Local governments brace against COVID-19’s financial impact

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

When RDCK directors returned to their phone conference board meeting after lunch last Thursday, someone had patched Pink Floyd’s song ‘Money’ into their phone, broadcasting it to every participant.

“It was good for a laugh as the directors got back to business, but money is very much on the minds of local governments.”

With businesses shut down, development choked off, and citizens laid off or working from home, everyone has money on their minds – from businesses to individuals to local politicians.

Cutting spending

Local governments are taking steps to try to ease the tax burden for citizens who have been hit financially by the COVID-19 pandemic. Politicians are cutting budgets and rescheduling payment plans to try to ease the burden for taxpayers.

“We’re well aware of the pressure this is putting on the taxpayer,” says Stuart Horn, the chief administrative officer for the RDCK. “And we are taking that to heart as we are looking at our operations.”

The RDCK led the local effort to ease the tax burden in March, paring more than $1 million off its budget the night before passing it.

“Things were starting to look bleak in other countries,” says Horn. “So at the board meeting the board passed recommendations to reduce the proposed taxation by $1.3 million,” he says. “We took away a lot of one-off projects, delayed the [new office] space initiative to 2021, there were two staff person hires that were put off, there was a number of capital projects that were pushed off, there was work at the fire halls that was pushed off.”

Local governments did the same: Nakusp, Kaslo and Slocan Village councils passed budgets with 0% tax increases. New Denver and Silverton are still working on theirs.

But no tax increase still doesn’t help those who don’t know how they’ll pay any taxes.

Deferrals help

Another tool in the municipal politician’s tool kit is postponing tax and payment deadlines.

The RDCK has moved its due date for taxes, the Province does. So the Regional District doesn’t have the ability to change the due date for taxes.”

But local governments can tweak their bylaws to postpone when their taxes and fees have to be collected.

That is something the RDCK supports, but since it could affect their cash flows, they are working closely with their partner governments.

“I have been in contact with all our municipal partners that if their councils decide to defer taxation, they inform the Regional District so we can plan for when our cash flow might be expected. “If there’s a sense we’re not going to get all our taxation because they’ve deferred their taxation to September or later, we’ve asked them to let us know so we can plan when the cash flow might come in.”

Most municipal councils are still considering the deferral issue.

Horn says Regional Districts could borrow from the provincial government and bridge some of those gaps if they need the operational funding.

Revenue drops

A financial wild card – both in the long- and short-term for the RDCK – is the impact of lost revenues. While some fees for service—building inspections and permits – seem to be holding, other parts of the organization have taken big hits.

“We don’t have our recreation centres operating, and we are limiting what we are collecting at our transfer stations,” says Horn.

Since annual revenues from the three main centres alone are about $3.4 million, a full month’s loss of revenue hurts. And they’ll be closed for at least another month, under provincial orders.

The future?

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The future?

Every government up the chain is in the same situation, and it’s not known what kind of support there will be for lower levels of government in the months to come.

That could potentially mean big tax increases to help cover the deficits being built up this year.

“We’re well aware of the need to continue to provide the services we can provide, yet ensure we are managing our costs appropriately,” he says. “The goal for us is to manage those costs through 2020, so any losses of revenue we experience this year and potential tax issues we have don’t roll over into 2021.”
MLA Katrine Conroy: Supporting our small businesses through COVID-19

We are greatly appreciative of all the hard work and resilience shown by our small businesses during these challenging times. It is our collective responsibility to support local businesses and help them stay afloat. There are several ways you can support your local businesses:

1. **Order take-out or delivery:** Many small businesses have adapted to offer take-out or delivery options to continue serving their customers.
2. **Shop local:** Support local stores and businesses by purchasing goods and services from them. You can also consider shopping at local farmers’ markets.
3. **Follow on social media:** Follow local businesses on social media platforms to stay updated about their offers and promotions. You can also leave positive reviews to support them.
4. **Refer friends:** Share information about your favorite local businesses with your friends and family. Encourage them to visit and support these businesses.
5. **Order gift cards:** Some businesses offer gift cards that can be purchased online or in-store. Gift cards are a great way to support small businesses.

By doing these things, we can help our small businesses thrive and continue to contribute to our local economies. Let’s come together and safely support our local businesses.

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**Swamp Tails**

Cheerful notes from the Valhalla Foundation for Ecology

Imagine this: the ancestors of today’s Sinixt people would eat eggs only once a year, in spring when ground-nesting wild birds would lay their eggs in areas such as Sink’mip Marsh. The Sinixt would gather eggs very sparingly, with a clear understanding that taking too many eggs would mean too few birds would hatch to lay eggs in the future. If there were four or five eggs in a nest, we could take one. If there were six or more eggs in a nest we could perhaps take two but no more,” Marilyn explained.

Non-essential businesses can also stay open if they can adapt their services to Dr. Henry’s orders. Many small businesses have been able to stay open through changing their business models, going online, or setting up new pick-up or delivery services.

Several small businesses have even changed their operations over to supporting efforts against the pandemic, such as distilleries producing hand sanitizer, or marine supply manufacturers switching to produce PPE for front-line medical workers. If you are a business that can supply products and services in support of BC’s COVID-19 response, please register at the COVID-19 Supply Hub: www.gov.bc.ca/supplyhub.

While we are prioritizing our health and safety, we can still consider ways to keep our communities working. Getting take-out, home deliveries, or curbside service are some ways to support our small businesses, and to make staying home a little more enjoyable.

We don’t yet know when our lives will return to normal. But when we do, it will be all the sweeter if we can celebrate by going back to the local businesses we know and love by supporting them now as much as we can.

The BC Business COVID-19 Support Service recently launched as a single point of contact to make business-specific info better available to small business owners during the pandemic. (See story, p. 19.)

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**MLA Katrine Conroy: Supporting our small businesses through COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted every single one of us in different ways. People are worried about their safety, the safety of their families and communities, and about making ends meet with normal life turned upside-down.

One part of our community that has been deeply impacted are our small businesses. As your MLA for Kootenay West, I want to talk about the impact of COVID-19 on our small businesses in the West Kootenay, and what we can do to support them, and each other, through this extraordinarily difficult time.

The health and safety of British Columbians is the first priority of our provincial government through this pandemic. Based on the advice of our Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry, we’ve taken steps in many different areas to ensure the safety of British Columbians. Gatherings of 50 people or more at a time are prohibited; Bars and restaurants must move to take-out or delivery only; Personal service businesses, such as salons, tattoo parlours, and barbershops, must close; People are asked to stay at least 6 feet apart from others when in public.

These orders have impacted the operations of many different types of businesses. Sadly, they have meant the closure of many small businesses have had to shut down. However, this does not mean that all businesses must necessarily close or stop serving customers.

Essential businesses (such as grocery stores, pharmacies, and hardware stores) are encouraged to stay open, while accommodating the need for physical distancing and other safety measures.

To help our small businesses, we’ve been working with our provincial government to ensure they have the resources they need to stay open.

In that spirit, we’d like to propose a voluntary “nest in peace” season for Sink’mip marsh and indeed for the whole area at the north end of Slocan Lake. This means staying well away from beach areas with long grasses where kilders and sandpipers nest, and well away from the edges of creeks, streams and wetland areas where ducks, geese and other water-birds nest.

Please keep dogs out of these areas and avoid being in the water from their waste and the oils on their paws can scare away sensitive bird species. If you do take your dog for a walk, for example on the rail-trail, it is more important than ever to keep it on a leash and of course bag and remove all droppings.

If you are using the rail-trail for walking or bicycling, please enjoy nature quietly. It is an opportunity for those who ride ATVs or other motorized machines on the rail-trail to demonstrate responsible riding by avoiding this area altogether until early July. (From a nesting standpoint, Gary says the most critical time is from mid-May to early July.)

Together, we can help the birds of Sink’mip marsh and areas nest in peace.

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**Swamp Tails**

Cheerful notes from the Valhalla Foundation for Ecology

We were excited to see a bald eagle sitting contentedly on a nest of sticks in a large cottonwood tree that towers over the marsh at the south end, located close to the rail-trail. If you want to see it, walk down to Sink’mip from Bonanza Road, to the picnic table overlooking the marsh from the north. With your binoculars you can get a good view of mama or papa eagle sitting on the nest (males and females take turns incubating the eggs).

Gary explained that the incubation period for the Bald Eagle is 34 to 36 days. The average number of eggs laid is one to three, but after they hatch usually only the fittest eaglet survives. It will take approximately three weeks for the flying food service delivery

Woo Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, Bullhead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Belted Kingfisher, Dowdy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Common Raven, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Varied Thrush, American Robin, Pine Siskin, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Song Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco and Red-winged Blackbird.

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Letters of support needed for Nakusp child care centre proposal

by Jan McMurray

School District 10 will soon submit a grant application for the proposed child care centre at Nakusp Elementary, and is asking parents, businesses and organizations to write letters of support for the centre by May 4. Signed letters of support can be submitted to terry.taylor@sd10.bc.ca.

“So far over 75 people have responded to the survey and indicate very clearly that there are significant needs for child care, but strong letters of support by May 4 from all interested parents. Indigenous parents, parents of children with diverse needs, parents who are refugees or immigrants to Canada or young parents, as well as from businesses and organizations are very much needed for the application,” said Terry Taylor, SD10 superintendent.

Taylor reports that survey results show over 70% of respondents need infant toddler care and 50% need care for three- to five-year-olds. Before and after school care is needed by 50% of respondents, and 55% say they need full-time care five days per week. Preschool programming is a desire for 30% of survey respondents. The grand majority (80%) feel the current child care supply in Nakusp is inadequate. The proposed centre would offer full-time child care for preschool aged children, and before and after school care for school aged children. The programming proposed for the centre is impressive.

Before and after school care would include activities such as music, drama, dance, visual art, yoga, and sports, says Taylor’s report to the SD10 board of education.

The full-time child care program would be “a high calibre early learning program which integrates indigenous learning and culture, is 100% accessible for people with mobility or other diverse needs, and meets the needs of vulnerable families and children. All 0-5 year old early childhood educators would be certified and licenced – high quality professional care by trained ECEs fluent in early learning using Reggio-inspired curriculum and play-based learning.”

Full-time programs would also be offered for preschool and school aged children over the summer, spring break and winter break.

The centre is proposed to have four separate spaces. One option is to licence all four spaces as multi-age spaces for eight children each, for a total of 32 child care spaces. The other option is to licence three spaces as multi-age spaces for eight children each, and to licence the fourth space as an infant/toddler space for 12 children, providing a total of 36 child care spaces.

One of the spaces would be shared with Strong Start. The proposal also includes a brand new kitchen and breakfast and lunch seating area for NES. “This is a long-needed asset for NES and will create a positive environment in which to prepare healthy food and allow kids to eat breakfast and lunch together,” Taylor says in her report.

The proposed Nakusp centre and the New Denver centre, which is proceeding as planned, offer opportunities for senior secondary students to get started on their Early Childhood Educator credentials while in high school. “Students can complete their college studies while enrolled in high school and also have supervised Early Learning practicums in the Nakusp and New Denver child care centres,” Taylor says.

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For appointment, please call 250-265-3397

Happy Supreme
Sixteen Sakura
April 20, 2004
– Alan Van Tress
– Analisa Azzopardi
Environmental studies guided rail trail plan

Many individuals and organizations contributed to the 20 years of discussions and initiatives related to the use and management of the Rosebery-Summit Lake rail trail and Bonanza Creek corridor. Some difficult issues arose.

One theme that carried through was the need for credible environmental impact assessments to guide decision-making. In the two years leading up to the recent management plan approval, that work was undertaken and was central to its final structure. Three documents, each with recommendations on how to proceed and for further work to be done, are now available online at roseberrysummitrail.com along with the management plan document and map. Interested readers can see what the issues and recommendations were and how they have been addressed in the current plan.

Richard Allin
Hills

Emotional emergency first aid

We’re afraid. And for many of us, our reaction to this fear is panic.

Well, what if we chose to give to our customers and the time you respond to the best services for everyone! Lellani Evans and family Victoria/New Denver

What could we do with a billion dollars?

What could be done with the billion dollars that Alberta’s Premier Jason Kenney, four weeks ago, designated to moving us a few more steps toward the demise of the planet.

We could employ untold numbers in the renewable energy sector including solar, wind, wave and geothermal. We could employ machinists, millwrights and tradespeople. We could support more research and development in the renewable energy sector including solar, wind, wave and geothermal. We could employ thousands of workers to install panels and turbines across the country, especially in Alberta where the sun shines and the wind blows.

We might actually be able to employ more people in the manufacturing and installation of these mechanisms of renewable energy than have been employed in the oil industry.

What an opportunity to re-train and re-hire thousands of out-of-work oil workers who are in limbo for numerous reasons as varied as the whims of Saudi Arabia’s manipulation of the oil market, resistance to more oil and gas pipelines, COVID-19 heightened awareness and concern regarding global warming. You name it!

So, why continue subsidizing oil when it’s bad for us? It’s high time and a perfect opportunity to admit we have an unhealthy and persistent addiction to fossil fuels.

Unreliable statistics

I refer to Dr. Amanda Bathroom’s paper in the previous issue of the Valley Voice. I also think there is no good reason for an official clamping down on information about where COVID-19 cases have been found. This is not about people’s names and street addresses, just the names of towns.

However, even with this information, the pandemic situation is likely to be far more dire and widespread than the figures show because few people are being tested even if they start showing symptoms.

Test positive for the virus four weeks after only 10 days after the onset of symptoms, though it is now known that people can still test positive for the virus four weeks after starting to show symptoms.

Add to the above the estimated 50% of infected people who can carry and transmit the virus while showing no symptoms at all. Also relevant is that all people can transmit the virus to others in the days before the onset of their own symptoms.

 Conspiracy theorists are dangerous because they can “likely motivate some domestic extremists to commit criminal, sometimes violent activity and could encourage the targeting of specific people, places, and organizations.” While this is true to a certain extent, it should be noted that most conspiracy theories are based around government operations and manipulation of the people’s tax dollars, labour, or even their rights as US citizens. So when the FBI says “could encourage targeting of specific people, places, and organizations” are they really looking out for our safety or their own?

Conspiracy theories are not just the work of online lunatics, either. Lots of previous conspiracy theories have proven to be true, finally brought to light by former FBI agents or whistleblowers. For example, the government really did prison alcohol during prohibition. Other examples: the Gulf of Tonkin attack, MKUltra, and many, many other False Flag Operations to get Americans involved in wars.

Conspiracy theories have exposed governments in the past again and again. Now with social media as a huge online sharing platform, it is even easier to promote ideas and theories of all kinds. When the FBI labels conspiracy theories as dangerous, it not only demonizes and discredit those who question the government, but it is also a first attack on the right to freedom of speech for American citizens.

Alaska Hoskins
Passmore

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter - Dan Nicholson

节选自Local Journalism Initiative Reporter - Dan Nicholson

The Valley Voice
Box 70, New Denver, BC V0G 1S0
Phone/Fax: 1-833-501-1700 E-mail: valleyvoice@valleyvoice.ca Website: www.valleyvoice.ca

Thank you, New Market Foods

We would like to send a huge thank you to Janice and Vern Gustafson and their entire staff at New Market Foods in New Denver. You are always upbeat, friendly and helpful. Your store is always neat, clean and stocked with a good variety of items and excellent produce and deli.

At this time, with the COVID-19 issue, you have gone even higher with your care of your customers. Ensuring that they are still able to come to the store to receive the items they need to keep themselves and their households running as efficiently as possible whether they shop for themselves, have someone shop for them or have the staff shop and deliver their items. The sign at the door to let customers know what they must do in order for you to keep the store open, the sanitizer available, the tape on the floor for distance reminders and the cleaning of carts, handles and other items each time they have been used is very much appreciated!

Thank you for your attention to detail, care given to your customers and the time you give to provide the best services for everyone! Lellani Evans and family Victoria/New Denver

CALENDAR

The Exception that EXISTS TO Covid 19 – but we will be doing take-out and off-sales Thursday thru Sunday.

www.kaslohotel.com 250-353-7714

Kalesnikoff’s Slocan Park logging plan

I don’t live in Slocan Park, continued on page 5
Government's sudden sense of social responsibility
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Alternative magazine

What difference a few weeks and a major disease outbreak makes! Not that long ago, I was asked if Mayor Clarke has to ask who did it? He’s been on council long enough. Maybe ask Councillor Main; she’s been there through all of this.

Time for honesty.

Our world is interconnected, whether in best practices to keep ourselves and our community safe and cared for. We are all responsible for our community's wellbeing.

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Time for honesty.
Coronavirus has closed classes, but created new options for learning

Communion

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Keith Greenhalf’s video blog begins with ‘90s-style special effects, cheesy music, comedy and singing. But the tone of the Nakusp Elementary School counsellor’s video belies the serious content inside.

“Today, I’d like to talk to you about for the media,” Greenhalf says in one video. “And it’s kind of a check-in to how we’re doing with this whole COVID-19 situation.”

Greenhalf’s 10-minute videos are designed to help students deal with the new reality facing the district’s education system.

“I really wanted to reach into the families and homes of all the students I support,” Greenhalf told the Valley Voice. “So I wanted to continue to connect with students with lessons on emotions and conflict resolution, things like that, and do it the best way I could remotely.”

Greenhalf is just one of hundreds of teachers and school administrators in the province struggling to make the transition from their brave new worlds of delivering teaching for the first time.

Like elsewhere in BC, School Districts #8 and #10 have had to re-tool how they work, to meet new demands to keep staff and students safe from the spread of the coronavirus.

Schools haven’t been closed in BC, but classroom instruction has been suspended. The districts were to ensure staff were kept safe, that essential service workers had access to ‘school care’ for children, that vulnerable persons in the school system were safe; and somehow, somehow, children, that vulnerable persons in the school system were safe; and somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, somehow, someo
Kyle Kusch wins prestigious award for Arrow Lakes coffee table history book

by Jan McMurray

Kyle Kusch of Nakusp has won a $500 Lieutenant Governor’s Historical Writing Award in the Community History category for Our Coloured Past: The Arrow Lakes in the Age of Colour Photography.

“Scenarios that could exacerbate flood risk this year include prolonged cool weather followed by a rapid shift to persistent hot weather (particularly in May), or persistent wet weather or extreme short-term rainfall,” analysts say. “Favourable scenarios would include continued dry weather and seasonal temperatures.”

The book started as a slideshow Kusch put together in 2014 to entice people into the ALHS archives room. “The response was big enough – and our collection was certainly more than big enough – that it wound up becoming a series of three separate 90-minute shows with multiple showings and a compilation DVD. I think people responded to the fact that recent, local history that took place within their own lifetimes was being portrayed as valuable and meaningful,” Kusch said.

Kusch went through the archives’ entire image collection over the course of three days and shortlisted about 400 colour images, then trimmed them down to 350 so they would fit in a 240-page book. “I put them in chronological order, and just began writing extemporaneously about each image. I wasn’t necessarily intending to connect the photos to one another, it just happened as I kept writing and the connections became obvious. Landscapes form people, people in turn reform landscapes, and so on.

“I let the photos write the story.” It was former society president Rosemarie Parent who submitted the book for nomination. “The first phone call I received after the award was announced was from Rosemarie, who has now retired to Maple Ridge, and the first thing she said after ‘Congratulations’ was, ‘I knew this was going to happen.’ And so I responded, ‘Well, it’s all your fault!’ She was the one who hired me back in 2012, and she made sure even from her apartment in Maple Ridge that this book was submitted for nomination. I also want to thank Karen Marshall for going back and forth with me on the proofreading for something insane like 100 to 120 hours.

Right now, Kusch is working from home like many during the pandemic. He has uploaded over 1,500 photos to the society’s website bringing the total of ALHS photos online to more than 17,500. He says there are thousands more to go, “many of which you’ll see appear on the site over the next couple of months as we ride this thing out.”

Another ALHS book, the SS Minto by Renata native Bruce Rohn, won this same award last year. The book can be purchased for $30 at alhs-archives.com.
**Knox Hall discoveries made as walls and ceilings removed**

by Kathy Hartman

The Knox Hall Revitalization Project is well underway and its 123-year-old bones have been exposed. Looking straight up 20 feet, behind the old lathe, is the original ceiling—thick hand-hewn roof beams that have been roughed out to give it a slightly curved shape swooping to a point. No one has seen this ceiling for probably six decades, according to Greg McTaggart, the Village facilities supervisor and project manager for Knox Hall.

It may not be beautiful, but you can tell that the carpenters and miners who constructed the Knox Presbyterian Church in 1897 built it with love and pride, from the ceiling to the X-crossed reinforced walks to the eight lancet-style tall window frames. The windows are being rebuilt by Joe Botelho with all new wooden tracery.

An empty framed-in space on the far wall was discovered when the drywall was removed that fits a stained glass of a shepherd with sheep currently hanging in the Silvery Slocan Museum on the main street.

Knox Hall was built as a Presbyterian Church by local miners and carpenters only five years from New Denver becoming an official townsite. According to Heritage BC, “The church utilized its upstairs space for Sunday services, special Christmas presentations, weddings, baptisms, funerals, ice cream and farewell socials. The 1901 Census showed 119 people identifying as Presbyterian making Knox the largest congregation in New Denver. The downstairs space was used for the Sunday School started in 1904, meetings held by the Ladies’ Aid Society, with the kindergartened children from the Japanese Internment Camp from 1942-1946. By the 1960s, church attendance began to drop off and the last services were held in 1969. The Knox Hall is used as a public hall and library.”

McTaggart gave the history of the three ceilings that were exposed. There is the original lathe ceiling from 1897, with two thick steel cables added in 1899 to keep walls from being pushed out by the snow load. The second ceiling was installed in the 50s and then the final sloping most likely went in during the 70s. It is the hope of the builders that the new ceiling will preserve the look of the original.

The removal of the old rafters and roof begins the week of April 20. New rafters and asphalt shingles similar to the original roofing will be installed. The siding will also look much like the original but made of fire-proof cement board.

The inside is getting a full make-over now that an abatement team has removed the hazardous lead paint and wallboard and disposed of it properly. The walls, windows and floor will be replaced. The kitchen and bathrooms will be modernized. There will be a new heating system installed with separate controls for the upstairs and the basement. The basement’s Reading Centre will be getting a new learning nook with several computers and a big screen for webinars. There will also be proper radon venting in the basement.

Under the Public Health Act, construction work may continue as long as the COVID-19 protocols are followed. The project’s completion date is sometime in September 2020.

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**Silvertown council, April 8: Council endorses Leah Main’s candidacy for re-election to FCM board**

by Moe Lyons

• On Wednesday April 8, Silvertown Council once more took up the current challenge of virtual meeting and convened at 7:19 pm. Everyone was present.

• Council endorsed Leah Main to stand for re-election on the Federation of Canadian Municipalities board of directors for the period starting in June 2020 and ending June 2021. Officially, the RDCK backs Main’s nomination and pays her expenses, but council has to approve the nomination.

• McTaggart was a request from the Slocan Lake Arts Council (SLAC) to suspend their lease on the Slocan Lake Arts Centre until the current pandemic crisis eases off enough to allow for use of the building, and or until repairs on the building are completed. SLAC expressed their appreciation to the Village for help with the BC Hydro bill. Councillor Main spoke in support of the request saying, “It makes sense to keep our cultural and social infrastructure alive. The longer the lease was up but that information wasn’t readily available. The request was passed. Council then discussed and then approved the Winlaw Regional Nature Park boardwalk replacement project. Councillor Main said there was a wondrous experience when the at the RDCK meeting, and that the Kootenay Adaptive Sport Association (KASA) is taking the lead on the project, with the intent of making the park accessible to all users. Main said it is similar to the Galena Trail boardwalk project, except bigger and more complex. The Winlaw boardwalks access wetlands in the park and are for non-motorized use. While council did not feel they could make a financial contribution to this effort at this time, they were happy to sign a letter to the Columbia Basin Trust, imploring them to approve funding for the project.

• Council received notification that all public meetings relating to the Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiatives grant programs scheduled for April 2020 would be postponed indefinitely. RDCK staff were asked to develop an online means for receiving community input on grant applications.

• Council gave third reading to the zoning and OCP bylaw amendments that will allow the former Zion United Church as a residential property. Only one person attended the public hearing on this, as an observer.

• Mayor Clarke and Councillor Main are in an ongoing discussion with Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Selina Robinson, particularly about housing, and currently discussing the possibility of tax deferrals because of people’s cash flow crises.

• Councillor Main’s report covered a meeting with MP Richard Cannings, who feels that communication currently is much better than usual, and that MPs are working together daily in virtual conversations.

Main has continued her usual packed schedule of meetings; they are now all online. Main is also involved in the local COVID-19 response initiative, headed by Hospice. Detailed information about the funding and intent of this initiative appears elsewhere in this paper.

• When CAO Elliott came to make her report, Mayor Clarke interjected to say staff had been busy. Elliott concurred with this. Staff has been working on numerous grants, year-end, and the 2020 budget. As well, Elliott has been compiling survey results and is hoping to have a draft of the new Official Community Plan as soon as possible.

A fair amount of time has been allocated to sorting out the work involved in removing the trees from the Silvertown campground.

There has been ongoing communication with SIFCo and information about Fire Resiliency reports and plans are available at www.sifco.ca.

The building permit for the Memorial Hall upgrade is being processed and hopefully work will commence this month.

Numerous discussions about COVID-19 are ongoing and time-consuming, and the CAO attended a free webinar on COVID-19 risk management.

• Council received a detailed and comprehensive 62-page document from the BC Centre for Disease Control to help explain the complex issues around management of the COVID-19 pandemic.
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Colleen Emery, RHT (CHAofBC) is conducting all client consultation online or over the phone. Priority is for acute cases, new clients are welcome.
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New Denver council, April 14: Temporary closure of KSCU creates complications

by Kathy Hartman

• Mayor Leonard Casley, Councillors Vern Gustafson, Colin Moss, Gerald Wagner and CAO Catherine Allaway attended in person with appropriate physical distancing and Councillor John Fyke attended digitally.

• Mayor Casley reported on a discussion with Kootenay Savings Credit Union (KSCU) concerning the temporary closure of the New Denver branch. Casley has several concerns: residents who can’t access banking online, the lack of paper records with phone banking, the inability to access funds for those who don’t have ATM cards, and residents who need documents from their safe deposit boxes. KSCU staff are currently working in the building as a call centre. Casley suggested that they could be available to support residents by appointment while still keeping everyone safe. He suggested that if a resident needs banking support to call the Village office and he will take it to the credit union. The CAO suggested that, since banking is under federal jurisdiction, residents can contact their MP.

• The Village of New Denver will provide up to $1,500 in-kind assistance to the New Denver Hospice Society for the COVID-19 Community Action Team (CCAT), an informal group of area citizens who have been meeting since mid-March 2022 to discuss and address community needs arising as a result of the pandemic. CCAT has begun making masks and head coverings for nurses. The masks will be available to the public at the pharmacy for a small donation that goes to that year’s graduating class. The group also hopes to begin a program where local restaurants make box lunches for vulnerable or at-risk residents. They have a sizeable volunteer list of residents willing to help by delivering lunches to nursing homes, grocery stores, etc. In-kind assistance can take the form of advertising, photocopying or staff time.

• The Village of New Denver senior requesting a change to the garbage collection start time, was received for information. The resident was upset that at 7 am he needs to get up by 6 am to take out the garbage to the curb by 8 am, and his garbage is not always picked up that same day. He asked that the Village reconsider the policy, even just for senior residents. The Solid Waste Management Bylaw states that no garbage shall be placed curbside for collection prior to 6 am on collection days. The scheduled garbage collection in a single day, even during seasons of peak volume. It also allows for emptying of the commercial bins prior to the start of the business day to limit conflicts with parked vehicles or other traffic. Changes to the garbage collection process can be made but should involve input from residents. The Village isTemporarily restructuring waste collection to be a rear-proof garbage cart to be used by the road (cannot interfere with snow plowing) or request assistance from a community volunteer to help in the event the roads are blocked.

• All public meetings relating to the Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiatives and Affected Areas grant programs are postponed indefinitely. CBT is working quickly to develop an online public engagement tool to receive community input on grant applications. The goal is to ensure that the grant monies are delivered to all communities with as little delay as possible.

• The Village of New Denver Economic Development progress report for March was received. Highlights included providing assistance to local business and economy re: COVID-19. CBT Funding is for 12 weeks. Fidler says the service after the initial 12 weeks can help with getting groceries, prescriptions, box lunches, residents willing to help by delivering groceries, prescriptions, box lunches, to order from the Kootenay Food Co-op and other stores. People who will expand their garden will need to make a lot of sense. Residents who wish to take advantage of the service the phone the participating stores, place their orders by credit card, and inform the store that Kootenay Food will be picking up the orders. Those without a credit card can make arrangements to pay at the time of contact by contacting the Sloan Food Bank and others.

• The Slocan Valley Economic Development Service launched a weekly doorstep delivery service for Kootenay Food and Sloan Food Bank decided to invest in the future food supply by buying 4,000 packages of seeds and giving them away to people who signed up for the program. They are “wildly successful,” Fidler said. “Over 200 people signed up, and lots are from the Slocan Valley.”

• People could opt in to grow an extra row, and if they did, they got more seeds. The food grown in the extra rows will hopefully come back to Kootenay Food for preserving and sharing with the Sloan Food Bank and others.

• “We’re pretty inspired by the number of people who wanted the seeds. We’ve received hundreds of people who will expand their garden space. It was so heartening to hear about some of our local elders who grew up feeding themselves from their gardens but have scaled back now and want to share their garden space with their neighbours.”

• Fidler says the seeds are of good storage crops that transport well, and are all from certified organic farms or operations that deal only with heritage and open pollinated seeds. “We got them from all over, from so many suppliers, including a few of our local farms.”

• To help people with planting and growing the seeds, sloan Food Bank has some local farmers have agreed to make ‘how to’ videos. The video series is launching soon on the Slocan Ka’Ewehtomin site, which can be accessed through the website kootenayfoodco.com. “Grow more food and share more food is the message,” Fidler says.

• The seed campaign has put in motion in the pandemic when the interrupted Kootenay Food’s planned programming under its funding from the Sloan Valley and development of hand sanitizer.

• BC Hydro sent information on their COVID-19 Relief Fund program which allows residents who have lost their income as a result of COVID-19 to apply for a credit of three times their average monthly bill. Small business customers that are currently closed as a result of COVID-19 measures can apply to have their electricity use charges waived for up to three months. Customers have until June 30 to apply for bill relief at bchydro.com/covid19relief.
New reporter joins Valley Voice team

The Valley Voice is pleased to welcome John Boivin to its reporting staff.

John is joining the Voice after several years of covering the Slocan and Arrow Lakes Valleys for a variety of online and print publications.

“In this day and age, it’s a pleasure as a journalist to work with a publication like the Valley Voice – one that is known, trusted, and respected as part of the community,” says Boivin.

“Where many news organizations are reduced to publish ‘click-bait’ stories to drive readers online, the Voice has struck a different path, with in-depth, consequential, and meaningful stories that are consumed by a loyal and supportive audience. It’s a real treat as a reporter to be able to return to a news organization that respects its readers and the work done by its editorial staff.”

Boivin has decades of experience in journalism, starting with small-town newspapers in the Northwest Territories and northern Manitoba, then joining the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in Winnipeg, Kelowna and the Yukon for the bulk of his career.

‘Our Children Speak’ posters give the children’s perspective on the pandemic by Jan McMurray

Words of wisdom and wonderful works of art from the children of the Slocan Valley are displayed on posters at the Slocan and South Slocan post offices. One should be coming soon to the Winlaw post office, too.

The Valhalla Children’s Centre in Slocan and Wee Ones in South Slocan are closed for now, but the early childhood educator at both centres, Natalie Lucas, keeps in touch with the children by coordinating the ‘Our Children Speak’ poster project.

“We had to shut down both centres without much notice, so I had no chance to talk to the kids,” Lucas explained in an interview. “I was wondering how they felt about suddenly not being able to come, and how they were feeling about the whole situation, and if their parents had talked to them about it.”

So, she emailed parents with a list of questions for their children, and asked parents to write down the responses. She also invited the children to create artwork.

“The parents’ response was, ‘Good idea! Glad you thought of it!’”

Since moving to the Kootenays five years ago, he has written for the Black Press family of newspapers in the area.

Boivin comes to the Valley Voice through the federal Local Journalism Initiative (LJI) program, which provides Canadian media outlets with funding to hire journalists in underserved communities. The focus of the program is coverage of civic institutions, such as Village councils and school boards, that is supplemental to existing coverage. The funding is strictly for the remuneration of LJI reporters.

“My colleagues at the LJI program think highly of the Voice, and say they’re receptive to the work we do,” says Boivin.

Boivin has received about the posters is very positive. “People say, ‘Yeah, kids have an opinion and this way we have a chance to hear that opinion.’”

When asked to summarize the children’s thoughts on the pandemic, Lucas said they are all very familiar with the protocols of washing hands, coughing into their elbows, and staying at home. “I get the sense that they really know it’s all going to be okay,” she said.
On Saturday, April 18, a number of volunteers from Friends of the Lardeau (FLR) climbed up the Lardeau bluffs to renew salt licks for the resident mountain goats. This is the third year this has been done, and as local wildlife photographer Jim Lawrence says, “We’re delighted that to date this has been a success story.”

The story began in 2018, when FLR wrote to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure’s (MoTI) Nelson district manager Hugh Eberle. FLR president Rhonda Batchelor requested “your ministry’s immediate intervention to reduce the threat of mountain goat/vehicle collisions on Hwy 31, just north of Lardeau.”

The concern was that mountain goats were being killed on the highway, drawn to the salt and minerals on the road. The situation had become more perilous because the road surface had been improved, meaning vehicles were driving faster. As FLR member Sage Raymond remarked, “Young kids were especially vulnerable in early spring because of their dependence on mom and their young age (they weren’t car smart yet!).”

MoTI consulted with a local wildlife biologist and the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource and Rural Development to address the problem. Biologist Kim Poole was given a contract to figure out a solution to the problem.

In July 2018 the Ministry presented this solution: “An intercept salt feeding station was created and put in place at Lardeau Bluffs, with the intention of diverting mountain goats away from the highway. This involved spreading 100 kilograms of a salt mixture in various sections of the bluffs, [three diversionary mineral licks] as well as installing a temporary wildlife camera to monitor the area. Additional salt supplies are available if the feeding station requires replenishing.”

A seasonal program of roadside mowing, clearing and brushing was introduced to increase driver visibility. Signage was also erected. According to biologist Kim Poole, “It has seemed to work very well; based on remote wildlife cameras at the lick sites the first goats appeared 55 minutes after we left the area! Mountain goats use the licks from late April through September. In 2019, the first full season of the diversionary mineral lick project, there was only a single report of a mountain goat on the highway.”

Also, according to Poole, “Volunteer involvement and interest has been huge. Coordinated by Jim Lawrence and Marlene Johnston, we have had up to nine local volunteers at a time help pack bags of salt up the mountainside.” MoTI is very excited about the success of the project. MoTI biologist Leonard Sielecki wanted to recognize the success of the project and to show the volunteers their appreciation, so they had T-shirts made up, which they handed out this year.
New Denver-Silverton volunteers form COVID-19 Community Action Team

submitted
Do you wonder what our community might need in time of

New Denver gets first-of-its-kind COVID-19 public information officer
by Kathy Hartman and Jan McMurray

Sara Thomas is the new COVID-19 public information officer for the New Denver and Silverton area.

Catherine Allaway, CAO of the Village of New Denver, says Thomas will be spending her very part-time hours in this position providing information to the public about the provincial orders that have come down during the pandemic. She will not be doing any enforcement. This may be the first position of its kind in the province, she adds.

“This week, I will visit all businesses in New Denver and Silverton, and will be visible on the street and on the trails,” Thomas said in an interview.

A paramedic since 2007, Thomas has been living in New Denver since 2006 and has been the New Denver ambulance station unit chief since 2011. She has helped out at the BC Ambulance Service Emergency Operations Centre during fire and flood seasons in the past.

“I feel passionate about keeping our community safe and educated,” Thomas said. “It’s important now that we have good, factual information circulating in the community. I want to make sure that people have access to good information.”

Allaway reports the Village of New Denver, with the support of the RDCK, was able to secure funding for the position. The purpose of the position is to help make sure that people have access to good information.

Allaway says if the service is well received in the community, the Village will look for further funding to continue the position until the end of the crisis.

New Denver laundromat given a reprieve during COVID-19 crisis
by Kathy Hartman

The New Denver Coin Laundry will remain open while COVID-19 measures are in effect.

“We decided that we would continue the laundromat lease on a month by month basis due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said landlord Sam Cowan. “It would be an undue hardship for locals to have to travel during this time. We will be communicating with Wendy [Harlock, laundromat owner] every month on the go forward plan. The laundromat won’t be going anywhere while we are observing physical distancing.”

Emergency repairs have been done on the laundromat’s inadequate septic system, with permission from Interior Health. IH has permitted the continued operation of the laundromat on the system until the end of the pandemic.

New Denver’s COVID-19 Community Action Team has arranged for cleaning of the laundromat with disinfectant twice daily. People are reminded to physically distance while using the facility.
Nakusp council, April 14: New way to handle bylaw offences introduced

by Jan McMurray

The Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw No. 694, 2020 was given two readings. This bylaw deals with offences that have penalties up to $500 and Nakusp’s MTI bylaw will deal only with offences that have penalties over $500. CAO Cheryl Martens said the new bylaw would make it easier for the Village to enforce bylaws and easier for residents to dispute tickets. However, she stressed that the first step is always to educate residents about the bylaws and to seek voluntary compliance.

Councillors were asked to provide their feedback to the CAO.

CAO Martens made a presentation to council about the new bylaw dispute adjudication system. She also presented a communication plan to inform residents about the system.

Paced down capital and operating budgets were approved. The final capital budget is $950,051, compared to the preliminary capital budget presented January 27 at $1,226,241. The final operating budget comes in at $4,484,298, compared to the preliminary operating budget of $4,755,341 presented March 8. See separate story.

Mayor Zelenzik reported on the marina breakwater project. The first phase focuses on the western breakwater. Divers were out the second week of April and located the anchors, which are all in good shape. Three hundred feet of the new style of breakwater are all in good shape. The west breakwater will slowly be rebuilt and the lake will be retrieved and stored at the treatment plant and reservoirs, has been approved and will be fully funded from the reserve fund.

The final capital budget is $950,051, compared to the preliminary capital budget presented January 27 at $1,226,241. The final operating budget comes in at $4,484,298, compared to the preliminary operating budget of $4,755,341 presented March 8.

“There are quite a few changes to the operating budget due to COVID-19,” Mark Tennant, Director of Finance/CAO, told council. “We’re trying to keep taxes flat.”

A 2% tax increase was proposed in the preliminary budget, but was removed “to reduce the burden on taxpayers with the current economic uncertainty that exists.”

The final budget also eliminates the need for $26,000 from surplus funds, “so we won’t be dipping into surplus for operating,” Tennant said.

Labour costs have been reduced because of layoffs in public works and at the hot springs. There is one temporary layoff in the public works department, and all staff at the hot springs were laid off at the end of April. Tennant said.

Budget numbers for both the hot springs and campground were decreased on the assumption that they will be closed for three months, till late June. “Obviously, it’s difficult to predict when things will go going again,” Tennant said. “We predicted three months, but it could go on longer.”

Conference and training expenses were reduced in all departments. Savings were found in the capital budget by deferring to 2023 the 1st Avenue culvert project ($533,000) and all hot springs projects (backup generators, chalet furniture, new signage, and a mini-truck for $112,500). Replacing the deteriorating waterfront memorial walkway with pavers ($60,000) was also removed from the 2020 capital budget.

The Downtown Revitalization phase II project (approximately $570,000) was deferred to 2021. Councillor Aidan McLaren-Cruikshank made a motion proceeding with the downtown project in 2020 to provide some work to locals, but the other councillors felt this was not a priority for investment at this time.

Added to the budget was the marina breakwater project: $330,000 per year, which would be about $1,500 2021. The total budget is $950,000 for engineering and construction of 300 feet of breakwater. This will be covered by the NACFOR Legacy Fund ($200,000), BC Hydro grant ($100,000) and the water fund.

Also added was a paved pad at the emergency services building, for $30,000 from the NACFOR Legacy Fund.

Another addition is a sidewalk in front of NAPA ($10,000), and a drainage project in the alley behind ($15,000). This will mitigate stormwater flooding at the shop, and will be paid for with funds from surplus.

A new SCADA system, which collects and monitors data from wells, the treatment plant and reservoirs, has been added to the budget at $33,000. The current system is obsolete and has had communication errors lately, resulting in unnecessary overtime. The water reserve fund will cover the cost of the new system.

Wildfire pumps at $37,250 were added, as well, and will be fully funded with a grant.

Staff was asked to look into costs of improvements at the Hot Springs Chateau, but the other councillors felt this was not a priority for investment at this time.

Much of the budget remains intact: computer replacement for administration ($15,000); two laptops for the fire department ($4,000), three-bay enclosed building for fire department trailers ($35,000), dump truck ($9,000), tables and chairs for the library ($7,500), sound system for events outside the auditorium ($6,000), commercial kitchen fridge for the auditorium ($6,000), Jackie James ball diamond repair ($30,000 carryover from NACFOR Legacy Fund), campground expansion ($19,091 carryover from capital reserve), flow meter installation ($100,000), Nakusp East Road booster station engineer design ($11,150 carryover from water reserve), and a mix tank for sewer system ($10,000).

All capital projects are covered by reserve funds, NACFOR Legacy Fund, or surplus.

The operating budget is covered by taxation, grants and fees for service.
Local book publisher now offering distribution service for the Kootenays

**by Moe Lyons**

When K.L. Kivi moved to New Denver in 2018, she brought her publishing company, Maa Press, with her. Now the company is expanding to serve the community in a new way. Here in the Kootenays, where every person is a writer, many have a book or two in mind or in process. How, one wonders, will all these books make their way into the world?

For those interested in self-publishing, the answer to that question has arrived. Maa Press became a commercial publisher in 2005 with a mandate to publish "radically and reliably regional books." This year, they will become Maa Press Publishing and Distribution. Teamed up with life-long bibliophile Catherine Fisher, they are developing a multidimensional enterprise, taking the aspiring author from rough manuscript to professional product and widespread distribution.

Several writers have expressed an interest, and discussions are ongoing about what role this new venture might have in their endeavours. Children's author Kathy Sager is already on board. Her upcoming book is Mother Reindeer's Journey to the Sun: A Tribute to Mountain Caribou. Though she started out to share a winter solstice legend about a reindeer matriarch, the project grew "to include spreading awareness about mountain caribou and supporting caribou habitat conservation efforts."

While she enjoyed working with the publisher of her first book, she decided to self-publish now "because I wanted to learn about the entire publishing process and to be a part of it all. It's definitely a lot of work and I have more respect for what publishers do each time I tackle another step in the process." Sager adds, "It would have been at least ten times more work for me to figure it all out without Maa Press's support and wisdom. They have been a pleasure to work with and I would definitely recommend them to other local writers."

Maa Press draws on their experience in book publishing, having contacts in the printing trade and good relations with booksellers and bookstores. They are now gearing up to revamp their website — www.maapress.ca. With several titles under one umbrella, advertising costs are lower, while one-stop shopping online means greater visibility for all.

They offer a range of services, including free initial consultation, help choosing designers and artists, help with legal requirements, printing, fundraising assistance, fact-checking, indexing, proofreading, and editing, and finally, distribution and promotion. For their full range of services and costs, contact info@maapress.com.

Maa Press has published eight titles. When Canada Council cut funding for small publishers and Kivi's book, accepted by a publisher, was cancelled, she decided to self-publish. As well as her own work, book after book came her way. She published some people's books, and helped others figure it out themselves. "Expansion," says Kivi, "was a natural outgrowth of the whole trajectory."

Fortunately, Kivi knew the perfect person to launch this new enterprise — Catherine Fisher. After years working in libraries, in 1993, she was hired at Oliver Books (now Otter Books) in Nelson. "In my 25 years at Otter," she says, "I learned a great deal about book retailing, publishing, and wholesaling." Fisher notes a huge upsurge in local publishing as well as self-publishing. Each year, Otter Books adds a average of 30 new books by local authors, most of them self-published, and carries more than 150 local interest titles.

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**Slocan Lake Arts Council calls for corona-inspired creations**

**Submitted**

During these unprecedented times of isolation in our homes, the Slocan Lake Arts Council offers everyone a challenge/opportunity to discover and delve into their artistic nature — to find their muse and to give us your impressions and delves into their artistic nature — to find their muse and to delve into their artistic nature — to find their muse and to give us your impressions.

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The Valley Voice
April 23, 2020

COMMUNITY

Slocan council, April 14: Grant approved for affordable housing project
by Barbara Caryn Makady

• The Village will receive a Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation seed funding grant for affordable housing pre-development costs. The CMHC’s $7,500 grant will be matched with a $7,500 Community Development grant. The Village intends to construct six to ten units, each with two or three bedrooms, on eight lots bordered by Giffin Avenue and Slocan and Springer Streets. In order to proceed with the development, the site needs to be rezoned from R1: Residential to R3: Multi-Family Residential. In addition, a laneeway needs to be closed officially (it is not currently in use). Village staff were directed to prepare draft bylaws and public notices for review.

• The Village is planning no tax increase for 2020 to help alleviate the impacts of COVID-19. Chief Financial Officer Colin McClure presented a draft five-year Village operating budget, water budget, consolidated annual surplus reconciliation, and community works fund budget. McClure said Slocan is “pretty healthy... in this unprecedented time” and has the ability to handle some “cash flow challenges.” Village staff will report to the May council meeting what tax changes local, provincial, and federal governments plan to make this year to further alleviate the effects of the pandemic. Council may make additional tweaks to the upcoming annual tax rate bylaw for 2020. Though campground revenues are expected to be lower, McClure said 2020 will be “a fantastic year for the Village on grants.” He also said that construction projects seemed to be proceeding despite the pandemic. The Village has 11 projects scheduled for the year (some have been planned for years): the Slocan Suites septic, Legion Hall reno, stormwater work, streetlight upgrade to LED, Expo ballfield irrigation, the CBBC fibre project, door replacement at the Wellness Centre, anchoring the breakwater, a heritage design plan for the Legion, Harold Street beautification, affordable housing, and waterfront improvement. The microhydro project is still on the books but no progress is expected this year. The Village has been given a one-year extension before hydro grant funds have to start being used. In addition, the Village plans to buy a new excavator and continue working on Village asset management. Council approved the 2019-year end allocation of surplus, transferring $70,000 to water operating surplus, and $30,000 to the equipment reserve. Council approved in principle Columbia Basin Broadband Corporation’s request to install an underground fibreoptic cable and associated equipment through Slocan. The cable will come from the south along the rail trail. Near Slocan, its route will veer east so that it goes by the fire hall, then along the east side of Harold Street to Lake Avenue. At Lake Avenue it will turn west to the end of Lake Avenue and then snake by the south side of the parking lot and past the gazebo before it enters the lake. Staff was directed to prepare a licence of occupation for council review and approval.

• Columbia Basin Trust has awarded the Village a $16,636 Public Arts grant for the creation of a sculpture for the ‘Discover the Koots’ series. The Village will meet with the artists to decide where the sculpture will be placed.

• A request from Leela Kapel for Village land to be used as a community garden was referred to WE Graham Community Services Society. Councillors thought prospective gardeners could volunteer at the Food Bank Garden and that WECCSS could put them in touch with local residents who might want to share their yards.

• Council agreed to renew the lease with the Slocan Valley Outdoors Association and to provide land for the Slocan Cemetery for another five years at a cost of $1 per year.

• Council approved extensions for two projects funded by 2019 CBT CIP/APP projects. The WEGCSS Farm to Kitchen Intergenerational Cooking and the Slocan Valley Community Band had to postpone their projects because of COVID-19 closures.

• Slocan’s Residential Spring Cleanup scheduled for April 20-23, was postponed for the time being.

• During public participation, Dave Frederickson said he saw seven campers in the campground is closed campers are camping “wherever they like.” He said he saw five vehicles parked by Tunnel Road on Thursday and three moved over to the beach on Friday. The RCMP told Frederickson that they can’t do anything without a Village bylaw. Pelletier said he saw seven campers in the beach parking lot one morning. He predicted the problem would increase. Mayor Jessica Lunn said she is attending weekly COVID-19 phone meetings with Minister Selena Robinson and one item of discussion is that small municipalities do not have a bylaw control officer to enforce provincial pandemic mandates. Lunn said she would bring Frederickson’s concerns to the attention of the Kootenay Boundary Regional District. Frederickson’s directed staff to see that large signs forbidding overnight camping be erected at Tunnel Road, the beach, and the Valhalla parking lot.

• In her mayor’s report, Lunn said that neither Silverton nor New Denver had agreed to contribute to the Winlaw Regional Park Boardwalk Replacment Project. Area H Director Walter Popoff said if Slocan would like to withdraw its offer of a contribution, Area H could cover the $5,000 contribution the Village had promised to rescind the resolution granting a $5,000 contribution. Mayor Lunn also said the KDCX was investigating establishing a dog control bylaw for Area H so there might be an opportunity for Slocan, Silverton, and New Denver to share an animal control program.

• A report from Ron Leblanc, Regional Economic Development Coordinator, mentioned among his other projects (cannabis, tourism, business support, digital media, agriculture) that he is assisting with the production of hand sanitizer in the Slocan Valley and working with West Kootenay Permaculture Co-operative to mobilize resources to develop a supply chain to keep food security issues in the valley.

• Due to COVID-19, Slocan council held its April meeting over the Zoom. One member of the public (Dave Frederickson) participated by phone. At Councillor Pelletier’s suggestion, council decided to test the option of receiving digital agenda packages for the May council meeting.

Mount Sentinel staff help fight health worker equipment shortage with 3D printers
by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Staff at Mount Sentinel in South Slocan are doing their part to support front-line health care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. They’re taking part in a multi-organization drive to create face shields and other protective equipment for emergency first-aid care personnel in this area.

“It feels nice to be able to contribute in any way,” says Danny Leeming, a teacher-librarian and the point person from Mount Sentinel on the project. “I’m stuck at home, so I might as well be walking downstairs and re-setting my printers every couple of hours.”

The idea began when Leeming, and colleagues at Selkirk College, School District 20, and the MIDAS lab in Trail heard about the looming shortage of protective gear for front-line workers.

Since then, local 3D-printing enthusiasts have formed a loose knit band of manufacturers, each taking a piece of the equipment and building it for later assembly.

“There’s this sort of community-driven Facebook page that coordinates everything. I’m one of a ton of different people who are using their school’s printers or basement or hobbyist printers to print these designs,” he says. “They’ll post to Facebook that we need to print this model, or that design, or this revision. Then we’re to drop them off at these locations, and so on and so forth.”

Leeming, who is well versed in utilizing digital media tools, brought four of the school’s 3D printers home. Using designs developed by another team member, he makes the frame before the team at Mount Sentinel, who create custom face shields, which resemble welder’s masks, for emergency workers.

“I’ve printed about 25 so far,” he says. “I’m having a few technical issues with the printers, but I’m printing them as fast as I can, and I’m doing my first drop off [Easter] weekend.”

With everything going perfectly (which rarely happens with any engineer) Leeming says he can make about 12 face shield frames a day. And he says he can keep it going for an indefinite period.

The masks frames are cheap to make – much less than a dollar. But the effort has received hundreds of dollars in donations from his co-workers.

“I have a big shout-out to make to the staff at Mount Sentinel,” he says. “The staff donated generously and quickly when I asked if anyone would support us.

“We have enough material to print masks for weeks, out of the goodness of their hearts.”

He may well have to. The pandemic is expected to last at least a couple of months this round – and return in late fall.

Leeming says it feels good to help.

“I have close friends working at the Trail hospital, my boss’ wife is the front-line receptionist for some of the ERs in the area,” he says. “If I can help them keep a little bit safer, if I can stay home and do that, it’s a great feeling.

“It makes me feel like I can be involved and be part of the solution, as well as rather than Netflixing my life away.”
Region’s heritage sites gain protection

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The Regional District of Central Kootenay has taken steps to start protecting historic sites and areas in its jurisdiction.

The RDCK’s Rural Affairs Committee gave final approval last week under the Local Government Act to support the establishment of a Community Heritage Register.

Directors started by adding five initial sites to the register.

The initial protected areas include the Slocan Valley Rail Trail, the JB Fletcher General Store in Nakusp, the Idaho Peak Fire Lookout, the Burton Historical Park and Campground and Kp’it’ el’s (the First Nations settlement that predates Winlaw). The work was done with $40,000 raised from provincial sources and the Columbia Basin Trust.

Eight of the RDCK’s 11 electoral areas are participating in the process, including Area D (North Kootenay Lake), H (Slocan Valley) and K (Arrow Lakes).

There are nearly 30 other sites that will be considered for inclusion on the list in the coming years.

Winlaw families keep connected during COVID-19

Community

Another favourite ritual has become the 7 pm valley howl. What started as a show of support for healthcare workers has grown to become a daily pastime that many kids look forward to each night as a means to feel a little less isolated.

The Winlaw Parent Advisory Committee has remained active and is utilizing video conferencing to stay connected and brainstorm ways to support one another through these extraordinary times. All Winlaw parents are welcome to join these video conference meetings, even if just to connect with other parents at this time. The next PAC meeting is scheduled for May 6 at 4 pm. Contact winlawschoolpac@gmail.com if you wish to join.

Winlaw Elementary students are doing their best to stay connected, social distancing and having fun at the same time. The Winlaw Parent Advisory Committee has been organized to offer useful ideas and resources to keep families engaged. Here are a few ideas they’ve shared: • If you are a Senior in Need please call the United Way help line number. • If you would like to volunteer with Arrow Lakes Better at Home please call or email Louella or apply with the United Way. • Please don’t be alone in these difficult times. Our passion is to Support You.

Arrow Lakes Better at Home

Wishing everyone Safety and Wellness during this very difficult time.

United Way Better at Home is enhancing services and can now help all Seniors with free Grocery and Prescription Pick up and Delivery.

Wellness Check by Phone - All volunteers are screened and have had Criminal Record Checks completed.

Arrow Lakes Better at Home has temporarily suspended Housekeeping Services at this time due to Covid 19. Sorry for any inconvenience.

If you are a Senior in Need please call Louella at 250-265-8747 or email louella.cann@arrowlakes.com or you can phone the 211 United Way help line number. If you would like to volunteer with Arrow Lakes Better at Home please call or email Louella or apply with the United Way.

Summer exhibition series #12 at Studio Connexion Art Gallery

Submitted

When students in the valley went on spring break in mid-March, they didn’t anticipate it might be the last day of school for the 2019-2020 academic year. Without knowing when the schools will reopen for regular classes, families at Winlaw Elementary are finding other ways to stay connected, while social distancing.

Winlaw parent Lisa Johnson designed a custom colouring page as a fun activity for the students. The colouring page followed the school, and Winlaw’s much-loved guitar-toting principal, Mr. Francis, as well as an iconic piece of Winlaw’s playground equipment. The colouring page also provides enough blank space for the kids to draw themselves and their friends.

“Even though we can’t gather at the school right now, we can imagine it—and colour it!” says the artist.

Many versions of the colouring pages have already been shared on social media and are circulating among Winlaw families.

The kids are also keeping in touch with each other by letter writing, and one class is meeting online via Zoom videoconference on Friday mornings to play games. Some parents have organized canoe playdates, so that friends can get together to visit and adhere to social distancing while paddling down the river.

Summer exhibition series #12 at Studio Connexion Art Gallery

Submitted

Studio Connexion Art Gallery in Nakusp embarks on a new adventure in these unusual times. New and returning artists will be showing their creations starting May 15. The gallery will be open by solo appointments to start the season.

Curator Anne Béliveau says the whole line-up was finalized at the beginning of January. She was also organizing a second workshop with Peim Air artist Marc Grandbois, which now has to be postponed indefinitely. “It’s so unfortunate. This cultural event usually brings thousands of dollars into the Nakusp-economy,” she says.

The first exhibition of the season showcases the experimental work of Silvertown artist Ursula Abresch, who returns to the gallery for a second time. Her perspective on nature and geography is eye-opening.

Mixed media artist Barbara Maye exhibited last in 2013. She is coming back June 2-20 with a new series of abstract stone sculptures and landscape paintings of the places the stones were extracted. Barbara lives in Revelstoke and is involved with the Visual Arts Centre.

Last November, Béliveau had the pleasure of meeting artist Patricia Palmer in Nanaimo. Palmer’s new abstract paintings will show at Studio Connexion in early summer, and another Vancouver Island painter will follow. For the third last weeks of July, visitors will be able to enjoy the beautiful West Coast landscapes of artist Allan Dunfield.

During the Columbia Basin Culture Tour this August, Studio Connexion will host Nakusp artist Betty Fahlman for the second time, with her new series of realistic landscapes of the region.

The sixth show will feature the abstract landscapes of Marie-Christine Croughan from Terrace.

Local artist Charlene Duncan, who had a sold out show last year, will wrap up the season. She returns with her father, Michael Duncan, an established artist. Michael does beautiful pen and ink work, watercolours and acrylic that often illustrate native culture, architecture and nature. Charlene paints with acrylic and favours birds and landscapes.

The gallery always shows other artists from across Canada as well, including Brigitte Desbois, Grace Croughan, Marc Grandbois, David Langevin, Maureen Howard, Tatjana Mirkov-Popovicki and others.

Visitors can book solo appointments to visit in advance from 11 am to 4 pm, Tuesday to Saturday by contacting gallerist Anne Béliveau at 250-265-8888 or 250-265-3586. Studio Connexion is located in the heart of Nakusp at 203 Fifth Avenue NW.

Follow the gallery at www.facebook.com/studioconnexion
Kaslo council, April 14: Tax due dates and penalties discussed

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

• Attending in person were Mayor Suzan Hewat, Councillors Molly Leathwood and Henry Van Mill, and Chief Administrative Officer Ian Dunlop. Attending via videoconference were Councillors Kellie Knoll and Rob Lang, and two members of the public.

• Start presented information on options for property tax due dates and penalties. Currently the date to forward property taxes is July 2. There are legitimate requirements to collect a 10% penalty on late taxes. It may be possible to delay the tax payment deadline by a month or two, as well as stagger penalty charges. Complicating the issue is higher levels of government also have deadlines for municipalities to forward tax remittances so any changes have to be coordinated with them. CAO Dunlop says CAOs are awaiting further guidance from the Province to see if exceptions will be made for these requirements this year. “This is to help people having a cash crunch this time of year,” he said. “We don’t want to be too lenient, we want to encourage people who can pay to do so. But it can perhaps help others.”

The matter will be further considered at the April 28 council meeting.

• The Western Communities Foundation wrote to the Village with a $5,000 cheque enclosed for ball diamond upgrades. Every year, each branch of Western Financial Group is given $5,000 for the project of its choice. This year, the Kaslo branch chose the ball diamond.

• Council approved a donation of $100 towards the production cost of COVID-19 temporary handers, and $500 towards the production of signs for trails, parks and downtown. Councillor Van Mill and Knoll voted against these motions. Van Mill feels there’s already enough reminders in the world about COVID-19. CAO Ian Dunlop noted the more signage, the more the Village can reduce potential liability for people using those facilities. He also noted that the Village would likely be reimbursed through federal or provincial support programs.

• CAO Ian Dunlop reported that the streetlight LED bulb swaps were completed for Village-owned lampposts, and the Village could see 70% energy savings. Lorna Louise wrote to thank the Village for the new lightbulbs on A Avenue. “These LED bulbs are a significant improvement – much softer light,” she writes. However, she points out that the new bulbs still send light in every direction and light trespass into homes continues. She asks for the Village to install light baffles and round each bulb to direct the light downward.

• Joe Johnston of the Kaslo Arena Association wrote to council with a hands up that if the arena opens late than usual this year due to COVID-19, the association would not need as large an operating grant. “This correspondence is solely to bring this contingency to your notice, that extra money might be available, and the necessity of advising the property insurer if operation is curtailed,” he says.

• Council approved an employee request for an unpaid leave of absence pursuant to the COVID-19 childcare leave provisions of the BC Employment Standards Act. This was brought forward from in camera. CAO report

• Some local projects are still moving ahead this summer, including the Rural Dividend funded projects for the Kaslo Bay, shipyard and aerodrome planning work.

• The Kaslo River dikers won’t be starting this spring, perhaps this fall. Project application to the Ministry of Environment continues to progress. Updated photos of the project sites were provided to the engineer. Hopefully flood season won’t rain any more of the shoreline.

• New sewer rates have been drafted. CAO will consult with the ministry on the Liquid Waste Management Plan requirements for the new operating certificate to be issued and the timing of the new sewer area and operating bylaws.

• Falko in Kaslo. Be very vigilant about preventing wildfire. Because of social distancing, PPE limitations etc., it’s going to be that much more difficult than usual this year due to COVID-19, the association would not need as large an operating grant.

Kaslo Golf Club plans to open April 25 for members only

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The Kaslo Golf Club executive hopes to open the Kaslo Golf course on April 25.

“We feel it is important to open the course for a number of reasons, not the least of which is to keep our membership happy, and $500 towards the production of signs for trails, parks and downtown. Councillor Van Mill and Knoll voted against these motions. Van Mill feels there’s already enough reminders in the world about COVID-19. CAO Ian Dunlop noted the more signage, the more the Village can reduce potential liability for people using those facilities. He also noted that the Village would likely be reimbursed through federal or provincial support programs.

The most important thing is it will be important for the economy of the Village,” he said. “We don’t want to attract people from other communities to come to Kaslo to play golf at this point in time. It wouldn’t be fair.”

Other distancing measures would include keeping the clubhouse, pro shop and locker rooms closed; no_pairs or rakes on the course; one golfer to a cart (except couples); and cups will be installed upside down, with a ball rolling across the hole being considered a made putt.

Lang says they haven’t sought provincial approval yet.

“I can tell you I have not been monitoring the provincial government. I have not been monitoring the Kaslo Valley Health Authority issued a statement that all Lower Mainland golf courses are okay to be open. I’m not sure what restrictions were placed on them, if any, or they are doing what we are doing, and devising our own guidelines.

“We are a little nine-hole golf course, with a very limited membership. It’s not like we’re a big city course with 500 members, that sort of situation,” he added. “We’re a slightly different situation in the middle of the Okanagan or Lower Mainland.”

The idea gained support from some council members, who want to see more restrictions put back in place. CAO Dunlop said it’s going to be that much more difficult than usual this year due to COVID-19, the association would not need as large an operating grant.

“We’ve been lucky so far and we hopefully will continue to be lucky,” she said. “But you can’t depend on luck. We have to be one community that says ‘we are okay with it, we are not taking it seriously.’”

Province-wide, health authorities haven’t mandated closed courses. If Kaslo opens, it won’t be alone. Many other courses in the area say they’re going to open soon, or plan to, or if they are doing what we are doing, and devising our own guidelines.

“We are a little nine-hole golf course, with a very limited membership. It’s not like we’re a big city course with 500 members, that sort of situation,” he added. “We’re a slightly different situation in the middle of the Okanagan or Lower Mainland.”

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Welcoming Warning and reminder signs will be posted around the course facilities to have players respecting distancing rules while on the links.

The board of the Valley View Golf Club near Winlaw is holding a meeting next week to consider how it might reopen, with restrictions. The clubhouses would likely be closed, and a club official would monitor that players are respecting social distancing measures, said Carolyn Eaton, the clubhouse manager.

Nakusp’s public golf course won’t be ready for players for a few weeks in any event, said one executive member. But the board met last weekend to talk about moving towards reopening the course.

The Slocan Lake Golf course is also waiting for the snow to melt before opening the courses, but is already warning players to expect reduced activities.

“The restauranteur and pro shop will remain closed until further notice,” says a notice on its web page. “All tournaments for the month of May have been cancelled. We are hoping to have the course open to golfers once the snow is melted, as long as golfers are practicing physical distancing during their round.”

The SLOC page warns that not obeying social-distancing rules “will result in closure of the course for everyone.”
COVID-19 support service launched for BC businesses

Submitted

A new BC Business COVID-19 Support Service will serve as a single point of contact for businesses throughout the province looking for information on resources available during the COVID-19 pandemic. The BC Business COVID-19 Support Service will be operated by Small Business BC (SBCBC), a non-profit organization that is well known and respected by the business community. The service will act as a one-stop resource to answer questions about supports available to businesses from the provincial and federal governments, industry and community partners.

“We know that business owners are worried about paying their bills and covering their payrolls, and our government is doing everything we can to help,” said Michelle Mangicaro, BC’s Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness. “There are multiple programs available, including the BC government’s COVID-19 Action Plan, to support businesses through these challenging times. I encourage people in the business community to reach out to Small Business BC to learn more.”

Throughout BC there are over 500,000 small businesses that contribute significantly to BC’s communities and economy. To respond to the needs of these small businesses, and all other businesses around the province, SBCBC will offer expanded services. Advisors are available Monday to Friday, from 8 am to 6 pm (Pacific time) and Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm at 1-833-254-4357. Inquiries can also be emailed to covid@smallbusinessbc.ca, or on the live-chat feature available on SBCBC’s dedicated website: https://covid19smallbusinessbc.ca. Support is available in multiple languages and a call-back feature will be in place to help manage high call volumes.

“We know that BC’s usually thriving tourism industry has been hit hard by COVID-19,” said Lisa Beare, BC’s Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture. “This support service will help BC’s tourism sector manage the impacts of this virus and be ready to welcome visitors back to our province, when it is safe to explore BC again.”

The BC Business COVID-19 Support Service is supported by the BC government and the Government of Canada through Western Economic Diversification Canada. As the situation evolves, both governments will continue to support businesses and take further action as needed.

Free yard and garden tipping at RDCK waste facilities

Submitted

The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) has implemented free yard and garden (Y&G) tipping at all Resource Recovery Facilities. The Y&G program has been fast-tracked to start earlier this year to accommodate the growing need to dispose of residential Y&G waste.

“We have implemented many changes to our Resource Recovery facilities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and we appreciate our residents’ patience and understanding as we navigate these unprecedented times,” said Uli Wolf, General Manager of Environmental Services. “We are offering this program earlier than usual to allow residents to remove excess debris from their properties to prepare for the upcoming wildlife season.”

Kootenay Savings donates $50,000 to area food banks

Submitted

To help curb food shortages caused by COVID-19, and provide immediate, tangible support for the communities served by the credit union, the Kootenay Savings Community Foundation is also reviewing budgets and finding ways to support vulnerable families and administration.

Kootenay Lake School District # 8 launches Pandemic Food Program Plan

Submitted

The Kootenay Lake School District is acutely aware that in-school food and lunch programs are an important provision that helps to support vulnerable students throughout the entire school year, which is why they are extending a Pandemic Food Program plan.

Principals from schools throughout the district have been distributing grocery gift cards to families in need and connecting with local food banks.

“We know these are incredibly difficult times, and we don’t want our students and families to have one more thing to worry about,” says Ben Eaton, Director of Instruction - Innovative Learning Services.

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COMMUNITY

FREE YARD & GARDEN WASTE PICKUP
7:00 am on 1st

N A K U P

The Village Common Clean up yard debris pick up on May 1st, 2020. Please separate debris into piles (leaves/grasses, tree branches, etc.) and leave at your front curb. We will not be able to remove debris that is NOT place on the road and have it ready for pickup by 7 am, May 1st. Branches trimmed to lay flat & limbs should not exceed 8’ in length. The collection of debris will be done a system from May 1 – May 14, so that the entire town is covered once before the end of May. To order call to schedule a pick up and there is no charge for the service.

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COMMUNITY FOOD HAMPERS: Anyone in the New Denver, Silverton, Hills area needing a food hamper during this difficult time call Sue 250-358-7787 and leave a contact number. If you wish to donate a food hamper please call (250) 265-4131.

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GARDENING

ELVENDAL FARM GREENHOUSE in Hills - Growing wide variety of veg and flower starters. Greenhouse opens May 1 at 113 Redin Rd. in Hills. Nakusp Farmers’ Market May 9th, and 16th, somewhere New Denver May 17, Kaslo May 18. Pre-select with our order sheet, kip@netidea.com, 358-3800.

HEALTH

SHADE TREE MASSAGE THERAPY Sending prayers for your health and wellness. Stretch, walk, abdominal breathing. Looking forward to our working together again for your self care. Jessica Connor ROM @kootenaymassageandtherapy@fastmail.com.

FREE YOGA WITH TYSYN in Slocan Fridays 9:30-11 am * CBT Faded. Intro Reflexology/Thai Massage $40. sacredearthmassages.com * 551-8505. Classes and body work postponed for now. Thank you for your understanding and to all the people and helpful neighbours and friends in Slocan. Sincerely, Joan Patterson.

COMING EVENTS

SLOCAN COMMUNITY LIBRARY Society AGM, Wednesday, April 29, 2020 7-8 pm. To be held at the Slocan Community Library, 710 Harold Street, Slocan.

IN MEMORIAM

July 12, 1988-April 28, 2011

JESSICA CONNOR

IN MEMORIAM

(250) 551-TIME (8463)

In memory of RANDY DUNCAN

July 12, 1988-April 28, 2011

Those we love don’t go away

They walk beside us as every day

Unseen, unheard, but always near

Still loved, still missed and always dear.

Not a day goes by that I don’t think of you.

Miss you so much.

Love Mom, Dad, Amanda, Megan and

Kaleigh and families

Nelson & Area Elders Abuse Prevention Resource Centre: 250-352-3056. Nelson@eldersprevention@gmail.com www.nelsoneldersabuseprevention.ca. Drop-in Wednesdays 12-2pm, 739 Lemon Street, Nelson. Nelson’s Elders Abuse Resource Centre (NERC) is here to support you.

HAVE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW been sexually assaulted and want help? Call the Interior Crisis Line 24/7 at 1-888-353-CARE to discuss your options or go directly to Arrow Lakes Hospital or your local emergency room for confidential care.

Pets

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Getting closer to a cure for dementia.

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HAVE YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO START your own business? If so, call Community Futures to become a member of the free Business Plan workshop open to anyone!

And if you’re eligible, you may also qualify for the Self-Employment Program, where you will receive ongoing business training and coaching and usually financial support while you start your business. To learn more call 250-367-3647 ext. 201 or email Nakusp futures@cfbc.ca

PUBLIC LIBRARY

Those who love books

You’re never alone

You’re never alone

You’re always loved

You’re always loved

Those who love books

Our memories will always last.

Our memories will always last.

They last thru the longest day

They last thru the longest day

Beautiful memories are wonderful things

Beautiful memories are wonderful things

They walk beside us every day

They walk beside us every day

Those we love don’t go away

Those we love don’t go away

They walk beside us as every day

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Rest in Peace Randi

Recall the best of Randi

Randi needed your kindness

She needed that more than anything.

You can make a difference

You can make a difference

We need to come together again for your self care.

Jessica Connor ROM

@kootenaymassageandtherapy@fastmail.com.

Yours, Dan & Jan.

Give us a call at 250-358-7218 for a chat, or email valleyvoice@valleyvoice.ca. Absolutely loved our life as newspaper people!

The newspaper business can provide a modest income for those who absolutely love what they do and are prepared to work hard to make it happen. To those who have sold this newspaper to the community - congratulations! To those who are interested in buying or expanding your own business? If so, Community Futures can help. For information on preplanning for death and advice for alternative funeral arrangements. Ph: 250-777-1974, www.carpentercreeklastwishesociety.ca

VALDYS’ PIZZAZZ - KANAYA - Award winning, hand-stretched artisan pizza. 250-551-2289

COUNTRY ROAD CAT BOARDING - 250-353-2282.

Buddy’s Pizza, Kaslo: 250-353-6550.

In Memory of Randy Duncan

July 12, 1988 - April 28, 2011

Those who love books

You’re never alone

You’re always loved

They walk beside us every day

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Randi Duncan

July 12, 1988 - April 28, 2011

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Most burning prohibited throughout BC

Since Thursday, April 16, most open burning activities have been prohibited throughout British Columbia. These prohibitions apply to all public and private land within BC, unless specified otherwise (e.g., in a local government bylaw). Check with local government authorities for any other restrictions before lighting any fire. A poster explaining the different categories of open burning is available online: www.gov.bc.ca/openfirereg.

These open burning prohibitions will reduce demands on firefighting resources and help protect the health and safety of the public, as well as BC Wildfire Service staff. They will also help reduce the impact of wildfire smoke on air quality and public health during the COVID-19 pandemic. A strategic deployment of wildfire management resources is critical this fire season, so it is especially important to reduce the number of unnecessary, human-caused wildfires. It is vital BC Wildfire Service staff remain healthy to respond to wildfires throughout the 2020 season and ensure the BC Wildfire Service’s response capability is not affected.

Open for business campaign supports Kootenay businesses

Downtowns across the region have emptied, as communities work together to stop the spread of COVID-19. The sudden shift has been very disruptive for businesses. Physical distancing has forced closures. Supply chains are disrupted. Many businesses have laid off staff.

Despite this, many businesses have found new, innovative ways to stay open. Some have developed delivery and pick-up services. Others have shifted to online sales. In a very short time, businesses have transformed

...
The Valley Voice   April 23, 2020

COMMUNITY
Seniors Advocate, Isobel Mackenzie

The elderly and those with underlying health conditions are at much higher risk of developing serious complications from COVID-19 and the restrictions for self-isolating can be more onerous for seniors. Fortunately, new supports and an outpouring of goodwill promises to make things better for BC seniors. The latest initiative is the ‘Safe Seniors Strong Communities’ program. It expands the role of the 2-1-1 phone and web system to recruit volunteers and help more seniors. Within the first 48 hours, 2-1-1 had received thousands of calls from seniors needing help and volunteers willing to help.

The program partners with bc211 and the Better at Home program. Now, anyone who wants to help a senior simply needs to call 2-1-1 or visit bc211.ca and register to volunteer. They will shortly be matched with a senior in their community who needs help with getting groceries and medications or who just wants a friendly voice to talk to. Any senior who needs help can also just dial 2-1-1 or visit the website and they will receive a call within 48 hours from the local Better at Home agency and help will quickly be on its way.

Launched only two weeks ago, thousands of British Columbians from every part of the province have already shown their support by registering to volunteer and undergone the necessary criminal record review to ensure we are protecting vulnerable seniors. As a result, thousands of seniors have had wellness checks, groceries delivered and reassuring chats with caring volunteers. If you are reading this and have not yet volunteered or if you need help, pick up the phone or visit the website now and join this growing movement that is connecting seniors with caring volunteers in their community on a daily basis.

COVID-19 is particularly difficult for some seniors. The case for staying at home is compelling for us all, but for seniors, even outings for the essentials should be avoided. Home isolation is a sacrifice for all of us; however, seniors are much more likely to need help with getting groceries and medications or who just needs help with getting groceries and medications or who just wants a friendly voice to talk to. Any senior who needs help can also just dial 2-1-1 or visit the website and they will receive a call within 48 hours from the local Better at Home agency and help will quickly be on its way.

Many seniors with caring volunteers in their community on a daily basis. The case for staying at home is compelling for us all, but for seniors, even outings for the essentials should be avoided. Home isolation is a sacrifice for all of us; however, seniors are much more likely to live alone and have no one else at home to share the burden. I know we have undoubtedly lifted the spirits of many seniors by demonstrating how much we care about their health and well-being. When the need for staying at home became necessary there was an immediate rush of people reaching out to their elderly neighbours and family members, checking to see they had what was needed. Elected officials at all levels of government have been consistent in expressing their concerns for the most vulnerable, namely seniors. Retailers are taking pains to dedicate special opening hours exclusively for seniors and the Safe Seniors, Strong Communities program has built on this foundation of exceptional goodwill.

When COVID-19 is behind us, many say we will be living in a changed world. The degree to which that is true remains to be seen. One legacy that will last, however, is the thousands of new friendships that will have developed between volunteers and the seniors they have helped. The chats on the phone will inevitably turn to chats over a cup of tea and we will have chipped away at the isolation and loneliness that many seniors experienced.

We will get through this together and we will come out stronger on the other side. How proud we will be when we realize that, when called upon, we found our compassion and humanity and we showed the seniors in our community how much they are loved and cherished.

The Valley Voice   April 23, 2020

Opinion editorial by BC’s
Nakusp community service agency adapts to pandemic

by John Boivin, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

How does a human-services agency for people in a time of pandemic? Very carefully, says its executive director.

“We’ve really had to adjust, it’s something new for us,” says Tim Payne, head of the Arrow & Slocan Lakes Community Services and Halcyon Assisted Living Society.

The sister agencies, which provide housing, employment support, counselling services and supported living, began adjusting its service models as the pandemic came roaring into British Columbian lives a month ago.

“We’re built on human connection, and have always had an emotional and physical involvement with the people we serve. Now that’s all of a sudden cut off,” he says. “Now we have to adjust to that and make sure folks get what they need. We still need to find a way to make things happen.”

Counselling from a distance

One of the biggest impacts has been to its counselling services. Counsellors have had to work from afar, adjust with their clients to access them, he says. “That’s been a bit of a challenge for them.”

It has staff wondering if they can do their jobs properly, he says. They’ve been using video conferencing software and the telephone to contact clients.

“It just didn’t seem to them to have connection to their clients, the physical connection,” he says. “One of the big gaps was with clients with diverse abilities, helping to serve them.”

“For our counsellor who specializes in this area, it’s a whole different ball game. They can’t necessarily get on the phone or communicate through Zoom. They’ve had to do things differently.”

Women’s counsellors and peace counselors are also adjusting to the changes. Some techniques now are just unavailable, like art therapy.

Diverse needs

ASLCS is a diverse agency, employing everyone from counsellors to bus drivers, meaning there are a dozen different methods needed for making sure staff and clients are safe.

The people who drive the medical buses have had an especially hard time adapting their very hands-on, public jobs to the new reality.

“It was hard especially at the beginning, when equipment, sanitizers, and gowns and masks were really hard to come by,” he says. “It’s still a big one, but we’re starting to catch up now though.”

Some drivers have decided not to work for the duration, Payne says.

Other essential service workers like home care workers are also putting themselves at risk, he says. ASLCS has cut its “Better at Home” housekeeping services for safety reasons – both at the request of the staff and of some of the people receiving care, he says. The friendly visits have been replaced by phone calls, or helping with food preparation and delivery when possible.

The food bank has also been receiving steady donations, said Payne, and earlier this month the organization launched an Easter food basket campaign that was almost as big as the annual Christmas hamper program.

“We had 95 baskets to give out,” he says. “That’s full baskets, hams and stuff. It was pretty good for the first time out.”

Technology bottlenecks

One of the big challenges has been technology, getting both staff and clients up to speed with software, hardware and internet connections.

Staff are working from home, but many clients don’t have a computer laptop or mobile device.

Twenty different programs, many with very different needs and requirements, moving the service online a challenge.

“We are so lucky because we live in an area with Columbia Basin Trust. They contributed a significant amount of funds for helping agencies cope with the extra burdens created by COVID-19. The Trust has handed out $11.7 million dollars in funding to support communities and individuals at this unprecedented time, including ASLCLS.

“It will allow us to upgrade some technology, put some technology in place we didn’t have before to help us work from home; there’s supporting families in school where technology will play a big part too,” he says. “We’re in the process for rolling this out.”

Essential services

The Halcyon Assisted Living Society has a whole other set of demands and procedures to ensure people receiving supported living are safe. Those regulations are set by Interior Health, and strict, says Payne.

“It’s an essential service,” he says. “They are on lock-down. They have no visits from family or friends, so the folks that are in there, are in there. They have lost a lot of means to communicate.

“So we are trying to make that better by introducing tablets to Facetime, or phone.”

That means not only do caregivers have to help protect the tenants from the virus, but dealing with depression and loss of physical contact that people crave.

Housing project

If one project of ASLCLS hasn’t been dramatically affected by the pandemic, it’s the ongoing construction of the new affordable housing units in the village.

Payne says physical distancing rules are in place, and work seems to be getting done despite the restrictions.

“BC Housing has some pretty strong standards on what they can do, and handling tools and equipment,” he says. “There’s times in construction when two people have to work together, but for the most part, when they do that, they are masked and stuff. They are maintaining as best as they can the six-foot rule, and cleanliness around their tools. They’re following the rules and there’s regular inspections coming out weekly.

“So that program is good, we’re on schedule now.”

Setting the tempo

Payne says despite the challenges, roadblocks and aggravations, his organization is continuing to be able to serve residents. And he says from his point of view, the community isn’t doing too badly.

“I think Nakusp is doing great. I think they’re doing wonderfully,” he says. “I think people have embraced this and caught on to trying to ensure we don’t have a huge outbreak. Most people are taking it fairly seriously and people are conscious around distancing.”

He says businesses have especially worked hard to keep clients safe.

“I think that sets the tempo for other people as well,” he says.
Medical experts say COVID-19 mortality rate actually very low

by Art Joye

Finding the truth of the coronavirus crisis is as difficult as trying to decide which political parties are telling the truth during an election cycle. Depending on which sources you trust, two completely different scenarios emerge: one in which COVID-19 could take millions of lives, and another in which the actual mortality rate is probably about the same as seasonal flu, which kills between 40,000 and 60,000 per year in North America alone. Journalist Dick Williamson compares figures suggesting that Colorado may suffer as many as 33,277 coronavirus deaths by June 2021 with a Colorado School of Public Health volunteer research team that predicts only 379 deaths by the same date. WHO statistics published on April 19 show 152,551 coronavirus deaths globally, compared with up to 650,000 per year from seasonal flu.

But most at issue is the data being used to justify shutdown of the economy, stay-at-home orders, and huge fines in some jurisdictions for noncompliance with “social distancing” protocols. In part, this confusion has been created by the political and medical authorities themselves. The lack of clarity around the actual spread and mortality rates of COVID-19 has been aggravated by a media script that seems intent on promoting the worst-case scenario. One need only listen to interviews with some of the world’s top virologists and epidemiologists to realize that, at very least, the lethality of the virus is not what it seems.

Dr. Knut Wittkowski, for 20 years head of the Rockefeller University’s Department of Biostatistics, Epidemiology, and Research Design, has stated that the methodology being used to collect data is so flawed, “it is impossible to de-convolute.”

“I don’t know where these numbers are coming from,” he says, adding that social distancing and lockdown is the absolute worst way to deal with an airborne respiratory virus, which has a typical life of about four weeks if left to its own devices. While he agrees that those most at risk – the elderly and immune compromised – should definitely be isolated from the virus, for healthy individuals this should be unnecessary.

Dr. Wittkowski says the virus cannot live for long outdoors, so by keeping people indoors “you are prolonging the life of the virus and virtually guaranteeing a second wave later on. If 80% of people have had contact with the virus and are therefore immune, that is an immunization. If someone is still infectious, then it will be difficult for them to encounter anyone who hasn’t developed immunity.”

Dr. John Ioannidis of Stanford University adds that for children, the risk is “zero or negligible,” so it makes no sense to keep them out of school.

Iceland has been able to test virtually all of its residents, thanks to its small population. The results of these tests revealed only .003% fatality rate, which is less than seasonal flu, says Dr. Ioannidis, which is typically 0.1%. Ioannidis agrees with Dr. Wittkowski that the data collection so far is “unreliable.” Regarding the high fatality rate in Italy, he says the country has “the oldest population in Europe.” With any flu virus, the elderly are at highest risk. Italy has high rates of coronary heart disease and the highest rates of smoking. If you want to extrapolate coronavirus mortality from Italian cases, he explains, you need to adjust for these factors. “These are people who would have had very limited life expectancy in the absence of that infection.” Due to these pre-existing health complications, it still remains to be seen how many of the Italian deaths are “with SARS COV2” and how many are “of SARS COV2,” says Dr. Ioannidis.

Dr. Jay Battacharya, an assistant professor at Stanford University Medical School, noted on March 25 that, “If it’s true that the novel coronavirus would kill millions without shelter-in-place orders and quarantines, then the extraordinary measures being carried out in cities and states around the country are surely justified. But there’s little evidence to confirm that premise – and projections of the death toll could plausibly be orders of magnitude too high.”

Dr. Battacharya also referred to poor data collection, citing selection bias in testing. By only testing those with symptoms or who have died, the mortality rate is artifically inflated.

Dr. Robert Glatter, an emergency medicine physician with Lenox Hill Hospital in New York, City, said, “About 80% of people get a very mild illness and they recover uneventfully.” If this cohort were tested, the mortality rate would decrease.

“It could make the difference between an epidemic that kills 20,000 and one that kills two million,” explains Dr. Battacharya, who is advocating for more widespread blood tests.

Battacharya has since been able to test his hypothesis, publishing the results on April 17. “Researchers used 3,300 residents in Santa Clara County to conduct their tests, which found that the coronavirus could have infected far more people than has been reported. While it may seem like bad news that the virus could be that much more widespread on a global level – which is what the study concludes – it presents several positive factors including the fact that the mortality rate would be much lower than it is now believed, and that many people have symptoms so mild they don’t need seeking medical treatment and recover rather quickly.”

A Danish study published earlier this week using similar methods reached the same conclusion.

An article published by President Trump’s chief medical advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci agreed with these studies, placing the overall mortality rate for COVID-19 at about the same rate as seasonal flu .01%. Experts estimate that 15% of people infected with coronavirus have more serious symptoms, and only 5% develop life-threatening illness.

Della Mae Pigott

July 16, 1933 – February 26, 2020

Della passed away peacefully with her family by her side. She is survived by her children, Barb Fulbitman (Edi), Terry Warren (Colleen) and Wendy Pigott (Chris); her sister Bernice; 11 grandchildren, Tammy, Sheila, Dulcie, Karen, Lisa, Leanne, Jerrod, Brandon, Nathan, Jordan, and Kristy; 21 great-grandchildren; 8 great-great-grandchildren (with 3 more due this year); as well as many nieces and nephews.

Della was predeceased by her parents, Grant and Christine Dettman; her son, Jack; husband Fred; great grandson Brynn; sisters Mildred and Yvonne; niece Valinda; nephews Dean and Kevin; and her ex-husband Lloyd.

The family would like to thank the doctors at Arrow Lakes Hospital, especially Dr. David Goranson for his excellent care of “Granny” over the years and Dr. Craig Courchesne over the last few months. Also, our heartfelt thank you to the staff at Halsey House and Minto House.

A Celebration of Life will be held later this year. Valley Funeral Home in care of arrangements.