said Rodney Cawston, chairman of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. “This is really exciting for us – it was really exciting for our people. It was an amazing day Friday when we received the decision.”

But while Cawston’s phone has been ringing with messages of congratulations, he still hasn’t heard from any official level of the Canadian government since the ruling. Politicians and the legal experts are still trying to come to terms with the implications of the decision.

“Nothing like normal communication or anything yet, but it’s still very soon,” he told the Valley Voice. “So if they don’t talk to us, we’ll reach out to them.”

He said the Colville Confederacy had some meetings with government while the Desautel case moved up the courts, “but not at the level we’ve been heard from any official level of the Canadian government since the ruling. Politicians and the legal experts are still trying to come to terms with the implications of the decision.”

The trial judge also found that Richard Lee Desautel was exercising his constitutionally protected Aboriginal hunting rights – even though he didn’t live in Canada. The decision backed up the ruling by the first trial judge, who threw the initial case out on constitutional grounds.

Because the doctrine of Aboriginal rights arises from the simple fact of prior occupation, the Aboriginal peoples of Canada under section 35 (1) are the modern successors of those Aboriginal societies that occupied Canadian territory at the time of European contact, even if they are now outside Canada,” said the majority ruling.

“The trial judge also found that the modern-day practice of hunting in this territory, as [Desautel] did, is a continuation of this pre-contact practice,” they continued. “Setting aside the periods in which no hunting took place, there was no significant dissimilarity between the pre-contact practice and the modern one. As a result, [Desautel] was exercising an Aboriginal right protected by [Section 35 (1) of the Canadian Constitution].”

But the ruling wasn’t unanimous, with some judges ruling the Colville Confederated Tribes base in the US precludes them having rights in Canada.

“The constitutional protection of Aboriginal rights contained in section 35 (1) of the Constitution Act 1982 does not extend to an Aboriginal group located outside of Canada,” said Suzanne Cote in the minority opinion. “And even if it did, [Desautel] cannot establish that he was exercising an Aboriginal right to hunt in the Sinixt traditional territory in British Columbia, as the modern group’s claim lacks continuity with the pre-contact group’s practices. Accordingly, [Desautel’s] claim must fail and he should not be exempt from the Wildlife Act provisions under which he was charged.”

Reaction cautious

Besides initial reactions, not much has been said by officials since the ruling. BC’s Indigenous Affairs Minister Murray Rankin was cautious in his first comments. While he called the ruling a “strong decision,” he told CBC “…the court was very careful to say that it applied only to the facts of that [Indigenous hunting rights] case, and was very reluctant to speculate about what it means in other contexts.”

He said his government would be sitting down with the Sinixt and Okanagan Nation Alliance, an intervener in the case, to discuss next steps.

And a Kootenay political anthropologist and scholar said the decision may not change the ultimate status of Sinixt rights to the land.

“Sinixt still have no First Nation government recognized by Canada and are still precluded from entering into government-to-government relationships with BC and Canada,”

continued on page 2
RDCK applies for grant to develop Flood Risk Evaluation Policy

by John Biovin

The RDCK wants to study how to assess the risk and dangers of flooding and other hazards to local residents, and will apply for a grant to develop a Flood Risk Evaluation Policy.

“Historic development in the valley has resulted in a number of communities being at risk to flooding and/or geohazards. With the impacts of climate change anticipated to increase the severity of events and vastly increase the frequency of those severe events, the residents of these communities are asking what can be done,” explains Chris Johnson, Manager of Community Sustainability, in a report to the RDCK board. “If future development continues to occur in a manner that increases the development in hazard areas with ambiguous rules, the challenge of building sustainable and resilient communities will continue to grow.

Johnson said a Flood Risk Evaluation Policy would “remove ambiguity in the decision making for approval of development in hazard areas and provide transparency on the requirements a development in a hazard area must meet in order to be approved. If successful and applied, the theory is that the number of homes that are exposed to higher risks will become static, and work to mitigate the impacts when a hazard area occurs becomes finite/achievable.”

The evaluation policy would review national and international risk management policies, develop an ‘interim risk evaluation criteria,’ and engage with stakeholders before coming back to the board.

Directors waded carefully into the subject, as some options would see the Regional District Into the subject, as some options would see the Regional District not fully embracing the subject, and the possibility of the RDCK becoming responsible for maintaining a long-forgotten dike to make the RDCK responsible for managing (and being responsible for) an unknown number of aging or about-to-fail water dikes in the area.

That was Director Andy Davidoff’s concern, and he said in a recent case a landowner tried to make the RDCK responsible for maintaining a long-forgotten dike on private property.

“This is a really scary area for us,” said Johnson. “The Province has completely abrogated its responsibility to us. Diking is a bottomless pit we have to be careful about getting ourselves into.

An application will go in to the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund for the project. If funding is successful, consultants will be hired to develop the new policy, which would impact the floodplain bylaw and Official Community Plans.

“An effective policy would reduce future impacts to the environment by ensuring we are adapting to it,” he said. “We will ultimately be safer, and our first responders will be exposed to fewer situations where we are asked to be at risk,” Johnson said.

Supreme Court of Canada ruling could reset Sinixt presence in West Kootenay

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saying Lorie Barcley. “This also means there is no mechanism to participate in the contemporary land claims process, despite their filing a land claim decades ago and creating contention in Sinixt traditional territory.

“In sum, [the ruling] affirmed Sinixt Aboriginal rights of Sinixt living on the Colville Reservation in the US to use the land, but did not recognize Sinixt rights to the land itself, nor to be consulted on what happens to it regardless of which side of the border they live.”

And local Sinixt also pointed out the ruling does not help their legal status.

“We take note that the Supreme Court of Canada affirms our ongoing connection to the land of our ancestors,” said Sinixt scream matriarch Marilyn James. “However, it is one thing to acknowledge our hunting rights in our tum xula7xw (homeland), and another to accord us our unceded rights to our land.”

The Desautel case only deals with Sinixt from the Colville Confederated Tribes of Sinixt people, both as residents of BC to use the land without hunting or other licenses. James said, something the Autonomous Sinixt in BC had already established prior to this case.

“The Colville Confederated Tribes of the US, who initiated the Desautel case only deals with Sinixt from the US and Canada. So that’s one of the first things we think about.”

There’s years of work ahead for both sides, Cawston says. But he sees the CCT eventually having a cooperative and productive presence in the West Kootenay.

“We would expect so… and if there is anything that impacts natural resources or the interests of the tribe, that we do receive notice as early on as possible, to allow for us to comment before anything is moved forward,” he says. “Really looking at a government-to-government relationship.

“We’re doing as much as we can to be a good neighbour… but we have a long way to go. We don’t want to come up as a negative force. We want to be viewed in a way we can be helpful to each other, in protecting the environment, doing what we can to improve water quality, habitat, anything we can do together.”

Cawston can even see the day when the CCT has a government office in the West Kootenay.

“That is a dream of mine and many of us. We want to work towards establishing government offices in Canada… now that our people have the opportunity to go back and forth. It opens up opportunity for many of our people for creating reserve land, if possible, if we can explore that, and some of our people can move back to traditional territories and come from.”

Working it out

It may take years to work out just how – or even if – the US-based Sinixt can have a legal and political presence on their traditional lands in Canada.

The Supreme Court offered no guidance on that matter. While outlining the requirement for government to establish a new relationship with a non-resident Aboriginal group, it would only say: “It is for the parties themselves to decide how they wish to proceed.”

The Valley Voice May 6, 2021
COVID quarantines shut down Nakusp Elementary

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

School administrators in Nakusp have shut down the community’s elementary school from May 4 to 16 after some cases of COVID-19 in the school community left most of the staff and students unable to attend class. A number of staff and students have to self-isolate for 14 days.

“In order to support the Nakusp Elementary School (NES) staff and students who are currently self-isolating, School District 10 has decided to close the school for two weeks due to staffing constraints,” said SD 10 Superintendent Terry Taylor, written by Interior Health (IH).

“In-person classes will resume on May 17.”

But IH and SD 10 were at pains to say they were not declaring an “outbreak” at the school.

“Please note, that this is a functional school closure and has not been declared a COVID-19 school outbreak,” said the release.

“Online learning will take place during this closure period with NES teachers reaching out to parents and students in the next few days.”

SD 10 Superintendent Terry Taylor said with only 27 of 157 students showing up for class Monday, and more than 75% of staff and students under orders to self-isolate, keeping the school open became unmanageable.

“We’ve been cobbled it together, trying to make it work,” Taylor told the Valley Voice. “We know how important school is to our families. We’ve been following the infection control is done – that’s already underway. But schools are safe places, and are always a reflection of community.”

The school closure was a reminder of how difficult it is to contain the coronavirus even as hundreds of locals received their COVID-19 vaccinations in the last week and provincial case numbers slowly decline.

“Actually, just like the rest of our community, we didn’t think it was going to happen here,” says Taylor. “We know it’s all around us, and so on, after only three cases for 13 months in our health region, we thought we were going to dodge this one.”

West Kootenay school affected

Nakusp wasn’t alone with the school-connected incidents of COVID. A second SD 10 school, Burton Elementary, also had an exposure earlier in April, and so did schools in Kaslo (JV Humphries), Nelson (Rosemont Elementary), Crescent Valley (Brent Kennedy), Castlegar (Stanley Humanities Secondary), and Trail (JL Crowe Secondary).

The Nakusp exposures prompted Interior Health to set up a mobile testing clinic at the Arrow Lakes Hospital for anyone who thought they may have caught the virus, and is doing contact tracing in the community.

After dealing with the week-long crisis, Taylor told the Valley Voice she’s confident that the district will endure.

“We’ll get through this; we always do,” she said. “Our staff has been absolutely amazing in following the protocols, in ensuring the children have rich and thoughtful learning experiences. As the numbers [of [students attending school] have been shrinking at the elementary and high schools, we’re really wanting to come though this. We’re in this together and that’s what small communities are about.”

Area case numbers remain low

While overall COVID-19 cases in the Valley Voice readership area remains reassuringly low, the numbers spiked recently in the Nakusp subregion.

In the seven days between April 18 and 24, the Arrow Lakes local health area reported five new cases – more than the previous 13 months combined – and this was before the recent cases at Nakusp Elementary. In the same period, the Nelson health area had 19 new cases and the Trail area had 13. Five new cases were recorded in Castlegar and one in the Kootenay Lake area, which includes Kaslo.

The latest numbers issued before press time Monday showed 106 new cases in the Interior Health region over the course of the weekend, with 29 people hospitalized and 18 in critical care. Fifteen more BC residents died from the virus over the three-day period.
Response to Heather Pittendrigh’s letter of April 22

Ditto.

Daniel Hellyer and Helen Davis

New Denver

Thank you

Thank you for continuing to print all opinions regarding COVID in your letters section.

It’s refreshing to know there is at least one newspaper out there that still believes in true, investigative journalism and realizes that both sides of any story need to be put forward in a balanced manner.

Keep up the good work.

Jon Burdon

Winlaw

No reply

Because I will not reply to assumptions, name calling, and censorship speculations.

Instead, I would like you to read the letter to the editor in the Castlegar News from Dave Carter. It’s on page A4 of the Thursday, April 15, 2021 edition. The title is “The risk of censorship.” I quote Dave Carter’s last sentence: “If statements or ideas are not true, then they need to be met with reasoned discussion and debate, not censorship.”

In my view, Dave Carter explains very clearly how governments and other institutions today try to push for their one and only truth, forgetting the old Latin principle altera pars, listening to the other side. Could you imagine a court session where only the prosecutor has the right to speak and not the defence lawyer?

I find that our democracy is in jeopardy, and we are walking on very thin ice.

Dave Carter states in the beginning of his letter: “Societies that allow the voices of dissent to be silenced, cannot call themselves democratic.”

Wulf Mense

Winlaw

Mt. Willet

Every weekday a cavalcade of logging trucks pass by my house, sometimes four in a row. Each truckload makes me wonder what mountainside is being denuded for the sake of our gross domestic product, a yardstick that measures destruction of ecosystems as a gain. What we measure as beneficial is a choice and those choices influence the policies our governments enact. An economic system that counts greenhouse gas emissions, producing plastic waste, and cigarette sales as meaningful economic indicators cannot logically continue forever. So where do we citizens call a halt to such destruction?

As someone who joined with others in the 1970s and 1980s to create the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy, I suggest we begin by including the proposed Mt. Willet Wilderness as part of the PWC. Look at a map and you’ll see it is already surrounded on three sides by the PWC! Preserving this vital missing part of the PWC will demonstrate that we can make choices that focus on well-being and quality of life.

Please visit https://www.willetwildernessforever.ca/, become concerned, write letters, and ensure that no logging truck carrying Mt. Willet timber ever passes my house.

Michael Jensen

Nelson North Shore

Liz Ross is not Lisa Ross

Liz, Liz Ross, have the same initial and last name as Lisa Ross, who has written letters to the editor repeatedly in the Valley Voice outlining her conspiracy-theory beliefs regarding COVID. I also live in the same small town (Kaslo) and for the past year, I have been getting phone calls and people stopping me on the street, assuming I am the one writing the letters. I responded to her initial letter in the paper last spring, indicating that it was not written by me and refuting the inaccurate information contained therein.

I have not responded since because others have taken it upon themselves to correct her unscientific beliefs.

Since I was a Public Health Nurse in Kaslo for 30 years, I am frustrated that my professional reputation is being sullied by people opposing wearing masks and COVID vaccinations and having people think that I share those views. Since you have been willing to publish all the letters that people submit no matter what their opinions, I would like to request that you include a disclaimer with every letter you publish by Lisa Ross stating that her views are not the views of Liz Ross BScN (Public Health Nurse - retired) of Kaslo. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Liz Ross

Kaslo

Local kudos

Kudos to Rail Trail Society administrators for getting the repair done quickly north of the Lemon Creek train bridge. For an organization that doesn’t generate its own money like a conventional business and is faced with all the governmental bureaucracy and fundraising, having this done within a year is impressive to me, and during such a World Event to boot! Well done! And it looks well done, too!

Thank you Valley Voice Jan and Dan et al. for proofreading and printing all the letters that you have on the topic of this World Event. I’ve read but a fraction, but to know everybody in our community gets a kick at the can through your privately owned paper warms my heart.

I’ll never expect you to censor any voices or ideas for me – that is for me to do. Please continue letting me know what my neighbours have in their hearts, be it benevolence, hatred, fear of speaking up or even conflicted views. We’ve all been born, in my view, into a world where the uncovering of our human spirit has been feared and diminished and we’re all trying to get our head from being held underwater for so long.” Blessings to you for showing us our brothers and sisters getting their heads out of the water. There may be lots of scary stuff to witness but the more of us out of suppression and into vitality, the more people at the party.

And kudos to the Winlaw VRF for yet again being totally on top of our roads this winter.

Marc Heroux

Slocan

Take AstraZeneca at your own risk

Canadians are being jabbed with a suspect vaccine of AstraZeneca. In March 2021, a cross-contamination at Baltimore, Maryland’s Emergent BioSolutions plant was so bad, 15 million doses were tossed out. Is the USA using the AstraZeneca vaccine? Not on your life! The government of Canada is using it out of sheer desperation. AstraZeneca is being made by India and South Korea, since we do not have the facilities to make even ONE dose of vaccine for COVID-19.

The FDA carried out a report on Emergent and found some distressing news. Emergent did not investigate what caused the unexplained discrepancies and contamination that shut them down. The USA government instructed AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson to make the vaccine elsewhere.

The Emergent plant sounds like a disaster. “There is no assurance that other batches have not been subject to cross-contamination,” the report says. Further, “Components and product containers were not handled or stored in a way to prevent contamination”; “written procedures to assure drug substances are manufactured at the appropriate quality, strength and purity are inadequate”; and “Emergent’s quality control personnel were not properly trained. The building was not maintained in a “clean and sanitary condition.” There were also areas of peeling paint and damaged wall boards, which would undermine Emergent’s ability to clean and disinfect the area.

The FDA and Health Canada can go on all they want about the batches being stringently tested – I am not taking it. Throw out those batches and get real.

Provide Canada with an adequately made練 continued on page 5
Death of community watersheds

Why is Box Mountain watershed, and over 460 community watersheds in the interior communities of BC slated for logging? The only water catchment basins (watersheds) protected from logging and other industrial development are the ones supplying the Vancouver and Victoria areas. Whatever happened to our charter of rights, democracy and fairness? Water is our basic need so why aren’t all community watersheds protected?

It takes 80 years or more for a replanted forest to reach a harvestable state, and because large-scale reforestation did not begin in BC until about 30 years ago, going into another 50 years or more before we can begin to harvest significant amounts of second-growth forest in BC. Suggestion that we should ‘grow’ all harvesting of old-growth forests in BC simply do not take into account the fact that such a course would mean essentially shutting down the BC forest industry. This would create an economic crisis with far-reaching implications for literally all aspects of social and economic policy in the province. (Source: Forestry in British Columbia Canada The Answer Book, page 16)

Garth Wiggill, Director Strategic Initiatives Resource Management Nelson, stated in his email to me April 19, 2021: “Approximately 48 percent of the timber harvesting land base in the Kootenay region is within consuprnptive watershed boundaries. But while we lack major issues excluded from these areas from this land base, it would have devastating impacts on our local economies and employment.”

BC is now covered in tree farms which will not be ready to be harvested for some time, so the only places left with big trees are the old growth and our community watersheds. Once again, the government, forestry and logging companies put dollars more important than sustainability, climate change, and meeting the basic needs of the people – water. They are still thinking and acting as they did in the past. There is no concern regarding sustainability, which is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Nor are they interested in protecting and conserving water resources and encouraging ways of living that neither deplete resources nor degrade environmental quality.

This is the reason our BC government has chosen not to protect all community watersheds, as the community watersheds have become the last resort to make big money. Look at how high lumber prices are right now – it is a gold mine for them. We need to learn from our peers in Scandinavia who have taken this to an art form of forests, which are beautiful and they are very sustainable as well as profitable.

Barbara Whyte Nakusp

Centennial Park Plan misses the mark

I am a property owner in the orchard who will be greatly affected by the changes proposed in the Centennial Park Master Plan. There seems to be a disconnect between what is being planned for Centennial Park, and for the dyke on the south side of the creek, and how it fits into the public’s desire for peace and quiet. The consultants stated in the Valley Voice that “the take-away message was to keep the park quiet, peaceful and natural.”

Yet how does an all-whells skills park and other manufactured playground facilities on the dyke fit this messaging? How does one ‘take away’ a message and cost the New Denver taxpayers virtually nothing to keep it in present state. It is currently well used by local residents for quiet walks free from fences and other man-made contrivances.

This is not about whether the kids can have a pump track. The Village should have investigated and presented the residents with options for the location of the track. I can think of several: Centennial Park itself (lots of room), the school yard, and especially the area across from the recycling depot, which already has a washroom, as does Centennial Park. By placing the track on the dyke, the Village is also proposing a new washroom and a parking lot.

Probably the biggest impact is on the lives of nearby residents, and seems impractical where the area around the recreational area across from the dyke, is now being used for:

- Disc golf course.
- A nurse walking with young people.
- A homeowner who has a dog that is being exercised across the street from my house and that of my neighbours. The planning department that reviewed this plan said it was not an issue.
- Another example of carelessness as to the impacts on surrounding residents: the potential second hand smell is from the dyke across the street from my house and that of my neighbours. The planning department that reviewed this plan seemed not to take into account with people who live here and the long-time values of the whole community towards keeping our surroundings natural. Maybe New Denver shouldn’t be like Golden and Revelstoke.

A washed-over inewed area and converting it into a paved roller coater pump track is certainly not maintaining the quiet, peaceful and naturalness of the dyke. I would like to know what the cost of this planning exercise cost. Please Village council, quit wasting our hard-earned tax money on short-term frills.

Craig Pettit
New Denver

And now for something completely different!

I received my ICBC rebate cheque in the mail recently. While $120 is infinitely better than a kick in the teeth, I thought it is hardly a game-changer for me financially. I picked up my copy of the Valley Voice at the same time and perused it at home.

My first thoughts were “Come on, people! These businesses and their employees are just obeying the regulations!” Cut them some slack. If they don’t comply with the health regulations they can be fined, fined or shut down. You really think they don’t want to support local businesses?

What can I do about it, I wondered? It does not seem that there is any point in writing another letter to the editor trying to reason about the issue. Then, looking at the ICBC cheque, I had an overwhelming idea that left me feeling empowered and excited rather than resigned and despondent.

I am going to use my ICBC rebate to purchase gift certificates from local businesses that have impressed me with their willingness compliance with health regulations. This compliance is appreciated so much by me who has been regularly visiting a loved one in a long-term care facility – to know that I can safely conduct business in their establishment without risking bringing infection into the care facility where it could have such deadly consequences.

Then, I am going to distribute the gift certificates to businesses that have experienced unpleasant incidents such as the Village lost its scholarship. I presume the Village Market in Slocan, to randomly draw from their employees to award a gift certificate. I may continue to do this monthly if my finances permit. It seems a much more positive way to thank front-line workers and businesses than penning another letter to the editor that falls on deaf ears.

It would be great if other readers were motivated to do the same with their ICBC rebates!

Rory Lindsay
Lemon Creek

Clarification re: Slocan City Suites

I am writing to clarify some information about the Slocan City Suites (SCS) that appeared in the April 22 edition of the Valley Voice.

A letter was received by Slocan council stating that there was a lack of clarity around the tenant selection process for SCS. Actually, the tenant selection criteria are public information and are explained on the application form available on the Slocan Valley Seniors’ Housing website, or from the administrative office at Passmore Lodge.

Tenant selection is done by a community-run society that is made up of member board members and staff. The society built, owns and operates both SCS and Passmore Lodge.

The Village of Slocan has no involvement in the operation or management of SCS.

In order to make the tenant selection process as transparent and equitable as possible, the society ensures that the criteria are applied fairly and with care.

BC Housing, a government agency that oversees publicly supported housing in BC and provided substantial construction funding for SCS, requires that applicants be Canadian citizens and residents of BC for 6 months, be 55 or over, and have low to moderate incomes.

The selection committee also considers if housing at SCS will improve or noticeably assist with the applicant’s health and well-being. Income levels, health and personal circumstances are also a factor in the selection process.

In addition to submitting a written application, prospective tenants are interviewed personally. They are asked about their current living situation, their support systems, their ability to live independently, and what other resources they have if their application is not successful.

The selection committee weighs all of these considerations in making a final decision, but clearly there will always be applicants who deserve a unit at SCS and can’t be accommodated because of limited capacity. Currently there are 17 applicants, all of whom meet the qualifications, on the waiting list for SCS which has a very low turnover rate.

One thing I’m noticing is how easy it is to get the vaccine. Just call this number and there you go, Easy, and you’re helping others, and helping end this craziness. Win-win.

I am also noticing how inconvenient it is not to get the vaccine. People are already losing work for their choice not to get it. There is concern that only people not being able to travel without it. It’s easy to imagine not being able to shop at certain stores or to use your credit card without getting it, in the near future.

I know I am not alone. But I do want to share my perspective, and let others know they are not alone.

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We have “One Country, Two Systems”

One Country, Two Systems

Decades ago, I was selected to attend Rotary’s “Adventures in Citizenship” program. High schoolers from every riding were selected to spend a week inspecting our government in Ottawa. All of us were guests at an embassy, questioned and conversed with bureaucrats, visited the floor of the Commons and Senate, and so on. I conversed with my MP, the Deputy Prime Minister, in his office. And I attended lectures and presentations about our Constitution and our Rights and Freedoms. At the end of that week, we were all invited to take the Canadian Oath of Citizenship. As a natural born Canadian citizen, I took the path of an immigrant and consciously chose my Canadian Citizenship after inspection of what China promised. Canada promised the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to its own citizens and to the world.

My faithfulness, my bearing absence, my observing laws and my fulfilling duties, were sworn as the way I stand on guard for all of our Rights and Freedoms. In other words, I swore an Oath for them.

I repeat a warning made in 1973. “You are the product of TV. You are delivered to the advertiser who is wise in all things, who will be accountable to provide me informed consent that the claims and decisions involving COVID-19 are true, valid or appropriate. The Province of British Columbia, through the Ministry of Mass and Social Media, deliver billions of you, billions of us, to be consumed.”

Here is the problem. No official from the Province of British Columbia is willing to be accountable to provide me informed consent that the claims and decisions involving COVID-19 are true, valid or appropriate. The Province of British Columbia is unwilling to provide scientific representation. Mass and Social Media deliver us to the Fear and Obedience for which they are designed.

Now I would really like to consciously provide my consent to the COVID-19 emergency which we are experiencing. I have excellent public and personal justifications to demonstrate to the neighbourhood a commitment to quality science. The COVID hoax reminds us that it is simple to persuade the public that one of the statements was trashed by media and easily challenged statements were published by the media. The public lying. The Big Tech censorship has reinforced the phony statements. The work of the Province of British Columbia is unable, or unwilling, to abide by any standard of accountability to which generations have worked to build the strength and outcomes for this situation, my working hypothesis is that I live in a hobbled civilization, and our officials prefer to exclude us from its rejuvenation, which is the minimum participation required for abuse of powers of the judiciary. Claims for rights abuses for thousands of years. The Attorney General’s office ignored the appeal and ignored follow-up emails until I made a complaint to the Prime Minister’s office which resulted in this reply: “We do not provide legal advice to the general public.”

Canadian judges claim to be above the law and not subject to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Claims for absolute power can be held in a democracy. Claims for absolute power have resulted in human rights abuses for thousands of years. The judiciary will not back down on this issue unless the people of Canada stand together and firmly refuse their services. We need a legal system in Canada that reflects the values of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This information with all of your friends and family.

Lisa Ross
Kaslo

The views of Lisa Ross are not the views of Lisa Ross BScN (Public Health Nurse - retired) of Kaslo.

Sign the petition to improve accountability of judges

There is a petition to parliament to improve the accountability of judicial judges in Canada. More important than voting, having a voice in our democracy creates a society that reflects our values. All Canadians must sign this petition as our judicial system is NOT operating within its constitutional constraints. https://petitions.parl.gc.ca/en/Petition/Details/Petition-23414

The petition closes on May 7, 2021. Sign it today. It only takes a minute. Share this information with all of your friends and family.

We are promised in the Charter that justice will be “fundamental” and criminal trials also “fair and impartial.” Parliament is supposed to monitor and control the powers of the judiciary. However, the responsibility for the oversight of judges has been delegated to the judges. Read the information on Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Judicial_Court

In my personal experience, I presented to the court the best evidence possible – the transcript of trial – because a lawyer created a fraudulent court order. The judge, protecting the lawyer, personally called up the plaintiff. The witness stood and asked if he would testify and “prefer to exclude us from its rejuvenation, which is the minimum participation required for abuse of powers of the judiciary. Claims for rights abuses for thousands of years. The Attorney General’s office ignored the appeal and ignored follow-up emails until I made a complaint to the Prime Minister’s office which resulted in this reply: “We do not provide legal advice to the general public.”

Canadian judges claim to be above the law and not subject to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Claims for absolute power can be held in a democracy. Claims for absolute power have resulted in human rights abuses for thousands of years. The judiciary will not back down on this issue unless the people of Canada stand together and firmly refuse their services. We need a legal system in Canada that reflects the values of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This information with all of your friends and family.

Lisa Ross
Kaslo

The views of Lisa Ross are not the views of Lisa Ross BScN (Public Health Nurse - retired) of Kaslo.

Sign the petition to improve accountability of judges

There is a petition to parliament to improve the accountability of judicial judges in Canada. More important than voting, having a voice in our democracy creates a society that reflects our values. All Canadians must sign this petition as our judicial system is NOT operating within its constitutional constraints. https://petitions.parl.gc.ca/en/Petition/Details/Petition-23414

The petition closes on May 7, 2021. Sign it today. It only takes a minute. Share this information with all of your friends and family.

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Return of the Nakusp Music Festival? One man is giving it a go…

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative

A Nakusp man wants to bring back the village’s legendary music festival – in a somewhat more modest form.

Tyrell Jordan says enthusiasm is growing for the idea.

“We’re putting a proposal together for the Village council to allow us to do it on the Village’s property – it’s not like we’re just running amok and hoping we throw a ‘Hail Mary’ pass and hope it’s going to happen,” he says. “You plan this correctly, it’s going to be a go.”

Jordan moved from New Denver

Canoe theft in Rosebery

by Jan McMurray

A Rosebery canoe is couple upset after discovering the theft of their canoe, two sets of paddles, a can of diesel fuel and a large funnel from their carport.

The theft happened the night of Tuesday, April 13 in Rosebery, just north of New Denver.

“When we looked out into the carport on Wednesday morning, BC Hydro plans upgrades in Rosebery and Edgewood

by Jan McMurray

BC Hydro is upgrading its power lines in Rosebery and Edgewood from single-phase to three-phase lines. Work is expected to begin in late summer or fall and to be completed by March 30, 2022.

“As communities grow and their demand for power increases, we make improvements to meet the need,” said BC Hydro’s Jen Walker-Larsen. “These projects will increase the amount of power that can be delivered by the line to meet peak customer load, improve reliability of service, and improve power quality.”

In Rosebery, approximately 1.7 kilometres of single-phase line will be upgraded, and nine new poles will be installed along Hwy 6. This will involve relocation of a section of the line.

“We are moving a section of the line to improve access for our crews,” Walker-Larsen said. “This makes it easier for them to maintain the system and restore outages. The line relocation work will install nine new poles along Hwy 6.”

She said three poles in Rosebery that hold Telus lines will be transferred to Telus.

In Edgewood, 2.4 kilometres of single-phase line will be upgraded to three-phase, and almost half a kilometre of new three-phase line will be constructed.

for Nakusp Community Events, and several music-related events are taking place in the park with Mayor Tom Zeleznik and other members of the society. He said one of the groups playing at the festival was from another city, and he said “there’s a little hill that kind of acts like a small amphitheatre.”

He also said the festival was not happening in the summer, so they’re looking at more affordable acts, and it’s looking at getting in one or two bands at a time, and have maybe four or five great concerts throughout the summer months.

Jordan has spoken with the Society

for the community is just not there, at least not right now.

While it never was really a financial success – and he’s not exactly sure why – he thinks this might be the time to try again, at least on a somewhat smaller scale.

“We’re erecting a stage in town, and now we’re looking at more affordable acts,” he says. “So what we’re looking at is instead of having two or three days of eight or nine bands a day, we’re looking at getting in one or two bands at a time, and have maybe four or five great concerts throughout the summer months.”

Jordan says there’s a lot of planning, community organizing, fundraising and volunteering needed before the reworked festival can resume. But he thinks it could mean big things for Nakusp.

“There are people still coming here for the summer, even though the music festival wasn’t happening anymore, because it was happening,” he says. “We are really having a boom now, our community… people want out of the city, and they see smaller communities that have good internet, a good grocery store, arena, good schools… we’re seeing a massive influx of population.

“So when you have an event like this, it will draw people not only from the community but from other parts of the Kootenays as well.”

Jordan is now putting a proposal together to gauge council and community support, and hopes to present it to the Village council at an upcoming meeting. He’s also committed to supplying the foundation for the stage and the most appealing materials and manpower to make it happen. He’s also convinced other local companies to donate to the cause.

“I’m a motivated guy,” he says. “I’m personally on the hook to help erect the stage. I’m all in.”

Jordan says he’s confident there could be concerts in town as soon as this summer. To turn it into an ongoing annual event, he says, will need a more robust organization of volunteers.
RCMP clarifies enforcement on non-essential travel

by Chief Superintendent Dave Atfield
Deputy Criminal Operations Officer, Core Policing
BC RCMP

Earlier this month, the BC provincial government announced a ban on non-essential travel between three regional zones in British Columbia, and authorized the provincial government announced a ban on non-essential travel between three regional zones in British Columbia, and authorized

the Combined Coastal and Fraser Interior Regions. When a road check is active, a notification will also be made on the BC RCMP website and social media channels. In preparation for the upcoming checks, we would ask the public to review the restrictions and provisions that the provincial government has issued, and to avoid non-essential travel between the Lower Mainland/Fraser Valley, Vancouver Island, and Northern/Interior regions.

We recognize that these checks will impact traffic flow and could potentially lead to delays. Leading up to the May long weekend we encourage everyone to revisit their plans and limit travel outside of their community. By working together, we will help to slow the spread of COVID-19 and return to normal seasonal travel more quickly.

Officer, Core Policing
Deputy Criminal Operations Officer
by Chief Superintendent Dave Atfield

The Valley Voice May 6, 2021

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May 6, 2021 The Valley Voice

COMMUNITY

Microhydro project and new water system show up in Slocan’s budget
by Joanne Feenstra

The five-year financial plan and tax rate bylaws were adopted by Slocan council at the public budget meeting on April 26. Two large capital projects on the horizon for the Village are a new water system and the Springer Creek microhydro project. In 2021, $500,000 is budgeted to start planning for a new water system, with major work scheduled for 2022-23. Starting in 2023, the five-year financial plan shows expenses of over $7 million for a revitalized Springer Creek hydro project.

Gordon stated that council is currently exploring options to continue with the project, such as partnership agreements with existing hydro providers. The municipality received a $2.4 million grant as a two-thirds contribution towards building a hydro project on Springer Creek but the project was put on the back burner when BC Hydro cancelled its Standing Offer program in 2019. At that time, consultations with interested agencies, including impacted First Nations, had been completed and it was anticipated that the project could contribute $300,000, before debt serving, into the municipal coffers annually.

Also in 2023, the financial plan shows a proposed expenditure of almost $5 million for the new water system for the municipality. The current water treatment on Gwillim Creek uses a membrane filtration system, which needs to be replaced every 5-8 years at a cost of $140,000 – double the original estimate given to the municipality during the pre-construction phase. CAO Michelle Gordon stated that production of this membrane may be discontinued in the future. Further, with climate change and landslides on the creek, the Gwillim Creek water supply system may prove to be unsustainable.

Gordon stated that a year’s worth of water testing has been completed on Slocan Lake to ascertain if the lake is a viable source of potable water, and the results are positive. It is possible, she said, that land at the previous sawmill site could be utilized for a new water system. Other water source possibilities include the aquifer below Slocan Village or Slocan River. Springer Creek has been ruled out because it contains too many heavy metals, due to past mining further up the creek.

In 2021, approximately $80,000 will be taken from general revenue to pay interest on the $845,000 loan incurred when the municipality purchased the sawmill site in 2020. Interest on the five-year loan is currently flowing at 1% and at the end of five years, the loan needs to be repaid or rolled over.

In 2020, Slocan used $60,000 of the $252,000 in COVID-Safe Restart funding to make up lost operations revenue. Some of the future COVID-related expenditures could include setting up online payments for the campground and revitalizing municipally managed washrooms to reduce contact.

The Village Slocan experienced a 19% increase in residential assessments and 16% in commercial assessments. Reappraisal, Nelson’s residential assessments increased only 5%. The 2021 budget has a 3% tax increase. An average homeowner in Slocan with a valued home at $196,000 can expect to pay $715 in municipal taxes this year – up about $20 from last year. Over and above municipal property taxes, water in Slocan costs $502 and garbage $135.

Municipal taxes account for 44% of the average Slocan resident’s total tax bill. RDCK taxes account for 28% and school taxes account for 24%. The remainder is for police, hospital and BC Assessment Authority taxes. The total 2021 tax bill for the average Slocan resident is estimated at $1,036.

Slocan’s revenue is $2.2 million this year, including $1.2 million in potential grants for capital projects. Municipal tax revenues make up only 7% of the Village’s budget revenue for 2021.

Expenses come to $810,000. The revenue over expenses will pay down debt, fund capital projects, and go into Village reserves.

New Denver council, April 27: Acting corporate officer appointed

by Kathy Hartman

• It seems that Catherine Allaway is currently exploring options to continue with the project, such as partnership agreements with existing hydro providers. The municipality received a $2.4 million grant as a two-thirds contribution towards building a hydro project on Springer Creek

by Joanne Feenstra

• Many upgrades at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre
• Council decided on its recommendations for Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiative Program funding. Silverton had $33,864 available, and Silverton was recommended for the Village’s KCSU account; Allaway was removed from the list.

Neither council nor Garceau would comment on the status of staffing issues at the meeting.

Allaway worked at the Village office as corporate officer for many years. She was appointed chief administrative officer, corporate officer and deputy chief financial officer on December 10, 2019. Her job is now being advertised.

Silverton council, April 28: CBT grant decisions and budget approval

by Jan McMurray

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• Nineteen out of 25 projects were recommended for Columbia Basin Trust’s Community Initiatives Program funding. The adjudication panel was composed of Councilors John Fyke, John Dubinsky, Nadine Stefan, and Bob Thomas. The 19 applications for funding total $43,500 (2019-20) – just $15,20 short of the full amount of available funds. The full list can be found on the Village website in the April 27 agenda package.

• Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre news

Many upgrades at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre include
• an expansion of the Nikkei Memorial Centre to include a fitness room, washrooms and a small kitchen.
• the installation of new windows and doors.

• The Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre (NIMC) is also open to visitors daily, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM until September 30.

The Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre (NIMC) is open to visitors daily, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM until September 30.

The Reading Centre is scheduled to open starting May 4th. Hours of operation are Tuesday 1:00 – 4:00 PM, Wednesday 5:00 – 9:00 PM, Thursday 1:00 – 4:00 PM and Sunday 1:00 to 3:00 PM.

Please note that current Public Health Orders are in effect until May 25, 2021. Know before you go and check the BC government websites for COVID-19 restrictions. If you are visiting us, please follow COVID-19 related signage and practice physical distancing.

Outdoor Burning Reminder

Residents of New Denver are reminded that outdoor burning is regulated within the Village of New Denver. Permits are required for all outdoor fires except cooking fires contained within a barbecue pit or fire pit having a surface area not greater than four (4) square feet; or within a manufactured gas, coal or electric barbecue. Free burning permits are available from April 1st to May 15th and from September 1st to October 15th.

For more information, please contact the Village Office during the hours listed at the top of this notice. Council thanks all residents for their cooperation.

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

VILLAGE OF NEW DENVER
PUBLIC NOTICES

Village Office Hours

With the COVID-19 situation ever-evolving, we are asking the public to avoid unnecessary drop-ins at the Village office in order to reduce the risks of spreading the virus within our community. Please call or email first should you have any questions or require a service, and our staff can determine how we can assist you. Thank you for your cooperation.

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM BY APPOINTMENT ONLY 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM OPEN TO PUBLIC

Home Owner Grant Applications

Starting May 1st, 2021 Home Owner Grant (HOG) applications are to be made directly to the Province of BC.

Program eligibility remains unchanged; however, municipalities are NO LONGER accepting applications for the HOG. Learn more & apply: www.gov.bc.ca/homeownergrant or Phone 1-888-355-2700.

Campground, NIMC & Reading Centre Open

Centennial campground is open for the season as of May 1. Public washrooms in Centennial Park are now open to campfire and day-use visitors.

The Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre (NIMC) is also open to visitors daily, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM until September 30.

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Taylor says Cormac will begin work over the next couple of weeks and has indicated they could have the bulk of the job completed within 24 weeks, or six months, of breaking ground.

“They plan to start assembling equipment in the first week of May,” she says.

Cormac promised in its bid that local contractors would be used as much as possible.

“Local meaning within the region, so I’ve asked for a list of all those contractors to be able to report to the board and public,” she says. “But this is really great news. We’re getting near the exciting part – the planning is over.”

Other projects

But it’s not the only project that’s going to be seeing work crews in the school district. Taylor says the district was able to procure commitments for three other big capital projects.

The biggest is a $980,000 project for their expressed need for protection of fine arts and applied skills learning for all students.

“Judicious use of a portion of the current budget surplus will protect some favourite programs in School District 10,” said Taylor.

“We have maintained small class sizes and the music program, which is what parents really wanted, besides the core reading, writing and arithmetic – the holistic education journey.”

Trustees voted to use $400,000 of their over $850,000 budget surplus to support those programs and other electives, and to cover cost increases like salaries, which are going up by 2% this year.

“What this budget proposes is that there are more electives for our kids, and building the professional capacity of our educators, our board has made a wise investment in what matters most, our children and youth.

The operating surplus has been growing for several years, but saw a real boom in the last two months as the board decided on is good strategy, and with the uncertain conditions we are all facing, and the consultative process [told us] everything was working well at the district and a lot of the participants were happy with the way the surplus was used, so that was brought into play for the final recommendation,” said Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Shelly Woolf.

The Province sets the school tax rates by determining the total amount of revenue required to fund the school tax rate, and the school board decides how to spend the surplus in accordance with Ministry of Education financial policy.

Another application that won’t be funded is from the Slocan Waterfront Community Centre.

This application generated quite a bit of discussion at the meeting. Mayor Lunn told us [told us] everything was working well at the district and a lot of the participants were happy with the way the surplus was used, so that was brought into play for the final recommendation,” said Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Shelly Woolf.

Slocan council approves CBT grants

Slocan council met on April 27 to allocate Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiative Program funding.

The program was undersubscribed this year, so $11,378 will be held over to next year.

Most applicants will be recommended to be fully funded. The Slocan Lake Golf Club asked Slocan for $4,100 towards its $38,600 golf course upgrades project, but will be recommended for $1,100. Two applications from outside the area will not get funding from Slocan: Rossland Gold Fever Follies and Wynndel Springs Council, the RCDC is going to fund an extra $600 to help cover the $400,000 worth of funding for community projects. They were asked for $43,367.31. The CBT grants will be finally approved at the RDCK meeting this month.
Survey is next step in Area D planning discussions

by Jan McMurray

RDCK Area D Director Aimee Watson has finished her round of ‘Planning 101’ meetings with interested North Kootenay Lake communities. This could be the beginning of “years of conversations,” she says. “If we decide to go zoning in some of the communities, it won’t happen until 2023 or 2024,” she said. “We can tailor it through consultation, it’s both amazing, but that requires a lot more conversation. Should we go down that road, I want communities to take a lot of meetings to get it right.”

Watson hosted a series of online meetings last month, starting with a general ‘Planning 101’ session for all Area D residents, and moving on to sessions with specific communities that showed an interest in learning more about zoning. Interested communities were: Schroeder Creek, Argenta, Kasdor Corridor, Mirror Lake, Woodbury and Larder Lake.

“It went better than I anticipated,” she said. “People were polite, kind, asked a lot of questions, and we were surprised that some people felt comfortable enough to say things in front of the neighbours.”

The next step in the process is to conduct a survey of all Area D residents. “There are a lot more people with comments than those who showed up at the meetings, I’m sure. I want to get as many voices as possible.”

Watson reports that all sessions were well attended except Kaslo Corridor and Argenta, and she didn’t hear from anyone in Meadow Creek or Cooper Creek.

The survey will be open from end of May to mid-July. Once the survey results are collated, she says she will convene with the local Advisory Planning Commission and RDCK staff to review the survey data and notes from the community meetings. Area D residents will know by September if a review of the OCP (official community plan) and discussions about zoning will be scheduled in 2022.

Kootenay Lake Ferry terminal improvements to begin

Work to upgrade the Kootenay Lake Ferry terminals begins this spring, with improved amenities, more parking and better access for people who rely on the ferries. Construction on the new electric-ready ferry for the crossing will begin this summer.

At Kootenay Bay, the ferry terminal’s existing washroom facility will be upgraded to make it more accessible. The terminal will get electric-vehicle charging stations, better lighting and parking improvements. At Balfour terminal, the vehicle queue capacity will be significantly increased, a new washroom facility will be built and a transfer shelter will be added. Improvements will be made to Highway 31/3A, along with the realignment of the intersection at Upper Balfour Road and Busk Road, to improve safety and traffic flow within the community. Sidewalks and lighting will also improve connections between the terminal, the new transit stop and the highway.

At both terminals, new terminal attendant stations will be added to provide ferry information and directions, new sheltered waiting areas will be added for walk-on passengers, and those waiting for the ferry will enjoy updated green space and amenities. A $5.54-million contract has been awarded to Marwest Industries Ltd. of Castlegar for the terminal upgrades. Site preparations began this winter, and construction will begin in the coming weeks, with completion expected by the end of 2021.

The ferry service is expected to operate as usual during construction. For everyone’s safety, ferry users are reminded to follow the direction of all traffic control personnel and signage.

A key tool used by local governments to regulate the riparian area above the high-water mark is the ‘environmental development permit area,’ Scott explained. Environmental development permit areas (EDPAs) are identified in land use bylaws and official community plans. They are the focus of this RDCK review.

If property owners want to do almost any development activity in an EPA, a development permit is required by the RDCK. In order to get a development permit, the RDCK requires a riparian assessment report, prepared by a qualified professional.

Examples of activities needing a development permit include disturbing or removing vegetation or soil (landscaping); building structures such as docks, pátios and retaining walls; doing flood protection works; burning; cutting trees; or removing utility corridors and drainage systems.

Scott advised calling the RDCK office to find out if you need a development permit or if you see any development along the lakeshore and want to know if the property owner has a development permit. If you have concerns about activity below the high-water mark or in the lake, such as abandoned boats or docks, Scott advised calling the RAPP line to contact the provincial government’s Conservation Officer Service.

Of the four RDCK electoral areas around Kootenay Lake, Area D (North Kootenay Lake) has a 30-metre EPA; Areas A (near Creston) and E (East Shore) have 15-metre EDPAs; and Area F (North Shore) has no EPA in place.

Scott said this review would determine whether or not to create an EPA for Area F, and whether or not to standardize the EDPAs around the lake. “From a planner’s perspective, it would be great if it were standardized, but we recognize there are differences around the RDCK and any changes to the EDPAs will be based on the feedback we receive from communities around the lake.”

Scott also explained that the floodplain and the riparian areas often overlap, but the RDCK floodplain bylaw is in place to protect property from damage and to identify flood hazard areas for safety reasons. Environmental development permit areas are in place to protect the natural environment, not for safety.

“At the end of this process, let’s make changes to the environmental permit areas around the lake so they are protecting Kootenay Lake riparian areas,” he said. “Environmental development permit areas are designated for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.”

To conclude the workshop, participants took a survey to identify the top two things they value most about the lake and their top five greatest concerns. Results were quite similar at both workshops, with the top two values being the natural environment and clean and abundant water; and the five top concerns being development pressures, environmental degradation, water quality, healthy fish habitat, and unauthorized foreshore modification.

The presentation and survey are available on the RDCK website under ‘Planning’ for those who couldn’t make it to the workshops.
submitted

To get British Columbians active in preventing and stopping the spread of harmful invasive species, the BC government has officially declared the entire month of May as Invasive Species Action Month. The Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society (CKISS) is taking action on invasive species by launching the EcoGarden Project.

With a rapidly changing climate and major climate disturbances, native ecosystems are under stress to adapt quickly. The EcoGarden Project aims to support the planting of native and non-invasive plants to increase biodiversity and reduce risks associated with invasive species, which supports resilient ecosystems in the face of climate change.

“The idea for this project came from the experience of my own garden. I wanted to know how I could do a better job protecting the Kootenays in my own backyard. I started researching wildlife gardens and I had questions about some of the plants I was considering. I figured I wasn’t the only one wondering what to do with all the disparate plant lists and needing expert local advice,” says Laurie Carr, CKISS development program coordinator.

Project aims to support the planting of native and non-invasive plants, with special emphasis on those suited for the Central Kootenay region and that support native plants. Protocols highlight are suited for future climate conditions, are non-invasive, support birds and attract pollinators. Wildlife attractant issues, such as attracting bears, are detailed on the list. All the plants are available from local sources and were chosen by local experts to ensure success by gardeners and landscapers alike.

“We also recently discovered a frog egg mass in one of the ponds that was constructed last fall. “Having a mix of ponds fed from groundwater and from the reservoir will provide a wider range of habitat for wildlife and plants,” she said. “These wetlands are intended to remain ‘in the wet’ even during the drawdown period, providing wildlife habitat year-round. In addition, the habitat mounds provide shelter for birds and wildlife even when the ponds are inundated, as they are built above the high-water mark.”

Walker-Larsen says engineering monitoring will be conducted periodically to see if the wetland is performing as designed. Environmental monitoring of the site will take place as part of BC Hydro’s larger monitoring program for the lower and mid-Arrow Lakes reservoir.

“Having a mix of ponds fed from groundwater and from the reservoir will provide a wider range of habitat for wildlife and plants,” she said. “These wetlands are intended to remain ‘in the wet’ even during the drawdown period, providing wildlife habitat year-round. In addition, the habitat mounds provide shelter for birds and wildlife even when the ponds are inundated, as they are built above the high-water mark.”

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The Burton Flats project was constructed in two phases, last fall and this spring. BC Hydro has constructed ponds, wetlands and planting mounds on Burton Flats to create and enhance wildlife habitat.

BC Hydro’s Burton Flats project complete

by Jan McMurray

The Burton Flats now has ponds, wetlands and other features that will benefit wildlife affected by BC Hydro operations on the Arrow Lakes reservoir.

“While the construction of the Burton Wildlife Enhancement Project is complete, the process of wetland restoration takes time to fully establish,” says Jen Walker-Larsen of BC Hydro. “Recreation on or near the site may disrupt this settling process and deter wildlife from taking up residence, so we encourage people to observe the area from a comfortable distance.”

Walker-Larsen says some additional planting will take place this fall to complete the revegetation portion of the project.

She says kingfishers, larkspurs and elk have already been observed using the newly constructed wetland.

The Doggy Doo Doo-Gooders clean up the abundant doggy doo from the ‘friendly forest’ where staff and children from the Goat Mountain Kids Centre play. Residents who walk their dogs up Carpenter Creek are reminded to please clean up after them.
The bears are back in town and so is WildSafeBC

WildSafeBC is the provincial leader in preventing conflict with wildlife through collaboration, education, and community solutions. The program is delivered by the BC Conservation Foundation in communities across BC. Cora Skaien and Brian Montgomery are back this season as the WildSafeBC community coordinators for New Denver, Silverton, Nakusp and Areas H and K, and for Kaslo and Area D.

While the COVID-19 pandemic may continue to keep many of us at home, that is not true for the bears and other wildlife that live nearby – the bears are waking up and they are hungry! As community coordinators, Cora and Brian will be working hard to reach out to community members in new and innovative ways that maintain physical distancing and safety for the community, building off successes from last year.

From April to November, Cora and Brian will be involved in a number of WildSafeBC modified program initiatives including door-to-door information delivery campaigns, garbage tagging, information booths and webinar delivery of the highly requested WildSafe Ranger Program for school-aged children, as well as Wildlife Awareness and Safety Education sessions. They also hope to host limited, outdoor, in-person workshops once the number of daily COVID-19 cases reduces.

Email Cora at newdenver@wildsafebc.com or Brian at kaslo@wildsafebc.com for more information on how to register for these free programs. Local wildlife activity news and tips will be posted as the season progresses on the local Facebook pages (WildSafeBC New Denver – Nakusp and WildSafeBC Kaslo).

For further information on wildlife and how to reduce human-wildlife conflict, visit www.wildsafebc.com.

SVCLS celebrates 10 years of supporting local volunteer-led groups

Volunteer Week in Canada may be over now, but we still have something to celebrate! The Slocan Valley Community Legacy Society (SVCLS) was officially founded in May of 2011, when a group of enthusiastic citizens stepped forward to create an organization that would “encourage and promote philanthropy and provide a conduit forward to create an organization of enthusiastic citizens stepped up to support local community needs, activities and projects that enhance the quality of life in the Slocan Valley and increase community resilience.”

With the help of many generous donors and supportive partners, over the last decade the SVCLS has been able to deliver successfully on those early goals. Since 2013, the first year of granting, SVCLS has provided over $80,000 to more than 30 groups from one end of the valley to the other. The endowment fund, which began with just over $134,000 is now at $237,000! This is definitely something to celebrate.

Throughout its existence, the SVCLS has supported local volunteer-led not-for-profit groups in the important work they do in our communities. We have also honoured individual volunteers for their contributions. For four years, prior to COVID-19, the society hosted a volunteer recognition event, ‘Get Your Just Desserts,’ for volunteers each April during Volunteer Week in Canada. This year, we have been celebrating with a contest just for volunteers. Any Slocan Valley volunteer is eligible to enter, and there are many great prizes to be won! A series of three clues have been provided between April 8 and May 6. Once you know the answer you can send it in to svcls.event@gmail.com. Be sure to include your name, email address and phone number so we can contact you, and also include a line to tell us how and where you volunteer. A random draw from among the successful entries will determine the winners. Check our website at www.slocanvalleylegacy.com for full details. Deadline is May 8.

CLUE # 1: It starts with “C” and can be found almost everywhere in the world.

CLUE # 2: It can be a place, a group or a concept.

CLUE # 3: It can be found in the name of the organization hosting this contest!

Best of luck to all participants, as we celebrate volunteers making a difference.

Volunteer Week may be over, but our contest is still underway! The Slocan Valley Community Legacy Society encourages everyone to reach out and thank a volunteer – they keep our communities strong and healthy, and they help create change. We are celebrating by hosting a contest open to any volunteer in the Slocan Valley. There will be three clues provided between April 8 and May 6. Check our website www.slocanvalleylegacy.com for full details.

Think you know the answer? Send in your guess (with your name and contact information) to svcls.event@gmail.com and if you’re right your name will be entered into a draw for one of 12 prizes! Deadline for entries is May 8th.
Local gardener warns of clubroot disease

submitted by Randy Cofer

Clubroot is a serious soil-borne disease which affects, and will kill, its host – which includes all brassica family plants.

“There are quite a number of gardens in the Slocan Valley that have been infected with this pathogen,” says Randy Cofer, Red Mountain Road Road gardener. “I am aware of two more gardens in the North Slocan Valley which have recently become infected by this disease. If we want to continue to grow brassicas in our area, we’ll need to pay attention.”

The brassica family consists of cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, kale, Chinese cabbage, collards, turnip, kohlrabi, cauliflower, rutabaga, radish, mustard and arugula.

Clubroot is considered a protist – an organism with plant, animal and fungal properties. It cannot grow and reproduce without a host, i.e. brassica family plants. Clubroot has been found in soils with fungal properties. It cannot grow and reproduce without a host, i.e. brassica family plants.

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Any soil or plant that’s removed from a contaminated bed needs to be double-bagged and emptied onto a burn pile where it can be immediately incinerated. Care needs to be taken to avoid tracking or splattering bits of soil between the garden and burn pile. Alternatively, the contaminated plant can be bagged and taken to the transfer station to be dumped in the trash bin – not into the yard waste or wood recycle bin. The ideal, though painful, option is to keep it contained.

The affected beds should be treated and the garden beds must be sterilized in 50/50 bleach and water. Soles of garden shoes and gloves will harbor clubroot spores, which need to be treated with a chlorine solution in a tray that can be stepped into on the way out of the garden. Hands and gloves will also need sterilizing before digging in the ‘clean’ beds. When digging in a contaminated bed, take care not to splatter soil into pathways. Contaminated soil must stay in the contaminated bed.

Search the BC Ministry of Agriculture website for clubroot information and contact the Abbotsford Agriculture Centre regarding directions for collecting soil samples to send to their lab for testing if you suspect you may have clubroot in your garden.

Studio Connexion Art Gallery announces 2021 lineup, starting with Marc Grandbois

by Jan MacMurray

Studio Connexion Art Gallery in Nakusp starts up its 2021 season with landscape painter Marc Grandbois, May 14-29.

Grandbois lives in the Saguayen region of Quebec, about three hours north of Quebec City. Most of his paintings at Studio Connexion this year will be of his region, but there will be one of Gardiner Creek in the Nakusp area, he says.

Grandbois has shown three times before at the small, private gallery in Nakusp. “I have work in many galleries of all sizes,” Grandbois said in an interview. “It’s the connection I have with the gallery owner that is more important to me than the size of the gallery. I prefer to work with gallerists who understand their artists and establish a kind of friendship with them. Anne is a very nice person. I very much like Nakusp.”

Grandbois paints with acrylic paint on wood panels. “The panels work better for acrylic than canvas, in my opinion,” he says. “They offer a smoother surface than canvas – and I don’t like to see the grain of the canvas under my brush strokes.”

Grandbois also gives workshops, and will come to Nakusp this fall to lead a two-day workshop at Valley of the Springs Winery. The workshop was originally scheduled for May, but had to be rescheduled due to COVID-related travel restrictions. His workshops fill up fast, and this one is already sold out.

Other artists at the gallery this year will be Janet B. Armstrong from Calgary (first three weeks of June), Delreed Dumont, a new Indigenous artist in the Nakusp area, Maureen Howard, Denise Marshall of Nakusp, Perry Haddock of the Vancouver area, and Brigitte Desbois from Nelson.

“We are happy to have Denise Marshall just in time for the Columbia Basin Culture Tour, and we are looking at the possibility of a workshop with Brigitte Desbois, also in the fall.” Studio Connexion gallerist Anne Beliveau says.

Shows will start May 14 and continue through to October 2 at Studio Connexion, 203 Fifth Avenue in Nakusp. The gallery is open only by appointment, between 11 am and 4 pm Tuesday to Saturday. Call 250-265-8888 to make an appointment.
Kaslo looks to open new lands for housing

by Jan McMurray

New land for residential housing may be coming available in Kaslo in the next few years, as the Village takes part in a provincial pilot program to prepare for an expected population increase.

Kaslo council voted last week to take part in the Rural Resident Attraction Pilot Project, a new initiative of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

Under the program, the Village can apply for funds to cover the cost of planning for land in their area that might be available for residential housing.

“For Kaslo, this is an excellent opportunity to obtain professional services in land development feasibility, planning and engineering, and how to market this opportunity to potential investors once we are ready,” Village Chief Administrative Officer Ian Dunlop wrote in a report to council. “It is also great timing as we embark on our Official Community Plan review, and obviously, we have the post-pandemic new world already seen the surge in real estate plans and the number of permits issued is up 50% over last year at this time.

Dunlop could not say just how many new homes or multi-unit buildings might be built on the land being examined, saying those were exactly the kinds of questions the planners are going to tackle. However, he did say the idea is to get new lands into the marketplace sooner than later.

“There are the things we need some professional advice on, to see what kind of density is appropriate in that area to get a good mix of low and medium-density residential,” he said. “The idea is to have these lands positioned for sale in about two years.”

The Rural Resident Attraction Pilot Project will provide a total of $250,000 to five local governments – Kaslo, New Denver, Silverton, Slocan, and the RDCK areas D and H – over two years to identify, develop, market new lands for housing.

The program is so new, however, that details haven’t been released yet. A spokesperson for FLNRORD said they would be making a formal announcement about the pilot project in mid-May.

The Village has pondered expanding into the area before, but was counselled to do its homework first. A 2018 report noted that “due to the number of lands containing institutional and other extensive uses, it is advisable to assess future (long-term) development potential within a comprehensive planning approach such as an Area Plan in advance of any major development decisions.”

“Here we are,” notes Dunlop in his report. With money available from the Province, and the Village on the cusp of starting a review of the Official Community Plan, the time is right to grab the opportunity, he said, even though it’s a big project piling up on top of an already substantial to-do list for staff.

“It’s a lot of balls up in the air,” Dunlop told the Valley Voice. “The Kaslo South Area Plan project is going to happen quickly, there’ll be RFPs put out for consultants fairly soon. We’d like to see it happen as soon as May.”

Dunlop said the project was likely going to hire consultants rather than use internal staff.

“We see it happening in parallel with the OCP, but the two are quite intertwined because this area is so significant to Kaslo’s immediate future as far as development goes,” he said.

Kaslo River bridge. While described as an “outstanding development opportunity,” one of the biggest barriers to development in the area to date is the lack of sewer services – and the prohibitive cost of expanding the existing sewer system south of the Kaslo River.

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Nakusp council, April 26: council passes budget, fence variance

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Campground report

Council received the report on planning and upgrades for the municipal campground. (See ‘Nakusp municipal campground has big potential – but at hefty price,’ elsewhere in this edition of the Valley Voice.) The report, 18 months in the making, was received as information as council reviews its next steps in the process. The committee formed to study the issue was also dissolved, with thanks for a job well done.

Deer fence OK’d

A homeowner on 3rd Ave in Nakusp is going to get her privacy fence. Jenelle van Houten asked for a development variance to allow her to build a seven-foot fence along two sides of her property, ‘for privacy and to keep deer off her property.’ After her application hearing, council asked for more information from staff about possible compromises. At this meeting, they approved a new plan for the fence, after getting staff recommendations. Van Houten will be able to have the bottom four feet of her fence solid wood, while the top three will be some sort of mesh design to soften the overall effect.

Land purchase partly approved

A Nakusp couple isn’t going to get all the land they wanted to buy from the municipal government. A report from staff on the request of Howard and Kathy Currie to buy a strip of land next to the cemetery, and behind their house, was received by council.

“The Village is opposed to selling the laneway portion as it is used by the Village when working in the cemetery and deems it necessary to retain this portion,” staff wrote.

“There is no concern to sell the portion of the Village property that is located between the rail trail and the Cunn’s rear property line.”

However, zoning of the portion the Village is willing to sell is an issue. Its current zoning would have to be changed to ensure the homeowners can’t build any structures near their new property line.

“Beach buoys

Speedy boaters are going to be warned to slow down when driving past Nakusp’s community beach. A report from staff showed the facility made $46,359 from operations in March with just over 2,400 visitors. That’s better than last year by $14,000, but still far below normal operations. In March 2019, the municipally owned facility made more than $63,000 for the local government. The campgrounds, hot springs and chalets were supposed to be closed for a week of repairs in April, but a decision was made to shut it down completely to follow the town’s public health restrictions. That decision will be revisited after the May long weekend, when provincial orders will be updated.

Water use way down

The mystery of the missing water has been solved. Councillor Susan DeSandojoli wanted to know why the Public Works report showed Nakuspians used only 26,700 cubic metres of water in March of this year. That’s way down from the 41,700 used in March 2020, and just one-third the amount of water used last September. Public Works manager Bob Gresik said that crews had caught and repaired a major leak on Shakespeare Rd, and one or two others in the system caused by pressure problems. Those were likely the cause of the Village’s high water use before last fall.

Gresik said Nakusp told council spring runoff and its concurrent drop in water quality is proving a daily challenge for his crew.

Budget passed

The five-year financial plan and tax bylaw were adopted. After all the pencil sharpening, debate and trade-offs, council approved a 3.5% tax hike this year – about a $20 increase on the average home tax bill. After passing the bill, councillors stood behind the decision.

“It’s kind of a stay-the-course budget,” added Councillor Joseph Hughes. “We tried to tighten the belt where we could, but there’s something to be said for sticking to plans for maintenance and replacement, so we’re not robbing tomorrow to keep taxes low today.”

“I just think the CFO did a great job of trying to keep things intact. We did the best we could,” said Councillor Miller. “If I think of your grocery bill only went up $30 this year, you’d be pretty happy with that.”

Nakusp Village CAO quits to reunite with family

In the end, family triumphs everything. Village of Nakusp Chief Administrative Officer Cheryl Martens says that’s why she’s quit her job at the head of the municipal government.

“My daughter just had her third child, my third granddaughter, and with all this COVID I have not been able to go back and see my family, I miss my family,” she said. “So I’ve decided to move back to Saskatchewan.”

Martens is leaving just short of two years on the job, having joined after a stint as CFO of the community of Princeton. While COVID has increased her feeling of isolation, she says it’s a decision she’s been thinking about for a while now.

“I just kind of wonder what I’m doing out here, when all my family are back there,” she told the Valley Voice.

“The community has been friendly, but I just feel I need to be close to friends and family. “It would have been different if I had family and friends here, but I don’t.”

Mayor Tom Zeleznik says he understands Martens’ reasoning, and says she will be missed.

“Cheryl has made a significant contribution and impact as our Village CAO over the past two years including leadership, and vision through some difficult and challenging times, especially during this ongoing pandemic,” he told the Valley Voice. “She especially cited her work on the new Occupational Health and Safety [now bylaw enforcement rules, downtown revitalization, and shepherding the Village through its biggest building boom in decades. “Cheryl worked hard with council through our strategic goals, and through several projects during her two-year tenure.”

Zeleznik says Martens will be replaced “as soon as possible.”

“[Recruitment is now underway to fill the vacancy to lead the community through the upcoming busy years ahead, as the Village prepares for the growth in the building boom and other major projects,” he said.

Martens will leave the position May 14, giving her time to wrap up some ongoing projects. But she’s not sure what the future will hold for her when she returns to Saskatchewan.

“I just want to get settled in and determine where I go from there,” she says.

Martens says she will miss working with Village staff, and says she learned a lot in her two years here.

“It’s very challenging, it’s a very challenging job. This community is highly active,” she says.

“But my most memorable thing here will be climbing Saddleback Mountain, which I did two summers ago.

“It was awesome. I am terrified of heights, but I did it anyway.”

Nakusp & The Arrow Lakes

The Valley Voice May 6, 2021

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Nakusp municipal campground has big potential – but at hefty price

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Nakusp residents got their first real look at plans to expand and improve the community’s municipally owned campground last month.

The Village’s Municipal Campground Expansion Committee submitted its report to Nakusp council on April 25, about 18 months after first being established.

“I think you’ll enjoy what we accomplished,” said Mayor Tom Zeleznik, who sat on the committee, when introducing the report’s author, Beth McLeod.

The plan envisions a three-phase approach to expanding and improving the municipal campground and other areas in the 36-acre (14.9-hectare) community park. Nakups said the project would cost about $2.8 million if fully implemented. The path forward, however, will require more resources and consultation with the public – let alone finding the funds to make it a reality.

“The Municipal Campground within that park is a very pleasant place to camp for those who like to be close to the town’s amenities and public beach, among other things,” the report summary explains. “This Committee’s work has shown that there is excellent potential to expand the campground and still retain space around the perimeter of the existing area. The topography, trails and natural areas, such as the ravine between the ball fields and the expansion area, are intact. But the campground has its problems. For 50+ years, it’s been a fairly reliable cash cow for councils, at the expense of the community in its infrastructure. As a result, today’s larger motorhomes have difficulty manoeuvring in and out of the park, and there aren’t enough spaces for them to meet demand. The washroom facilities are hopelessly inadequate, and the entrance location is located right across the street from where campers bathe and clean their dishes. It’s time, said committee spokesperson Beth McLeod, to acknowledge the campground needs help.

“It’s lots of big dollars, yes, but hopefully some grants can be found,” she said. “There are many priorities for the Village of Nakusp. So it depends on prioritizing this one over others.”

Councillor Tom Miller, who also sat on the committee, agreed, saying it was time to set up a reserve fund for the campground.

“Because we are years and years into profits from the campground going straight into municipal coffers, that’s one of the reasons the campground is in the condition it is,” he says. “So having that fund put aside for improvements adds a little tax burden to the community. But it should be done. We have reserves for everything else we manage, and we have to do that here, too.”

Three steps to the future

The committee envisioned three phases to the expansion and renovation of the campground. The first phase (and cheapest, at $175,000) would see adjustments to the ball diamond parking and access road. The local slo-pitch group has been consulted and are excited about the improvements, McLeod said.

The second phase (at $1.29 million) would see the construction of a new entrance way and semi-damp for the big rigs off Broadway. The construction of 21 powered sites for the large RVs, and seven tent sites.

Phase three (also $1.3 million) would see major improvements to the existing campground, especially the showers/washing facilities. The refurbished campground would be able to accommodate 39 large-sized RVs with power.

McLeod said the committee emphasizes the $2.78 million estimate for the work is only a rough calculation: next steps would include speaking to an architect, electrical engineers, utility companies, and other professionals to pin down the work to be done and approximate costs.

But the project can be juggled according to funding available. After questioning by councillors, McLeod noted the staging of the improvements was only a suggestion, and any of the three phases could be done first, or skipped over completely.

But she said the committee also strongly recommends a proper Master Plan be done first for the facility as part of a parks review – something that could be incorporated into the recently completed Official Community Plan.

“It may be wise for council to delay a decision on campsites expansion until after that plan is completed,” she noted. “If council wants to fast-track at least phase one of the campground expansion, then perhaps council should fast-track the Parks and Recreation Master Plan as well.

Having a Master Plan in hand would also help encourage funders to pay for upgrades, she said.

Carpenter Creek Green Burial Ground announces first work party

submitted

The Carpenter Creek Green Burial Ground (GBG) has exciting news. The land for the burial ground has now been severed from the original land parcel, and work can begin to prepare the space.

To celebrate, the core group of GBG invites anyone who is excited about this to come and see the site, and to be part of the first community work party to make this dream come true. This opportunity will take place between 10 am and 3 pm on Saturday, May 8. Come when you can, help as long as you like. Some goodies and drinks will be provided, and you are encouraged to bring your own snacks and drinking cups, and any useful tools for pruning and brush clearing. COVID protocols will of course be observed, and if people come throughout the time allotted, the number of workers can be kept to 10 at a time.

The new burial ground is right next to the Masonic section of the New Denver Cemetery, at the very back, on the right (south) as you face uphill. To get there, turn right onto Diver/Siding Road for about 120 metres, then continue on 10th Avenue/Atlantic Street for another 120 metres, where you may park at the corner and walk in. It is on the far side of the cemetery. Alternatively, you can come up through the cemetery from the highway.

The subdivision application, required to sever the cemetery site from the larger property, received final approval from the provincial approving officer on April 21. All documents and plans required to create the new cemetery parcel have been signed, and were submitted to the Kamloops Land Title Office for registration on April 27. When registration has been finalized (anticipated by May 1), the cemetery parcel will have been legally created, with its own separate legal description. However, the transfer of the property ownership will not happen until the society has received charitable registration status from Canada Revenue Agency, which is in the works.

Technical as all this sounds, it means the community, represented by the Carpenter Creek Last Wishes Society, to all intents and purposes now owns the property and can begin to create the green burial ground many have dreamed of for years. GBG wishes to express extreme gratitude to Cunliffe Barnett, whose generous donation of the land has made all this possible.

For more information about this project, and to find out how to contribute, go to http://carpentercreeklastwishesociety.ca/green-burial.

The committee also recommended council engage the whole community in the planning and design. While it consulted with immediate neighbours on noise, traffic and other issues, McLeod noted there are many community groups with an interest in the park, and it would help build public support for the money that will have to be spent to improve the facility.

“The Village of New Denver conducted such a survey in early 2021 during their process of developing a new Master Plan for their Centennial Park,” said McLeod. “The… committee feels that if this type of survey was conducted regarding Nakusp’s downtown community park, the results could be very helpful in making informed decisions regarding future development and uses for the park, including campground expansion.”

Next steps

Mayor Tom Zeleznik says there’s a lot for councillors to chew on in the report, and that it will take a bit to absorb before making next steps.

“We have to give council time to look at it, but it’s given us lots to look at. The biggest one is we’re going to have to meet again and decide how to share this with the public, to hear the feedback.”
We are sickened to hear stories of plastics washed up on shores of oceans, rings in ducks’ bills and blinding in the stomachs of wildlife. There may be around 5.25 macro and micro plastic pieces floating in the open oceans, weighing up to 269,000 tonnes. 100,000 marine mammals and turtles and one million sea birds are killed by marine plastic pollution annually.

We know the need to change our plastic waste habits. Recycling is important but it is not enough. The whole plastic crisis is too big! We need to turn off the tap! In Canada, more than one-third of our plastics are created for single-use products or packaging. About 86% of plastic waste ends up in the landfill, while a measer 9% is recycled. We need to fight our addiction to disposable plastic. The problem starts here and the solutions need to start here, too.

Last fall, Prime Minister Trudeau introduced a law to ban some single-use plastic items in 2021. Among them were stir sticks, shopping bags and six-pack rings. Further proposed laws will list single-use plastic items in 2021. Among them were recycled. We need to fight our addiction to turn off the tap! In Canada, more than one-third of our plastics are created for single-use products or packaging. About 86% of plastic waste ends up in the landfill, while a measer 9% is recycled. We need to fight our addiction to disposable plastic. The problem starts here and the solutions need to start here, too.

Many of us have often wished that grocery stores come in reusable containers. Now, in Ontario, there is an online store, Loop, that sells food in returnable containers. Loop will sell well known brands, such as Heinz, President’s Choice and Haagen-Dasz in take-back containers. The companies charge a deposit fee, clean and refill them, like beer bottles or our Kootenay Meadows milk. Burger King plans to launch reusable packaging through Loop later this year, as does Tim Horton’s. We can hope this idea will grow and change our consumer habits.

Here are some other ideas for us to dispense with disposables. Examine your own shopping cart. Choose things with less packaging. Let your retail stores know. Talk about reducing plastic waste among your friends. Raise awareness in social media. Speak or write to your local government leaders. Kaslo is updating its Official Community Plan this year. Ask that things that are important, because we’re all so tightly wedded to our particular version of reality. We write impassioned letters, make ardent FB posts, and then are shocked by how grossly others misunderstand our statements. Words have become stumbling blocks rather than steps to mutual comprehension.

The world of cognitive linguistics reminds us that language is our best attempt to accurately portray bodily experience. But experience occurs first NOT in the language centers of the brain, but in the vast world of physiological give and take: in breath and beating heart, in scent and touch and temperature, in quiet obsession. Language is the second-hand report, an attempt to shove boundless experience into the straightjacket of words. It’s a job that has to be done; but it’s not always a pretty job.

I’ve been ruminating on Rumi lately – or more accurately, on Coleman Barks’ translation of the poem ‘Close the language door and open the love-window.’ Rumi continues:

“The moon will not come to open.

I'll bet that love-window would come to open.

Maybe we'll be silent, maybe you will squeeze my hand in return. Maybe we'll feel warmth radiating from the blossoms or new mown grass; maybe we'll smell the plum trees. Maybe we'll smell the plum blossoms or new mown grass; maybe we'll feel warmth radiating from the road, coolness rising from the earth. Maybe we'll feel warmth radiating from the road, coolness rising from the earth. Maybe we'll feel warmth radiating from the road, coolness rising from the earth. Maybe we’ll reach over and take your hand. Maybe you will squeeze my hand in return. Maybe we’ll be silent, the language door closed.

Let’s get on board with the ideas and solutions that are out there. They may not be as easy or as comprehensive as is needed, but every step in the right direction leads us closer to zero waste.

The airport remains focused on providing a healthy and safe travel experience during the pandemic and delivering on a 25-year Airport Master Plan, which focuses on improving reliability, maximizing revenue, improving airport operations, and providing affordable travel options to connect West Kootenay residents to their destinations.

Other recent provincial COVID response funding recipients in the transportation industry in the region include the Nakusp Airport ($13,000), Mountain Man Mike’s bus service ($6,000), the Whitewater Shuttle ($4,380), the Trail Regional Airport ($180,000), the Nelson Airport ($90,000), and the Creston Valley Regional Airport ($90,000).
**Community**

**Dog control bylaw coming to Slocan, but prevention is best**

by Jan McMurray

A dog control bylaw for RDCK Area H (Slocan Valley) is in the works but it will take some time, reports Director Walter Popoff.

Popoff initiated a survey in the valley some months ago. "Thank you residents wanted a noise bylaw, a dog control bylaw and an unsightly premises bylaw. By a very slim majority, the answer was yes to all three."

Popoff decided not to pursue an unsightly premises bylaw, as he feels the fine arts already have support of their application.

As for the dog control bylaw, Popoff says the Villages of Slocan, Silverton and New Denver have all expressed interest in being included.

"We are looking at feasibility and cost. It’s going to happen, it’s just going to happen at the right time," Popoff says.

Once the bylaw is in place, people will be able to call the dog control officer to report incidents with dogs. "There won’t be anyone doing patrols," Popoff says. "It will be a complaint-driven process."

In the meantime, he says if you get bitten by a dog, you can call the RCMP – section 49 of the Community Charter gives police the right to seize dangerous dogs that have seriously injured a person or domestic animal. However, he says the RCMP is reluctant to do this because of the process they have to follow, including impounding the dog. Popoff says he has told the RDCK to work with the RCMP to use RDCK Area H funds to pay the impoundment fees for any dangerous dog seized in the Slocan Valley.

Another course of action for a victim of a dog attack is a civil suit, Popoff said.

However, for those who have been seriously injured by a dog, having recourse after the incident has happened is rather unsatisfactory.

One area resident told the Valley Voice she was attacked by a dog when she was 11 years old, and had to spend three weeks in the hospital as a result. She had 79 stitches, had to wear a steel cast from ankle to hip, and had to re-learn how to walk. Now, many years later, she is experiencing PTSD, and she believes it was triggered by three recent incidents of large, unleashed dogs rushing towards her on local trails. She is now on medication and looking for counselling.

"I never thought it would rear its ugly head at this point in my life, but it’s gotten to the point I’m a little afraid to go outside," she said. This woman says she would like to see a designated area for people to run their dogs free. Barring that, she’d like to see dog owners leash their dogs when other people are around.

"So far, 100% of the time when I yell for the owner to control his dog, he yells, and the dog ignores him and continues at me. In my mind, this is an uncontrolled dog."

She says she has spoken to an RCMP officer who recommended she carry wasp spray with her. "Please don’t make me spray your dog," she says. "Leash them when there are others on the trail. I’ve had enough PSTD to last a lifetime. Please respect other users of the trails."

**Valhalla Fine Arts Society plans programs for this summer**

As the pandemic rages on, the society is planning for summer programs to help foster appreciation for the arts, music and dance.

"It is our hope that by June 1, we will see COVID-19 cases decline and new Public Health guidelines which will allow us to proceed, following careful and cautious programming changes," says Katrina Sumrall of the VFAS.

Programs start up with two weeks of dance. Slava Doval will teach contemporary dance May 5-6 and Lynette Lightfoot will teach ballet August 16-20.

SVI, the long-standing Suzuki program, will offer two weeks of programming, with 25 students each week, July 26-30 and August 2-6. This program is carefully designed to meet the challenges of the pandemic. The society is working towards hosting recurring, frequent outdoor concerts so everyone can enjoy the music in small groups.

Valhalla Summer School of Music (VSSM) is hoping to host a regular program in Lucerne School the week of August 9-13. This will occur at the same time as the program SOAR, which brings together adult musicians for orchestral playing.

Last year, the society managed to run VSSM online with over 50 students enrolled. "We feel successful in being able to deliver music education, but we missed the music community you build when you are working in person," Sumrall said.

**Local scholarships assist Lucerne graduates**

Most of the Well-controlled, using the proceeds from investments of the scholarship society to generate funds that are available each year. Scholarships are awarded based on academic performance while others recognize citizenship, service, or excellence in the fine arts. The grads complete a recurring, frequent outdoor concerts so everyone can enjoy the music in small groups.

Valhalla Fine Arts Society (VFAS) is hoping to host a regular program in Lucerne School the week of August 9-13. This will occur at the same time as the program SOAR, which brings together adult musicians for orchestral playing.

Last year, the society managed to run VSSM online with over 50 students enrolled. "We feel successful in being able to deliver music education, but we missed the music community you build when you are working in person," Sumrall said.

VFAS has a positive outlook, Sumrall said, and hopes they can proceed with their plans for the summer season of 2021. "We also acknowledge that it is of utmost importance that we plan and execute what we can while following public safety guidelines for everyone in our community."

Check the website for up to date information: www.valhallafinesarts.org

**Catch Nelson author at online festival**

Diana Morita Cole will speak at this year’s online LiterASIAN festival.

"I never thought it would rear its ugly head at this point in my life, but it’s gotten to the point I’m a little afraid to go outside," she said. This woman says she would like to see a designated area for people to run their dogs free. Barring that, she’d like to see dog owners leash their dogs when other people are around.

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**Mom needs new sandals...**

Ortho Lady Sandals are for those who don’t want to sacrifice comfort for style. They’re made in Germany with the highest quality materials.

These leather sandals are very breathable and super soft so your feet never get sweaty. They were designed to support the natural movement of the foot, and they counteract tiredness (that stiletto feeling). And best of all, they come with an amazing inside that is thermal orthotics. But if you have your own orthotics, you can use those instead – Ortho Lady insoles are removable.

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May 6, 2021 The Valley Voice
Kaslo council, April 27: RCMP reports quiet first quarter

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Kaslo council opened up on April 27 with a report from the local RCMP detachment. Constable Duncan McGee said he spent the first three months of the year reasonably quiet for law enforcement. The local detachment handled 153 calls in the first quarter, compared to 176 for the same period in 2020. Motor vehicle collisions, alcohol and drug offences, property crimes, and criminal code violations were all down from last year.

McGeorge said police want to remind the public that store owners have the right to refuse service to people who don’t want to wear a mask in their shop. “Some people have exemptions, but if the merchant says ‘I don’t want you in the store, that’s the merchant’s decision,’” he says “I don’t want you in the store,” so they can make the call.” McGee also said they continue to get calls about people with Alberta or US plates on their vehicles, and wanted to remind people that there may be many legitimate reasons for people to be here from outside the area.

Council thanked McGee and received his report as information.

Forestry reflection

After narrowly avoiding losing their representation on the Kaslo and District Community Forest Society (KDCF5) board of directors last month, councillors want to focus on how to rebuild the relationship with the group.

At the KDCF5 AGM, a majority of the society’s members voted in favour of eliminating the two appointed positions on the board (Village and RDCK reps). However, the motion was defeated because it needed a two-thirds supermajority to change the society’s by-law. It only missed the mark by one vote.

The new councilors wondering how to move forward to improve the relationship. “To those of us who are really forresters,” said Councillor Rob Lang. Council moved the discussion to a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

Land Planning

Kaslo needs land for housing, and a new pilot project from the provincial government is designed to help them develop their options. The Rural Resident Attraction Pilot Project will provide money for identifying, assessing and marketing properties the Village can open up for land development (See ‘Kaslo land development part of larger provincial housing initiative’ elsewhere in this issue). Council voted to take part in the program, and will ask for $50,000 over the two-year life of the project to hire consultants to assess the properties’ potential for aerodrome and Kaslo Bay planning.

The Village is getting ready to proceed with the Kaslo Investment Assessment and Planning Second Phase, a continuation of the work that began with the Kaslo Lands Investment Attraction report completed by CTQ Consultants in 2018. In this phase, the Village will review land tenure and development opportunities around the Kaslo Bay waterfront and the aerodrome. The Kaslo Bay planning includes demolishing the CPR wharf, if funding can be secured, to open up the waterfront area to expand commercial, tourism and recreation facilities. The aerodrome project is to establish long-term leaseholds for hangars and development at the east end of the aerodrome and land title registration. The Village has a provincial grant for this planning work, and will also apply for $10,000 from the RDCK Community Development Program. There is $127,359 in this year’s budget for aerodrome and Kaslo Bay planning.

Big projects mark 2021 Kaslo budget, tax increase tied to inflation

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Kaslo Village council was expected to work this week to approve its 2021 municipal budget, which calls for a 4% general tax increase, a new parcel tax for sewer services, and managing increased costs in grants for infrastructure projects.

The budget was reviewed a final time at a special council meeting May 4, and members ploughed through the tax requisitions from the Regional District, hospital board, police, and school district. The Village collects taxes on their behalf.

“I am happy with the budget and I do believe that it does deliver value,” Mayor Suzan Hewat told the Valley Voice. “Taxpayers will see the same service level that they have come to expect from the Village with only a modest increase in taxation.”

Money goes in…

The budget calls for a 2% tax increase this year, and the application of last year’s 2% increase, which was deferred because of the pandemic. General revenues are projected to be $4.2 million, which includes a slight boost from taxes from new developments, which added an extra 1% to Village coffers. (Some numbers in this article may have changed slightly at this meeting, which occurred after the Valley Voice went to press.)

Staff pointed out the tax rate this year matches inflation, and overall has actually gone down the last few years, from 5.58% in 2018 to 2.94% this year (for residential property) while business has seen rates drop from 8.33% to 6.86% in the same period.

In total, the Village will operate on $2,98 million in revenue, $660,000 of which is raised through taxes. The rest of the money will be raised through grants, transfers, and fees for services provided.

The municipal government is also benefitting from provincial support through the COVID Rapid Restart grant, which grants councils money to re-in to spend as they see fit. About $240,000 will be spent on various projects such as building capacity at City Hall for asset management, community planning, Kaslo Bay Park toilet, City Hall upgrades, improving the public works building, and giving local business a discount on their water bill.

Money goes out…

It’s an ambitious year for municipal projects, though many are still awaiting approval. More than $3.1 million in spending is proposed in total, with about one-third or $1.37 million for capital projects such as the new community centre ($633,000), the Kaslo River Dike project ($451,000) and the A Avenue Waterline ($641,000). The projects were approved by council pending funding from the KASLO & DISTRICT CAP Grant for the project.

The budget also meets some staff requests, like the purchase of a new public works vehicle – an electric pick-up truck – which will cost around $26,400, from Village reserves. Moving to electric will help the Village meet its pledge to be greenhouse gas-neutral by 2050. The Clubcar Carryall CA700 should be hitting the streets later this year.

A new project to help keep down bear-human interactions in the community and to move toward Bear Smart was also given the green light. The Village will hire consultants to develop a guide to help a consultant to conduct a bear hazard assessment, at a cost of $2,450.

Council and staff have worked hard to keep municipal services at a good service levels and delivers on the wishes of the community,” says Hewat. “We are pleased to be able to provide some relief for our hard-hit business community. We have to make some very difficult decisions every year, but we remain conscious of the struggles that some members of our community are facing.”

Successful auction closes land deal for Kaslo and District Library

The auction went relatively smoothly, with the exception of an opportunistic bear making off with a long-term, if possible – a bag of fertilizer, which had to be replaced,” she said.

Some of the most intense bidding was for the bat walk and Karen’s famous pies,” she said. “Special thanks to Kaslo and area residents who donated an appealing variety of Kootenay-style experiences, services and products for the auction.”

Kaslo & District RCMP reports quiet first quarter

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The Valley Voice May 6, 2021
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The Valley Voice

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WHAT AN AMAZING OPPORTUNITY to live your dream and own your own business. Become the proud owner of the Valley Voice and a quest building on the main street of New Denver. The newspaper business can provide a successful living for you and your family, and wonderful community connections. If you are so inclined, we would love to show you the ropes and stay as long or as little as you need us. We have absolutely loved our life as newspaper people! Give us a call 1 833-909-1780 for a chat, or email valleyvoice@valleyvoice.ca. Yours, Dan & Jan.

SLOCAN VALLEY TOOL LIBRARY
GLOBE TO CELEBRATE our 40thANNIVERSARY this October. Have you a story to tell or photos to share related to guild activities over the past 40 years? Please email janieloumurphy@telus.net or brendagailelder@gmail.com or mail Slocan Valley Threads Guild, 1131 Perry’s Back Road, Winlaw, BC V0G 2J0.

PLEASE BRING YOUR BOTTLES to New Denver Recycling. On May 8 and May 15, all bottles collected will go to Lucerne Community. 250-265-3842.

SPECTRUM HOME AND FAMILY
THINKING OF STARTING, buying or expanding your own business? If so, Community Futures offers business loans, business plan workshops, and many other programs and services to help you get started. For more information, contact us at svcls.chair@thevoice.ca or by phone at 250-358-7766.

LEMON CREEK
READY, SET, LEARN in the New Denver area! All pre-Kindergarten 3 to 5 year-olds, including home-based learners, are invited to participate in this free program on three Wednesday mornings, May 26, June 2 and June 9. The modified program will be delivered partially through hands-on activities and at home through learning kits. Parents or caregivers may pick up Activity Kits for the program at Lucerne Elementary Secondary School on the Tuesday before the class. Please pre-register early to receive a kit; call Lila at 250-358-7766. Sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Lucerne Elementary Secondary School and Arrow Lakes Distributed Learning School.

SLOCAN VALLEY LEGACY. You are invited to join us on Thursday, May 27, at 7 pm via ZOOM. Contact us atгляд.chair@gmail.com and you will receive the AGM agenda reports and ZOOM link.

BONES(Set)
THANKS for your support. A big shout out to the people who have been helping people find solutions for their everyday needs! Contact Susan Wilson, Independent Tupperware Representative, 250-226-7751, swilson@direct.ca - 250-226-7751

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COMMUNITY NEWS
Lemons distributed Learning School.

Elemental Gardening at the Hills is open. How to shop our large selection of annual Gardner! Be welling at the farm, 113 Road evening and weekends, 2) Taking online orders and we make deliveries. JY) Vending at Nakusp Old Fire Hall market May 15, New Denver at the Domes on Sunday May 16, 23, 9am-12. Nakusp FM May 22, Kasko Garden Fest May 24. Clean food plants and flowers to keep you well. 358-2660 for order form online.

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CRA\PINGTON CREEK LAST WISHES SOCIETY provides information on preplanning for death and advice for alternative funeral arrangements. Ph. 250-777-1974. www.\carr\apingtonlastwishesociety.ca

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SILVERTON LAKESHORE INN is looking for all the things taken from the hotel as follows: all the archive pictures that were displayed in hallway, BA sign orange and blue, grandfather clock, air conditioners in all the rooms, 5 old yellow hockey jerseys in frame with broken glass, and numerous other things. Please return, no questions asked.

SILVERTON LAKESHORE INN is looking for people who have witnessed: heavy machinery piling snow on our septic field, slander against the hotel or hotel owner. Call your email buyriteautosales@hotmail.com.

BIGFOOT I N N 90 would like to thank you for coming forward with so much information and all the supporting emails. We’re looking forward to serving the area again one day.

QUESTIONING AND DOUBTING what’s going on these days does not make you anti-anything. Nor does it make you a conspiracy theorist. Actually, questioning IS forward to serving the area again one day.


THE TWO VALHALLA PARK Rangers are looking for a house to sit for June to September. Phone 250-214-8734.

LOOKING FOR LARGE SHOP or covered space for Rent/Lease in New Denver/Silverton area. Prefer 14’ door and high ceiling to fit RV’s for my RV Repair business. Alpenglow RV Services 250-551-8605.

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250-358-9617. For NA: New Denver, 250-\ 551-4043. For AL-\ NON (family): New Denver, 250-551-6540. Please, if you can’t get through, try another number.

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‘KBRH Gratitude Mural’ to lift spirits at regional hospital

The Kootenay Boundary Physicians Association (KBPA) commissioned the mural. Initially, Dr. Sue Benzer, KBRH Chief of Staff, inspired by the smiles the Gratitude Garden project at the back entrance brought to staff, proposed a smaller mural to go behind the garden. When Dr. Sue Babensee (project lead), the KBPA working group and board explored options, the idea expanded into a 21-metre (70 feet) by 16-metre (55 feet) 3-D commission for Toews.

Toews’ colourful murals can be seen on Nelson City Hall, the Rossland Cenotaph, and the BC Children’s Hospital.

"The proposed mural is a colourfull, anamorphic design that will create an optical illusion as it interacts with the architecture of the building. Featuring a large red ribbon that forms a heart of gratitude, the completed painting will transcend the boundaries of spatial design and perception," said Toews.

"Art is what grounds us all individually as it reminds us to stop, reflect, and feel inspired," Kohut said. “Art also enables connections with others by sharing stories about the world we live in, our culture, our communities.”

KBBA is proud to have this project, which will reflect its community commitments and connections. The mural’s design, to be unveiled virtually as it progresses through May, will mirror the growth spring offers. The mural will give staff, visitors, and the community a memorable image to take with them. Fellow and contribute to the story on Instagram @kbdoctors.ca @canadianmurals #KBRHGatitudeMural

KBRH Gratitude Mural project team.

May 6, 2021 The Valley Voice
No plans to re-open tourist access to Idaho Peak, FLNRORD says

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

One of the Slocan Valley’s most popular tourist attractions is going to remain closed until further notice.

“The Idaho Lookout Forest Service Road will remain closed for this field season. There is no alternate route of vehicular access to the trailheads,” a spokesperson said for the FLNRORD, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development has told the Valley Voice.

The spokesperson said FLNRORD has not completed any work on the Idaho Lookout FSR since June of 2020 and the road remains barricaded and closed to the public.

Visitors and locals alike were very disappointed when a violent thunderstorm last May 31 washed out a stretch of the 12-kilometre road to the two trailheads to the lookout, one of the easier-to-access viewpoints in the valley.

Last year, road inspectors said an overwhelmed culvert was plugged and stormwaters swept away the road surface in a number of spots along a half-kilometre segment of the narrow, winding road. The disaster immediately closed the road for the season, though eventually a mining company working in the area managed to re-open a segment of the service road for its use. The vehicle path to the lookout, however, remains closed while initial assessment work continues.

“Selkirk Resource District is currently seeking capital funding to complete the preliminary field assessments from last season. This will determine the best course of action,” the departmental spokesperson said. “Works this field season will include survey and design of the suitable repair/relocation options and will then follow up with a completed project budget request.”

Loss for tourism

Idaho Peak is one of the most photographed viewpoints in the Arrow Slocan region due to its panoramic views, endless alpine flowers, and an ease of access alpine that is rare to find locally. It is a very popular spot for both residents and visitors to the region.

Located at over 2100 meters, the views offered from both parking locations are stunning. “This was a place where visitors had opportunity to experience the magnitude of the region’s incredible mountains without a multi-hour hike,” said Megan Chadwick of Arrow Slocan Tourism. “It was a place where visitors could go after a hard day’s work, or a hike on the way to Kaslo from New Denver.”

Moreover, the location is particularly stunning. “This was a place where visitors could go after a hard day’s work, or a hike on the way to Kaslo from New Denver.”

While the water’s not quite high enough to thrill yet, these kayakers were having fun in a standing wave just downstream from the main beach at Crescent Valley on Sunday.

Where to go while Idaho’s closed

For those who wish to capture an Idaho-Peak-like experience, there are options, says tourism officials.

Strong hikers can still access the parking lots and Idaho Peak Trail by first climbing Wakefield Trail off the Silvertown FSR. It’s 14-17 km round trip (depending on parking location) on a steep up-track, so hikers need to be experienced and plan for a long day.

Access can also be gained from the Three Forks side via the wagon road and the upper section of the Idaho Peak Road beyond the washout. Given the distance, this is more appropriate for the advanced off-road cyclist with a good fitness level.

Alternates in the Arrow Slocan region that appeal to a wider range of visitors include:

- **Buchanan Lookout**, on the way to Kaslo from New Denver on Hwy 31A. Turn up Blue Ridge Forest Service Road and follow for 12 kilometres to the top. Views are spectacular and flowers are lovely in season. There is also a 2-km loop trail below the lookout that provides access to viewpoints on the rock bluffs.
- **Silverton Lookout**, on the rest area on Hwy 6 near the summit of the pass between Enterprise Creek and Silverton. The lookout offers views up and down the Slocan Lake and into the Valhallas. Close to sunset at this location is particularly stunning.
- **Vicky’s View near Nakusp** off Kuskanax Mountain Road offers views of Nakusp, Arrow Lakes, Valhalla and Monashee Ranges. A short walk from the road through the forest provides access to the viewpoint.
- **For the advanced hiker**, the 8.8-km challenging return journey to Kuskanax Mountain gets hikers up above 2100 meters. There is also 4X4 access via Turner road to the same location, which includes a 4.8-km moderate hike.

Where to go while Idaho’s closed