Nakusp Citizens of the Year announced

by Jan McMurtry

Nakusp Citizen of the Year, Sharon Montgomery, and Lifetime Achievement Award recipients, Chuck and Dawna Dinning, will be honored at a banquet at the Legion on April 26.

One of the people who nominated Sharon wrote, “Sharon is a dedicated volunteer at the Nakusp Museum. In fact, she is the museum.” Another said, “Without Sharon, there is no museum.” Sharon has been volunteering at the museum since 2002 and has been chairperson or co-chairperson most years since. Her countless volunteer hours are spent fundraising, applying for grants, hiring and training summer students, planting flowers in the Centennial Building gardens, and working on museum displays. Sharon is also on the Arrow Lakes Arts Council and has been active with School District 10’s aboriginal education programs.

Chuck and Dawna Dinning got involved in community work as soon as they arrived in Nakusp 19 years ago, starting out in the Kinmen and Kinette Clubs. Since then, the list of organizations they have been involved in has grown to include Meals on Wheels, the United Church, Halcyon House, the seniors’ association, the hospital board, the hospital auxiliary, the Nakusp Golf Club, and more.

“Their unique talent for making people of all ages laugh, sing and feel better is much appreciated at Halcyon House, Minto Home and Rotary Villa, as well as the many organizations they are associated with. Their day-to-day friendliness and kindness and humour makes Nakusp a better place to live and visit.”

Come and celebrate with these three wonderful community members at the Citizens of the Year banquet on April 26 at 5:30 pm. Tickets are available at Barton Insurance.

The Arrow Lakes Historical Society held a grand opening for its new archives facility in the Centennial Building on April 5. A welcome surprise was the $10,000 cheque presented to Rosemarie Parent by Area K Director Paul Peterson to cover the final renovation costs.

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Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program update provokes debate

by Art Joyce

What began as a routine update on Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) initiatives at Nakup Senior Hall March 31 soon became a forum for public input. Experienced fishermen from the Arrow Lakes and as far north as Revelstoke voiced dissatisfaction with FWCP’s emphasis on studies and monitoring rather than remediation work. And indeed, there was some bad news: kokanee populations are in serious decline and ‘invasive’ species such as walleye and pike seem to be on the increase in the Arrow Lakes.

The nurient restoration program that has worked so well in Kootenay Lake has had a much more uneven response in the Arrow reservoir. The program seeks a balance of phosphorus and nitrogen ratios; the goal is to increase phytoplankton and zooplankton, which then feeds aquatic life higher up the chain, including kokanee. Unfortunately, mysids, an introduced species, turned out to be a competitor instead of a food source for kokanee. In the early years of nutrient restoration, kokanee enjoyed a tremendous increase but this has since tapered off and gone into decline. Individual fish size has increased, however, which bodes well for long-term survival.

While no means comprehensive since not all fishers report their catches, the FWCP also tracks fish populations by monitoring fishing trends in the Arrow Lakes. Three stations ‘have been regularly checked since 1987: the dock and boat ramp in Nakup, Shelter Bay and Syntuga Park. The initial spike in fish populations resulting from the nutrient restoration program enjoyed a corresponding increase in fishing, with catches peaking around 2001. The Shelter Bay trend is on a gradual upswing while Castlegar reports the lowest of three stations for bull trout fishing. Redd counts for bull trout peaked at about 1,000 in 2006-07 and have since had a 50 percent drop, with a reasonable recovery in 2013.

Last year was also a poor year for salmon throughout all three sites monitored, although still above the worst years. 2001-05 were the best years so far in the Arrow Lakes for rainbow trout but a fish over 15 pounds hasn’t been caught since 2005. Kokanee catches hit a record low in 2012. Last year was the first time since the mid-70’s that there wasn’t a single kokanee brought back on creel days.

Meanwhile, burbot populations seem to be stable, but are only sampled at Nakup and data is limited from the early years. Overall, both bull trout and rainbow trout harvests are below the 2001-05 peak periods but slightly above 1998-2000 levels. Every year there’s a release of hatchery steelhead at High Level, and additional fish were released into the Arrow during the first week of May – a popular program with local schoolchildren. Unfortunately it hasn’t yet been possible to track adult steelhead so population levels remain murky. So far, natural spawning is very low on lower Arrow Lake and Columbia River.

Last month, FWCP biologists performed a major review of its Hill Creek kokanee-spawning channel. Key conclusions were that for wild kokanee, reducing the number of fry released should lead to increased numbers daily without significantly reducing quality of food supply for predators. The province’s answer to this problem is to allow harvest of the fishery beyond the limit set to out-compete their wild cousins, leading to an imbalance. Assisted spawning is subject to the law of diminishing returns if you go much over 1.5 million fry – it only reduces the size of individual kokanee. FWCP has thus decided to reduce its fry production to between one and two million fry per year over the next few years.

During period question, one man mentioned that walleye have been caught in the lower Arrow. FWCP biologists said they were confident walleye haven’t yet “colonized” the lakes so they aren’t yet an invasive species risk. Another man said Northern pike were illegally introduced in Montana and have been found in the Robson basin. Another person claimed that there are 14 pike in the Pond of Orelle and therefore are likely to make their way into the Columbia River. A Revelstoke fisherman said he’s caught many smorns in his area and they have no fish at all. Nelson Fish and Wildlife branch biologist Jeff Burrows said creel sampling is only done as far north as the Revelstoke,"so it’s hard to say whether whole survey are done north of there.

During an interview following the meeting, FWCP board member Grant Trower said currently the program spends over 50 percent of its budget on research and monitoring, whereas he agreed with audience comments that “restoring natural spawning with assistance should be a priority.” Broader the scope of FWCP decision-making to include public input has been “a very valuable addition to the program, helping to gain local stakeholder knowledge and experience.”

Nakup biomass project proponents host ‘Lunch & Learn’

by Art Joyce

With electricity rates and propane costs soaring, monitoring is building for the Nakup wood biomass district heating project. On April 3 Councilor Tom Zelekzink hosted a ‘Lunch & Learn’ meeting at Selkirk College’s Learning Centre that put all the technical expertise needed for the project in one room. Engineers Steve Thompson and Nathan Ward of 3E Engineering and Sun Thomas of Primus Engineering, the firms behind the Nakup hydro and water treatment systems, were present along with Stephen Bears and Burtiford Fink of Fink Machinery Inc., the company that has earned fame for its biomass-fired heating plant in Enderby, BC. With help from David Dubois of Wood Waste 2 Rural Heat, the audience was fed not only a hearty lunch but also all their questions.

“Through this could be a success for other communities on how to collaborate as well as providing a model on how to build investment in community initiatives,” said Zelekzin.

Prior to lunch, Zelekzin and guests toured buildings that could be tied into a district-heating grid, including the daycare centre, Overmain, Nakup Lakes Hotel, Haldyock Home, Kalm Tree, hotels and motels, and local schools. Engineer Steve Thompson has expressed interest in being the lead consultant on the project, and working with David Dubois will develop a business plan with complete cost breakdowns. Zelekzin will be making his case before School District 10, seeking their partnership.

Zelekzin opened the lunch meeting with a summary of the project so far, noting that a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with the Village of Nakup stating its support in principle and offering in-kind services. Zelekzin is proposing the formation of the Nakup District Heating Group (NDHG) – with the municipality, NACFOR, local businesses and other potential partners as shareholders. Possible funding partners include the BC Bioenergy Network (BCBN), which specializes in funding bioenergy technologies and capacity-enhancing programs for industries, private companies and communities throughout BC, as well as Columbia Power Corporation and the CBT. Fink Machinery – which has installed or consulted on similar projects as far north as the Yukon – would be the technology supplier. Fink Machinery’s Stephen Bears would assist in designing a cost-effective biomass boiler system with a payback schedule of between three to seven years. That quick rate of return on investment is entirely feasible, said Dubois, given that Nakup’s current energy costs are about $25 per gigajoule for electricity; propane costs recently jumped from 55 cents per litre to over a dollar. The school district is spending $30,000 per year on heating in each school. Heating costs with a biomass system would drop to about a quarter of that, or about $2.5 per gigajoule. The $3,000 connection costs to add a building to the grid is therefore recoverable in well under 10 years. Another advantage is that, because the fuel supply is entirely local and a waste product, the system would not provide support for fluctuations of energy markets. Some studies show that while 90 percent of money spent on fuel from non-local sources is lost abroad, 75 percent of money spent on local energy would remain in the local economy. The reverse would be true for a biomass district-heating grid. And because biomass is considered “carbon light,” the system would not subject to carbon taxes.

A biomass boiler generating between one and five megawatts of power only requires 20-30 trackloads of wood chips annually, which could easily be increased; average deliveries in Nakup would be only about once per week. Box Lake Lumbar and Pacific Interior Pole Construction (PICCO) could easily supply that amount and more – enough to also supply New Denver if it chose to get on board. The Enderby plant – the first one-megawatt biomass boiler plant in its kind in Canada – averages one 20-ton trackload per week.

During question period it was pointed out that all mechanical systems are subject to breakdowns. Dan Webe of Box Lake Lumber said he would prefer an agreement that did not require the NDHG to cover heating costs during breakdown. In contrast, Bears of Fink Machinery said that to date, the Enderby plant has not had a single day of shutdown due to mechanical failure. Dubois added that there are literally thousands of wood-burning systems in Europe, all proving reliable.

The ghost of the wood pellet system at Nakup Senior Hall was also raised. It was pointed out that wood was the first of its kind in Canada, the pellets were not sourced locally, and the company experienced funding and bureaucratic barriers. Dubois added that the experience has led to the development of a supply system that could “generate up to 20 megawatts and help the rest of Canada,” with considerable savings over wood chip systems.
by Jan McMurray

Results of the Slocan Valley Business Retention and Expansion survey were presented to the public at meetings in Slocan Park (April 2) and Sibbald (April 13).

Lesh Main, chair of the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission (SVELDC), explained that the survey was conducted in cooperation with the Slocan District Chamber of Commerce to work with the Rural Development Institute (RDI) at Selkirk College on the region’s economic development.

The results of the survey in the valley were surveyed, and the data from the surveys was analyzed by the RDI.

“This detailed amount of data has not even surfaced here previously,” she said.

Main explained that the RDI is doing these projects with many communities throughout the Columbia Basin – 550 basin businesses have been interviewed – so the data from the different communities can be compared and used as a basis for collaboration between communities.

Joy Bottle, researcher at the RDI, gave a PowerPoint presentation of the survey results on behalf of the SVELDC.

He explained that Business Retention and Expansion is all about existing businesses. He said that although new business is important, making sure that existing businesses stay in business in the community has proven to be a highly effective economic development approach, especially in rural areas.

The survey identified several areas where businesses could use some assistance. These included: business expansion (resulting in the identification of potential expansion sites); training opportunities; recruitment initiatives; succession planning, and infrastructure and transportation (support for more research in partnership with local universities and service organizations into the development of telecommunications and transportation infrastructure and services, and for Sibbald’s business development was to host a forum focused on planning for growth and infrastructure development. This could help engage others in the community in the process of visioning for future change.

Survey results

Fifty-one percent of respondents saw their market as local or regional. “This is not the situation,” said Bottle. “One of the things that pushes people into collaboration is seeing themselves in bigger groups.”

Bottle said it was encouraging to see a nice spread in the age of the businesses and the stage of their life cycles in the valley. Thirty-two percent of respondents had been in business for more than 20 years; 16 percent between 10 and 19 years; and 40 percent for less than 10 years.

Forty-six percent said their businesses are growing; 30 percent said they were staying the same; 14 percent were emerging businesses; and eight percent were declining.

An ownership change was planning in 22 percent or one in five businesses surveyed. Bottle said that although a fairly high number of exits were planned, a low number of respondents had succession plans in place.

Staffing is an issue, with 34 percent of respondents citing it as an issue, and respondents experiencing recruitment challenges. “This is not unusual for the region,” said Bottle. “Everyone is screaming for employees.”

The survey reported that the biggest demand is for machine operators, general labourers, and administrative and clerical.

Bottle said the area lacks people in the 25-35 age group – the trend is for people aged 20 to leave the region and then not return. Recruitment efforts in the Slocan Valley are generally done through local connections and local newspapers. “But we’re hoping that getting the community together and developed a plan for recruitment outside the local area. He suggested Slocan Valley businesses may want to do something similar.

Respondents said their training needs include business management (25%), marketing and sales (15%), facilities management (15%) and Workplace and Workers’ Safety (10%). Forty-seven percent said they want classroom/seminar training and 40 percent said they want in-plant training.

Projected sales growth was very positive, with 54 percent saying their market is increasing and 32% saying it is stable.

Where are businesses’ customers? Thirty-seven percent of respondents said their source most of their supplies nationally. Thirty-two percent said locally/regional and 35 percent said elsewhere in BC. The top reason for out-of-area purchasing was the lack of product availability.

Fifty-six percent of respondents do not participate in government procurement processes. Bottle said this was another area where networking might help.

Another survey topic was facilities and expansion plans. Seventy-six percent of respondents said their facilities are in good or excellent condition and 81 percent say their equipment is in good or excellent condition. Forty-five percent have expansion plans within the next three years – eleven percent of these said their current site is inadequate for the expansion expansion. Bottle said this was a much bigger issue in other areas, such as Nelson, but not so pronounced in the Slocan Valley.

Financing – identifying and accessing new markets, and lack of information were identified as expansion barriers. Bottle said there is no angel investing and there is no venture capital in the Kootenays. “We haven’t developed a culture of providing it, looking for it or administering it, so it is appropriate for us?” He said the RDI was going to be looking into this.

Access to highways and recycling were rated highly, and access to the airport and telecommunications were rated poorly. “Cell service and high speed internet show up repeatedly as issues,” said Bottle.

Schools, and cultural and recreational amenities were rated highly; workforce stability and housing were rated poorly.

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Huge BC Hydro bills concerning cause

by Jan McMurray

Many people in the area have contacted the Valley Voice to report that they’ve recently received a huge bill from BC Hydro, after many months of receiving bills showing estimates rather than actual meter readings. This has resulted in some customers receiving a bill for over $100 per month – in April 2013, by which time almost 75 percent of their residential customers province-wide had smart meters and the transition to the automated billing system was well on its way.

One woman who lives in Galena Bay was shocked when she was recently billed $3,626.35 and was told that BC Hydro had decided to under-charge for the period between March 27, 2013 and March 19, 2014. On the equal payment plan, she says the payment was $138 per month. For every month, for a total of $2,268 for the March 2013 to March 2014 period. She says the BC Hydro customer service representatives the speaker was adamant that she owed the additional $1,626.35.

Another woman in the New Denver area was on the equal payment plan at $108 per month. She always paid a little extra ($10 per month) in order to avoid a bill on the payment plan anniversary date. In March 2014, she was sent a package of adjusted bills showing an amount of $334.92 owing.

Many people who have contacted us are not on the equal payment plan, but recently received a whopping bill after having had their electricity usage estimated much more often than not since April 2013.

For the past year, smart meter installations occurred in the New Denver area very recently, during the first week of April. The Valley Voice has asked BC Hydro why a meter reader was not sent on for the New Denver area when the company knew that smart meter installation had been delayed there.

The Valley Voice has also asked BC Hydro how they can charge people who chose to keep their analogue meter 35 months to their meter read when that service is not being provided.

Further, the Valley Voice has asked BC Hydro why it started billing the ‘legacy meter charge’ in the New Denver area on December 1 instead of April 1, when smart meters were installed. Almost everyone in the New Denver area had an analogue meter between December 1, 2013 and April 1, 2014, but some were being billed the ‘legacy meter charge’ and others weren’t.

BC Hydro spokesperson Sabrina Levenson is working on getting the answers to these questions. Meanwhile, the company encourages customers with complaints about their bills to contact BC Hydro’s Customer Care Team at 1-800 BC Hydro.

If unsatisfied after contacting BC Hydro, Citizens for Solar Technology is advising people to submit complaints about their BC Hydro bills to the BC Utilities Commission and the BC Ombudsperson. BCUC, Customer Service Specialist, 6th Floor, 900 Howe Street, Box 250, Vancouver, BC V6Z 2N3; email: complaints@ bccuc.com; fax: 604-600-1122. BC Ombudsperson, PO Box 9039 STN ORD, Vancouver, BC V6B 2P5; telephone: 250-387-0198; phone: 1-800-567-3247.

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Nakusp Rotary Club

MEETS WEDNESDAYS AT 5:45 PM
at Gabi’s Restaurant • 211 - 6th Ave NW
West Koot Route

West Koot Route? Please say it isn’t so. West Koot Route does not compete! Hope the local Chambers will take a hard second look at this marketing proposal and open up the process to involve public comment. It’s not kind to see the Chambers make fun of a sizeable portion of our populations (the ‘old crews’). The use of the ‘Koot’ seems destined to promote negative connotations and stereotypes. And it might be interesting to listen in as some of our neighbours to the south (many of whom pronounce ‘route’ as in ‘gent’ or ‘boat’) try and figure out why those folks up north have a non-thriving Koot Route. Let’s Boot the Koot.

JD Mah Nakup

Dear legislators

Please take the time to read this. Those who do not learn from history are destined to repeat it. As legislators, leaders have known to create and maintain strategic regional food capacity and supplies for millennia and you are about to destroy one of its last foundations in BC (with your ‘review’ of the Agricultural Land Reserve) adding to the travesty of successive sell-offs of the BC Ministry of Agriculture. You do not have the mandate to make this decision which repercussions will not take months or years but decades to reverse, once material changes/chunks and mortar are placed on the land. Our children will not forgive us.

Even in the USA, the bastion for the free market, their leadership has maintained farm extension services, grants for farm infrastructure like fencing and lots of subsidies. Could it be that there is some clear-sighted and responsible reasoning for this?

If anything, we need a

EDITORIAL / LETTERS POLICY

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

Letters and articles should be no longer than 500 words and may be edited. We reserve the right to reject any submitted material.

Please mark your letter “LETTER TO THE EDITOR.” Include your address and daytime phone number for verification purposes.

We will not publish anonymous letters or letters signed with pseudonyms, except in extraordinary circumstances.

Opinions expressed in published letters are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Valley Voice.

West Koot Route makes farmland unprofitable to would-be young farmers. One way would be to have a system to swap non-arable crown land for farmland when a retiring farmer receives an offer for his land. This would be leadership.

Andre Piver Nelson

McGreal apologizes

I fully apologize to Mayor Perriere, Slocan Village council, as well as to the Valley Voice and its readers, for both the content and tone of my letter which appeared in the March 27, 2014 issue. I allowed my frustration concerning a perceived lack of attention to detail (by my standards) to override my own moorish of intelligence and propriety, in unflatteringly criticizing council and in particular the mayor. It was not until I read the Slocan council notes, which also appeared in that issue, that I realized that I had been wrong about a number of things, including that the most serious error of the community garden licence had indeed been corrected by council resolution.

I have no doubt that everyone has a sense of duty to the Village and is working in the Village’s best interests. It is sometimes difficult for me to understand that we all work in different, though equally valuable, ways to attempt to achieve the best result for the Village, and that is a shortcoming I hope I have awakened to, and will try to overcome.

As my letter, which I fully retract, angrily demonstrates, any failure of care, diligence, skill and common sense is my own, and not that of Mayor Perriere and the other members of council. Again, I sincerely apologize.

Patricia McGreal

Open letter to Minister responsible for Canada Post

I am writing to express my grave concern about the changes to service that Canada Post is in the process of implementing in several communities in my riding of BC Southern Interior. These changes threaten jobs, limit access to the post office for my constituents and reduce Canada Post staff morale.

Canada Post is the need for these changes to the public with a rationale that perpetuates mistruths about their purpose and necessity. Here are several examples from my riding.

In the town of Osoyoos (population 5,000) Canada Post has opened a franchise postal outlet in a Pharmasave drugstore directly across the street from the main post office.

In the town of Rossland (population 3,500) Canada Post is proposing to open a new ‘high traffic dealership outlet’ in order to “improve service for customers in the market to be served.” At the same time, Canada Post is proposing to downsize the corporate retail outlet in Rossland, a move described by management as a “new smaller retail model.”

This “model” will eliminate 1.5 retail positions and place all retail products behind the clerk in a customer service window. Canada Post has eliminated Saturday service in many of the smaller and rural post offices in my riding, including Balfour, Christina Lake, Crescent Valley, Slocan Park and South Slocan.

Canada Post has reduced the hours of service in the Trail and Castlegar post offices by opening at 9 am rather than 8.30.

Canada Post is pitching the necessity for these changes across Canada as good business practice in the face of declining profits, the loss of letter post revenue and more competition for parcel services. It defies logic that the best way to complete in the marketplace is to reduce hours of business, withdraw services from communities and go into direct competition with oneself.

Reality check: According to the Canada Post website, the corporation posted profits in every year from 2009 to 2012 with the exception of 2011, when it locked out its workers. It would seem that Canada Post is determined to undermine itself by raising costs, cutting services and driving away customers in an ill-conceived attempt to privatize the corporation.

Minister, the loss of well-paid, union Canada Post jobs in the small communities that I represent will be devastating not only to the individuals whose livelihoods are threatened, but to small business and service industries that rely on customers to stay vital. The reduction in hours of service at corporate retail outlets and the opening of franchise outlets will not serve customers, employees or communities well.

At a recent public forum in my riding, the Mayor of Castlegar, the Executive Director of the Castlegar Chamber of Commerce, the coordinator of a seniors’ support network, and a representative from the CUPW union local all spoke out against community mailboxes, increases in postal rates and the reduction in staffing and hours at the local post office.

If such a cross-section of individuals in this small community are united in opposition to Canada Post’s plans, who is left to speak in favour of them except the government and the corporation, both of whom should be working for the best interests of Canadians.

I strongly urge you to re-examine the plans of Canada Post to downsize postal outlets, downgrade services and eliminate well-paid union jobs. My constituents are not interested in being sold something that they neither want nor need.

Alex Atamianenko, MP
BC Southern Interior

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Kaslo ER

It is a very sad state of affairs with regard to rural medical care in BC. As of April 1, our local ER here in Kaslo is only open from 9-5 Monday-Friday. For us Up-the-Lakos, that means an hour and a half drive to Kaslo ER outside of those hours.

As a parent this freaks me out. I can’t help but flash back to all of the many dark times my son and I have been here. I’ve done this in the past with my son struggling for air with his severe asthma. And upon arriving in Kaslo, at oh so unhurried hours, he would receive the nebulization he needed to open his airways.

I don’t know what the outcome would have been if we had needed to keep driving for another host on to Nelson.

I don’t think it is fair or even sane that Interior Health or our government forces us to make that gamble with our children’s lives because our EMERGENCY falls outside of the regular business hours at the ER. We can do better than this!

Instead of buying billion dollar fighter jets that in reality if we ever really do need them we are basically screwed, let’s demand that our hard earned tax money be spent on what the overwhelming majority of us do not really want: Prevention and holistic healthcare, education and roads – and not on all other ridiculous military spending. These are the seeds we need to plant to create an economy and foster growth.

Educated people = high-paying jobs; robust healthcare = a healthy, stable and vibrant people; and roads are the arteries and veins of an economy. These are the things that we must demand our government spends our money on! Things that benefit all, not a select and nasty minority.

Sorry for the long rant but we all really need to stand up and demand that simple logic be the compass for our country. This site’s recommendations sound like a good start: http://ecmp.ca/advocacy/romanow-commission/rural-emergency-care

Ben Smith

Perry Ridge Water Users Association

Oil pipeline blitz is upon us

I wrote recently in the Valley View of the upcoming millions-dollar public relations campaign brought by CAPP (Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers) through electronic and Post Media (owns many large metropolitan newspapers) advertising pages.

Check out Section F (first six full-color pages) titled "BC’s Pipeline, Oil and Gas", Vancouver Sun, Saturday, March 30, 2014. It’s heavily disguised as independent journalistic articles. It is clear that readers would be easily fooled into believing these articles were written by unrelated people and purported public relations spins paid for in full by the oil and gas industry. It is also clear that

disguising corporate public relations as journalism is exactly the point of the partnership.

A perfectly outrageous example is page F2, the CEO/Science BC article about fracking and water safety. There is a photo of a supposed technician standing with an instrument in an idyllic forest stream. I did some research into the "not for profit" organization and their financial statement dated June 30, 2013 reveals that their "Unrestricted Assets From Inception" include BC government grants of $48,700,000. They earned $7,322,686 in investment income! They incurred $7,620,005 in administrative expenses.

So the BC taxpayer paid over $48 million in grants AND the "not for profit" made investment income of over $5 million. I could go on...

Nowhere to the glowing newspaper pages were any photos of the actual tar sands, pipeline right of ways through pristine forest or teachers roughly as long as the Empire State building is high.

The article went on your own research, perhaps starting with the recent United Nations Report on Climate Change.

The Alberta pipeline in question is a project that should not move forward.

It was a well documented 92 case series that is scientifically valid. It clearly demonstrates adverse health effects in the human population from smart meter emissions.

The "emergent reports" in this case series clearly correlate not only with the Clinical findings of environmental physicians, but also with the scientific literature. Many of the symptoms reported including fatigue, headaches, heart palpitations, dizziness and other symptoms have been shown to be triggered by electromagnetic field exposure. Also the clinical presentation of exposure under double blind, placebo controlled conditions.

"It is critically important to note that the data in this case series indicates that the "most varied cases" were not electromagnetically hypersensitive until after installation of smart meters. Dr. Langstaff concludes that smart meters "may have biological characteristics that lower people’s threshold for symptom development".

"This research is the first of its kind, clearly demonstrating the correlation between smart meters and adverse health effects.

"Based on the findings of this case series, AAMF calls for further research regarding smart meter health effects; Accommodation for health considerations regarding smart meter avoidance; Awareness of smart meter EMF/RF emissions based on health considerations, including the option to maintain analog meters. A moratorium on smart meters and implementation of safer technology; Physicians and health care providers to consider the role of EMF and RF in the disease process, diagnosis and treatment of patients.”

To prevent the continued health effects resulting from electromagnetic fields, the public should demand the following:

The supplement reveals the misleading nature of the statement you echo from BC Hydro, that their meters only transmit for one minute per day. The spikes of communication from smart meters is continual, not just one per day, and as there are 60,000,000 meters per minute, that minute takes on a very different meaning as explained in the 2012 supplement

"An urgent example for the need to address the lack of adequate public protection from intensive safety standards for pulsed RFR exposures is the rapid, global roll-out of wireless utilities meters (‘smart’ meters for electricity, gas and water meters). Current safety standard calculations that rely on time-averaging of RFR almost entirely dilute out the power density of RFR levels that are delivered in millisecond bursts, but occur at intervals of every second, or multiple times per second when in use within a wireless mesh network

..."Utilities from California to Maine have installed tens of millions already, with no noticeable adverse health complaints or expressions of experts who are already seeing thousands of health complaints. The wireless meters produce pulses of pulsed radiowave radiation on a continuous basis (247), and in typical operation, will sustain living space at levels that can be much higher than already demonstrated by the huge amount of adverse health effects for some people. These meters, depending on where they are placed relative to occupied space in the home or classroom, can produce RFR exposure levels similar to that within the first 100 feet to 600 feet of a mobile phone base station (cell tower).”

While you seem to ignore this very extensive list of concerned scientists and medical doctors, you also seem to ignore contradictions in your own policy letter. For instance, in paragraph 4 you state “smart” meters are active for 1.4 seconds per day. In paragraph 5 of your letter you state: “Smart meters transmit as average total of a minute a day.”

Even if we bypass your contradiction, this is the continuous millisecond, peak bursts that are endangering, something your statements completely overlook.

The excepits stated above are only a few of the references on which I base my refusal to accept a Smart Meter. Because I am recovering from a cancer operation and, as my previous correspondence indicated, I am in my 2nd year, the nature of these extensive findings, contrary to your assurances, are what must guide your decision.

I would very much appreciate if you could now understand my deduction of the Legacy (penalty) monthly fee from my electricity bills, and recognize it as inappropriate, unfair and constitutionally challenged. Please stop the monthly fee, the hit to the pocket of the electricity or collection agency.

If, under the circumstances, you, Mr. Bennett and the BC Government stand behind and mean to prolong this punitive policy, I will have to suffer the consequences, but the publicised consequences will blow up in all of our faces.

Richard Connell
New Denver

Open letter to Acting Assistant Deputy Minister re: smart meters

Thank you for your letter of 20 March 2014 in reply to that sent to

Mr. Bennett. I recognize that the BC government and Hydro are co-joined in their enthusiastic support for the use of smart meter technology. Your references, however, are substantially about academic and scientific data and medical findings, out of which I comprehend I quoted previously in my letter to Greg Reinman, BC Hydro President.

In addition to this material, the American Academy of Environmental Medicine, an international organization of physicians and scientists, issued a position paper on October 2013, stating:

"The AAME has received a case series submitted by Dr. Federica Lameh, MBBS, Self-Reporting of Symptoms Development from Exposure to Wireless Smart Meters/RF Radiation Fields in Victoria.AAME supports this research. It is a well documented 92 case series that is scientifically valid. It clearly demonstrates adverse health effects in the human population from smart meter emissions."

The symptom reports in this case series clearly correlate not only with the Clinical findings of environmental physicians, but also with the scientific literature. Many of the symptoms reported including fatigue, headaches, heart palpitations, dizziness and other symptoms have been shown to be triggered by electromagnetic field exposure. Also the clinical presentation of exposure under double blind, placebo controlled conditions.

"It is critically important to note that the data in this case series indicates that the “most varied cases” were not electromagnetically hypersensitive until after installation of smart meters. Dr. Langstaff concludes that smart meters “may have biological characteristics that lower people’s threshold for symptom development”.

"This research is the first of its kind, clearly demonstrating the correlation between smart meters and adverse health effects.

"Based on the findings of this case series, AAMF calls for further research regarding smart meter health effects; Accommodation for health considerations regarding smart meter avoidance; Awareness of smart meter EMF/RF emissions based on health considerations, including the option to maintain analog meters. A moratorium on smart meters and implementation of safer technology; Physicians and health care providers to consider the role of EMF and RF in the disease process, diagnosis and treatment of patients.”

To prevent the continued health effects resulting from electromagnetic fields, the public should demand the following:

The supplement reveals the misleading nature of the statement you echo from BC Hydro, that their meters only transmit for one minute per day. The spikes of communication from smart meters is continual, not just one per day, and as there are 60,000,000 meters per minute, that minute takes on a very different meaning as explained in the 2012 supplement

"An urgent example for the need to address the lack of adequate public protection from intensive safety standards for pulsed RFR exposures is the rapid, global roll-out of wireless utilities meters (‘smart’ meters for electricity, gas and water meters). Current safety standard calculations that rely on time-averaging of RFR almost entirely dilute out the power density of RFR levels that are delivered in millisecond bursts, but occur at intervals of every second, or multiple times per second when in use within a wireless mesh network

..."Utilities from California to Maine have installed tens of millions already, with no noticeable adverse health complaints or expressions of experts who are already seeing thousands of health complaints. The wireless meters produce pulses of pulsed radiowave radiation on a continuous basis (247), and in typical operation, will sustain living space at levels that can be much higher than already demonstrated by the huge amount of adverse health effects for some people. These meters, depending on where they are placed relative to occupied space in the home or classroom, can produce RFR exposure levels similar to that within the first 100 feet to 600 feet of a mobile phone base station (cell tower).”

While you seem to ignore this very extensive list of concerned scientists and medical doctors, you also seem to ignore contradictions in your own policy letter. For instance, in paragraph 4 you state “smart” meters are active for 1.4 seconds per day. In paragraph 5 of your letter you state: “Smart meters transmit as average total of a minute a day.”

Even if we bypass your contradiction, this is the continuous millisecond, peak bursts that are endangering, something your statements completely overlook.

The excepits stated above are only a few of the references on which I base my refusal to accept a Smart Meter. Because I am recovering from a cancer operation and, as my previous correspondence indicated, I am in my 2nd year, the nature of these extensive findings, contrary to your assurances, are what must guide your decision.

I would very much appreciate if you could now understand my deduction of the Legacy (penalty) monthly fee from my electricity bills, and recognize it as inappropriate, unfair and constitutionally challenged. Please stop the monthly fee, the hit to the pocket of the electricity or collection agency.

If, under the circumstances, you, Mr. Bennett and the BC Government stand behind and mean to prolong this punitive policy, I will have to suffer the consequences, but the publicised consequences will blow up in all of our faces.

Richard Connell
New Denver
Eric Winje's memories of the Slocan's 50-year history
by Art Joyce

With the demolition of the Slocan mill ends a 50-year history with connections to an even older history of logging and milling in the Slocan Valley. Among the first to operate mills in the valley in the early 1900s were the Patrick brothers, famous as hockey players who helped establish what became the NHL. The Burkus family is another clan that has long associations with the lumber industry here, and Gary Burkus continues to operate a forestry consulting business in Slocan. For a brief period Gary was foreman of a selective logging crew attached to the mill.

The mill was built by Pacific Logging at its current waterfront location in the summer of 1964. Bill Hicks recalls his father and uncle having a sawmill and planer at this location for a decade prior to that date. “After they made their fortune, they shut it down. But it was small, just on the lakeshore. In my lifetime this is the third one that’s been there.” During his childhood he recalls seeing a cedar mill being built. Although Hicks never worked in the mill, he was foreman of the bush crew for 26 years.

Another person whose career was built around the mill is Eric Winje, who started working there in March 1965. Pacific Logging, a subsidiary of CP Rail, had acquired the mill and planer at Passmore but it took until late 1965 before the planer was moved to the new mill at Slocan. In the meantime, the company had its lumber planed and kilns dried at the Passmore mill. “The shop was the last thing to be moved up from Passmore, and that was probably in November 1965,” Winje recalls. Then about 1970, Triangle Pacific became the new owners, followed later in the decade by Slocan Forest Products, who were in turn bought out by Canfor. Canfor had it for a relatively short period of time; Spring Creek Forest Products were the final owners.

I decided to interview Winje about his memories of a lifetime working at the mill. By contrast to today, when he started, there were more jobs than men to fill them. Except for brief stints working out west, he worked in the mill’s mechanical shop from 1965 until his retirement in 2003. A ‘downsizing’ of the workforce meant either a reduction in pay or a severance package, so he chose the latter.

How did you get started working at the mill?

I was working in the local garage at the time they started construction and the company had quite a bit of dealings with the garage. Bringing in the new equipment, because as well as sawdust and fuel and power saws. I was actually called up for work even though I didn’t have my name in. And that was the case quite a bit during the first 20 years of operation.

What type of lumber were you producing?

We were producing pretty well everything, but of course it was all rough lumber that had to be trucked out. I was actually working there the day they shut it down over 100,000 board feet a shift. In fact the management promised they were going to buy box for the crew that cut over 100,000. Day shift prior to us cut over 100,000, so the beer had to be shared with both shifts. That was sometime in March or April of 1965.

What was the relationship with management like when you started?

Pacific Logging occasionally would have a party for both hourly equipment and management. There was the case where a house was burnt down and they sent their carpenters and hammer and rebuilt it even though the guy had never worked for the company. They were very community minded and people oriented.

How did the relationship change when the new owners came in?

One of the most obvious changes that always comes to mind is that when Pacific Logging had it, they seemed to put more emphasis on employee satisfaction. When they shut down logging in the winter, they always did some make work projects at the plant so the employees wouldn’t have to go on unemployment insurance. After about 1970, once Triangle Pacific took over, it was all about profit from then on.

I’ll bet you’ve seen a lot of changes over the years, especially in safety practices?

In the later years, there was a very decommissioned insurance. The only protection we were required to have when I first started was hard hats. Then it was hearing protection, safety glasses, safety-toed boots. The union is an equal partner with the company on the safety committee.

Were there any attempts at union busting as there has been in other industries?

I understand the union in later years amalgamated with the steel workers; it was originally the International Woodworkers of America. There’s no evidence that union busting was ever attempted here.

Eric and Ailine Winje raised a family of two girls – Anita and Alana – in Slocan. Anita has moved back east, while Alana lives in New Westminster, B.C. and is a RN in the Regional District of Central Kootenay, Alana works for a hospital in Vancouver. For those seeking historic images, Ailine has been posting photos of the mill in construction on her Facebook page.

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Kootenay Lake Partnership
Presenting information on the Slocan Lake Shoreline
Take a Look at Your Lake
Slocan Valley residents are invited to attend information sessions presenting the shoreline guidance document for Slocan Lake.

Hosted by the Kootenay Lake Partnership, the sessions will be held:
- Wednesday, April 23, 7 – 9 pm
- Slocan City Legion Hall
- Thursday, April 24, 7 – 9 pm
- Silverton Memorial Hall

The Shoreline Guidance Document outlines government jurisdiction around waterfront uses and informs decision-making based on scientific ecosystem data collected about the shoreline condition on Slocan Lake. Government representatives will present the details of the document.

Hope to see you there! For more information or inquiries, please contact:
KLP: Ryan van der Marel, Chair
Phone: (250) 505-7666
Email: klp.coordinator@gmail.com

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The Whole School
Invites you to celebrate Earth Day with us at our
OPEN HOUSE
Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014
2:00 pm to 5:00 pm
1634 Highway #6 – Windermere

Kindergarten Registration & Multi-age Elementary Applications
For 2014/15 Now Accepted

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Mt. Sentinel School launches Wildcat TV program
by Art Joyce

And now for news at the top of the hour – from Wildcat TV at Mt. Sentinel School. Thanks to the visionary thinking of teacher librarian Danny Leemming, a supportive staff, and a $10,000 grant from Columbia Basin Trust, the school has acquired the equipment needed to produce its own in-house TV station.

“I’ve essentially created our own YouTube inside the school,” says Leemming. “The big picture is that we’ll eventually like to be the school TV station for the entire valley.”

Leemming, who teaches Information Technology and acts as the technical coordinator for the school, got the idea from LTVT, the in-house station he worked on as a student at Nelson’s LHS Rogers Secondary. The CBT grant was essential for providing necessary equipment to purchase a TV production system called the Newtek TriCaster, as well as other studio equipment such as cameras and lights, microphones and green screens. About 15 students from grades 9-12 work in writing, editing, lighting, sound production and acting as news anchors. Wildcat TV creates between five to 10 minutes of daily school news. There are plans to expand programming to include drama and sports coverage. Leemming hopes to eventually be able to live stream graduations, possibly by next year.

“Our biggest obstacle was the startup costs for it, so I can’t say enough about the funding we got from Columbia Basin Trust,” says Leemming. “Especially because the TriCaster unit itself costs over $5,000, we could have used the cameras and stuff in bits and pieces but not that.”

The TriCaster is the ‘brain’ of the operation, with all the audio-visual inputs and outputs, digital recording and graphics editing – all in one unit. Compared to the equipment that would have been required in the 1980s for TV news, which would have taken a whole van to finagle, this is the size of a banker’s box. Due to provincial restrictions on Internet speed, the school is not able to be their own ISP to live streaming capacity is still limited, for now.

Wildcat TV has been broadcasting for about four or five weeks, providing learning opportunities from many different streams. The Music Studies class is creating the music for the ‘intro’ and ‘outro’ on the daily news feed. The acting class has been working on a play that will be screened. Other students did a stop-motion animation class with Oxygen Art Centre that was shown and Information Technology students are creating digital media. Media literacy is also included in the program, teaching students how to evaluate the methods used by advertising to get people to buy products, as well as how to evaluate website content.

The production is entirely extramural and volunteer but offers a great opportunity for students to ‘bridge’ into post-secondary media studies such as the Selkirk College New Media program. “We have lots of trades students there but we’re not a lot of tech training so it gives them the option to at least try it and find out if it’s something they want to pursue after high school,” says Leemming. “I was involved a little bit with LTVT when I was a student there; I wouldn’t have known it was possible if I hadn’t had that opportunity.”
Kaslo council, March 25: Health Care Committee update

by Jan McMurray

• The Health Care Select Committee meeting minutes of March 20 were received. Cheryl Middleton and Andrew Nemer of IHA attended. Middleton is the main IHA point person for the committee. It was reported that IHA negotiations with BC Ambulance Service regarding Kaslo area patient transit were going slower than hoped. IHA was to provide an update by April 1. It was also reported that a Nelson doctor would be working some regular hours in Kaslo as a stop-gap measure.

Maggie Winters gave a report from the recruitment subcommittee. The Kaslo Visitor Guide and a one-page description of Kaslo and the Victorian Health Centre was inserted into 800 registration packages for physicians attending the Rural and Remote Physician Conference in March. A similar package will be available at the Rural Emergency Continuum Care Conference in Penticton in May.

The subcommittee was to meet with a professional recruiter in early April, to discuss the development of a recruitment strategy.

The CAO reported that the main water break along the New Denver highway late at night on March 15. City of Nelson Public Works staff brought the required pipe up to Kaslo, and the Kaslo crew worked into the early morning to do the repair. Loss of service was minimal. Marytch went to the City of Nelson, and to the RCMF for traffic control.

• The Kaslo infoNet Society is looking at burying fibreglass cable, mostly underground Water Street and alleys, to deliver high speed broadband in the downtown core. Once the fibre is buried, the Village may want to introduce an approval process before any digging takes place, in order to protect the buried fibre. Staff is looking into options for the approval process that would involve the least amount of red tape.

• Staff will proceed, as time and budget permits, with the initiation of Phase 2 of the Liquid Waste Management Plan this year.

• Staff will arrange a five-year lease arrangement for the Kaslo Community Hosts forestry forum

by Jan McMurray

The Kaslo and District Community Forest Society hosted a full-day forum on April 3 at the golf course clubhouse called, Planning for the future: forestry in the West Kootenay.

"It was a good meeting. It’s good when we all get together in the same room and share our experiences, and make connections with people who might join us down the road," said Erik Bird of the Kaslo Community Forest.

About 35 people attended, including many local contractors and people formerly of the local forest companies (Kalenkskoff, Pecorino, CPS, Hamill Creek; boards by George, Harrop-Pecker Community Forest, Kaslo Community Forest, Nakusp Community Forest). Other organizations represented include Selkirk College, CFT, the Village of Kaslo, the Kaslo Chamber of Commerce, the Southern Interior Beetle Action Coalition, and the Bridges Project.

The people in the room identified two of the main problems with the local forest industry as the labour shortage, and local attitudes about forestry.

Developing a local culture of respect for forestry seemed to resonate with the people in the room, but as Ken Kalenkskoff said, "there are no silver bullets."

Kalenkskoff sells siding from the Kootenary Innovative Wood remanufacturing plant in South Sicamous to eastern Canada - but none to the west. "Why?" he asked. "It’s weird. We don’t appreciate wood in this part of the world. People prefer vinyl, that they don’t have to paint."

About the "save the trees mentality" in the area, Kalenkskoff said, "We’re farmers of the land. We cut trees down, we plant them, they grow back. We always plant them... Everyone in this room is an environmentalist. Those trees are so important to us. If anybody is an environmentalist, it’s us."

Aimee Watson of the Village of Kaslo’s Sustainable Economic Development Select Committee said she thought Loggers are the best environmentalists’ was an excellent slogan for the forest.

"Why aren’t people getting into logging?" Many reasons were offered when this question was asked. The industry is unstable. Loggers have a bad reputation locally. There is a lack of people who want to work it. It is not well known in the community that there is an opportunity to work in forestry. The fact that Meadow Creek Cedar was so poorly managed for so long with atrocious working conditions, didn’t help. When the Meadow Creek Cedar mill shut down, people left the community. People have better opportunities elsewhere.

Kalenkskoff pointed out that there is no local training available for forestry jobs. "There’s no school to send someone to be a Sawyer," he said. "It’s all tribal knowledge." And unfortunately, the "tribal knowledge" tradition of passing the skills along from worker to worker in the mills and in the bush is disappearing, Kalenkskoff said.

He also spoke about the lack of training for value-added work. "We"
Nakusp council, March 24: Library report, proposal for lease of old firehall

by Art Joyce

Nakusp's old firehall may yet get a new lease on life. Rosemary Hughes appeared before council March 24 on behalf of the newly formed Old Firehall Collective Society, which would like to lease the building for use as a year-round crafts market. The society's vision is to have 'resident' spinners on the premises offering products, classes, a commercial kitchen for community use, and artist-in-residence programs. The society has applied for a job creation partnership to provide funding for restoration of the building envelope and Home Hardware has agreed to offer a discount on materials. They are seeking a Memorandum of Understanding with the Village for a lease. Staff was directed to work with Hughes on drafting an agreement to present to council.

The Nakusp Public Library is in the black and thriving. Board members Heather Davidson and Barb MacPherson and librarian Susan Rogers appeared to present their annual report. Despite a challenging year in 2013, the library was able to show a modest gain of $800. Davidson said the library board's goal for 2014 is to increase patron services while keeping expenses to a minimum, so no increase is being sought from Village tax revenues. Susan Rogers has been officially hired as the new librarian. Staff hours have been reshuffled from four part-time to three full-time positions. The board would like to seek more capital funding for improvements such as an elevator for disabled access and shelving. Library use by children continues to decline but staff is pursuing innovative ways to attract them, for example by promoting use of its e-readers. Popular programs include the Recess Bat Project, For the Love of Poetry evenings, book swaps, the Writer's Coffeehouse, and the new Britannia Club, with a focus on all things British. Mayor Hamling complimented the board for the warm and welcoming atmosphere that exists in the library.

CAO Linda Tyrus briefed council on the building inspection services provided by the RDCK. Prior to 2010, this service was provided through a contract negotiated between the Village and RDCK. Liability concerns prompted the RDCK to ask the Village (and the other small municipalities of Kaslo, Slocan, Silverton, New Denver and Salmo) to join the Regional District inspection service, which has been in place for years in the electoral areas. The municipalities were asked to rescind their individual building inspection bylaws and adopt RDCK Building Bylaw 2200. This brought up concerns, and staff from the RDCK and municipalities have been in discussions on this issue for a year and a half. Meanwhile, the liability concerns have been cleared up, but the RDCK is not interested in going back to contracts with the small municipalities.

The discussions have highlighted the fact that better communication between the RDCK and municipalities would go a long way to alleviating the municipalities' concerns, so the RDCK is preparing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU will outline expectations for communication and the process for amendments to be made to the bylaw—which would be at the discretion of the RDCK, not municipal councils. Tyrus said that although there are some concerns with the 'one size fits all' approach to building inspection, she recommends that Nakusp go along with it and monitor it over the next year. She also advised passages of a 'do not enforce' clause to Nakusp's bylaw. This would keep the original bylaw intact for retroactive building issues, and provide clarity that building inspection in Nakusp is governed by RDCK Building Bylaw 2200.

Mayor Hamling asked, "If we're trying to do green initiatives and it's not part of the code, is there a way we could implement it and still be in code?" Tyrus said it's still possible to create a stand-alone bylaw for such initiatives. "The real issue was determining whether the municipalities made a bad deal by entering this one-size-fits-all bylaw, and that's where the memorandum of understanding with the regional district comes in," said Tyrus.

"The CAO reported that she will be contacting Multi Material BC (MMBC) about the collection point for recyclables, which is currently being used. She wants to ensure MMBC compensates the Village for the material the extra distance. "It's exactly what we feared," said Tyrus. "The program is not geared to small municipalities."

"The contract to assist the CAO with Hot Springs has ended. President Debra Rundfeldt and vice-president Betty Fehren are curating the event, as well as writing guidelines for future curators. ALFA Guild is still working with Selkirk College, instead of a gallery there will be an individual in residence in June, July and August.

ALFA is a group of Nakusp-area artists and art lovers who came together in 1988 to form a non-profit society, to promote visual artists in the Arrow Lakes and surrounding areas. For 12 years a group of dedicated volunteers ran the summer gallery; in 2012 the volunteers needed a break, and no one else was willing to take on the job.

In the fall of 2013 Debra Rundfeldt approached the old board members about the ALFA Art Walk. Christine Big Canoe had organized this event for years and was ready to step down.

ALFA Art Walk will hold a kick-off party on June 27 at 7pm at Selkirk College in Nakusp. Please join us, meet this year’s artists, and learn what venues will be featured. Get your brochure so you'll know what's going downhill.
Area H North TV Society to continue to be funded with tax dollars

by Jan McMurray

In a show of hands, the grand majority of people who attended the Area H North TV Society AGM voted in favour of the society maintaining television, radio and online, and continuing to receive tax dollars to fund it.

Out of 26 people present, 18 voted in favour and three voted against. New Denver Mayor Ann Bunks and Area H Director Walter Popoff were both in attendance, and informed members that they believed that television service would dramatically decrease in 2014, from about 18 cents per $1,000 of assessed value to 9.4 cents per $1,000. Although the TV Society will receive only $20,000 this year compared to $35,000 in previous years, the society will be able to provide the same level of service.

TV Society President Peter Roulston explained that the tax amount had been set years ago, when the service changed over from a user pay system to a tax-based system. But as it turns out, the society doesn’t need all those tax dollars to operate—so it has ended up with a surplus of $50,000, which is currently sitting in a term deposit at the credit union.

Roulston said the board has been able to provide the service for much less than originally estimated because board members do a lot of volunteer labour and are prudent with the funds. Roulston explained that when CBC discontinued its over-the-air free TV service two years ago, Shaw began offering free satellite TV with a basic package of channels, including CBC. At this point, one of the TV Society directors, Trevor Harrop, felt the TV Society should return to a user pay system. Harrop circulated a petition to gauge public opinion on the issue, and received many letters on the issue appeared in the newspaper. This was when local politicians requested a meeting with the society board.

At that meeting, the board agreed not only to the lower tax rate, but also to further gauge public opinion on the issue. And the petition was revised so that taxes should be going to “bring foreign TV into my living room.” (Some of the TV Society’s channels are American channels, and the petition said he is not opposed to radio, and said that the $60,000 the society has in the bank would last a long time with a radio only service.

Richard Harwood, board member, reported that the society pays $85 per month per TV channel, and $35 per channel per radio station.

Mayor Bunks agreed that the service was inexpensive at approximately $1.50 per month per household, “but we’re looking at big picture stuff.” She said it was “fairly shocking” to see that this was New Denver’s second highest tax requisition for the RDCK, next to the waste service. With the tax decrease, it is now fourth in the list of 16 RDCK services. “We pay less into emergency communications, general administration, and the payment of council,” she said. “Some people might prefer to see that $15 go into parks or transit.” She asked if the society would do a survey.

Director Popoff said that if the board were to conduct a survey, they would advise him so they could mail it. Popoff surveyed Area H North residents by mail about the OPP, and it cost $4,500.00. With the postage increase, it would cost more.

Many people felt that the survey wasn’t necessary, as people had every opportunity to attend the AGM, which was well advertised. One woman pointed out that many snowbirds were away and could not attend the AGM. Whether or not to conduct a survey is a decision that must be made by the board of directors.

New Denver council, March 25: Nikkei Centre to be funded on the Columbia Basin Culture Centre

by Katrina Campbell

• Council agreed to manage Monuko Ito’s request to register the Nikkei Intergenerational Memorial Centre as a heritage venue for the Columbia Basin Culture Tour August 9-10, August 9 is also the date of the NIMC’s 20th anniversary celebrations.

• Council also agreed to submit an application to the City of New Denver for a grant of Japanese Communities Development Program for $5,000 to offset some of the costs associated with the Nikkei Writers’ Weekend in April.

• A request from the Slocan Lake Garden Society (SLUGS) for in-kind assistance with the Kohan Garden was approved. The Public Works crew will assist SLUGS in maintaining the property boundaries near the Ida residence, and provide an operator and machine time to relocate the garden’s sign, to level the service area, and remove the dying weeping birch near the main entrance.

• Councillor Heather Fox reported on the new West Kootenay Tourism Writers’ weekend: registration deadline looms

Submitted

The days of wilderness exists may or may not be numbered. But the days of the multi-award winning Writers’ Weekend for the third annual Convergence Writer’s Weekend in New Denver May 2-4 definitely are. The theme this year’s gathering, which features talks as well as workshops focused on registrants’ original literary efforts, is Writing for the Wild.

“My experience is that the Convergence Writers’ Weekend is a fun and empowering event,” said Keith Wiley, a former participant and a member of a panel discussion on this year’s theme May 3 at 7:30 p.m. The panel portion is open to the public, and like all weekend events takes place at New Denver’s Heart’s Rest Retreat Centre.

Besides Wiley, a public health care activist and a leader in the fight against the Northern Gateway pipeline, panelists include publisher, author and Jumbo Wild campaign leader CSL Kivi, author and Columbia River watershed expert Eileen Dehantuyt Peardon. Convening the writing workshops that respond to registrants’ writing workshops will be local autoethnographers Aquinas Glenn Miller, Vera Rellof and Tom Wrayman.

Alliance branding project. The iconic reference is the West Kootenay Route’s signage, which looks like the old Route 66 signs. The focus is on people who “want to get away.” She called the presentation “very interesting…well done.”

Councillor Fox participated in a composting presentation, an Organics Division webinar by Cariboo Central Kootenays. She said it was “good for information but I see no action for us at this time.”

Mayor Ann Bunks reported on her meeting with MLA Katrina Conroy to bring Conroy up to date on local issues. They discussed the problem with the Debris flow in Carpenter Creek last year, and the work that had been done on the creek and bridge. They also talked about the problems of frequent power outages; Bunks said the recently installed surge arrestors seem to have reduced the frequency of outages.

• Councillor Fox will place a sign at the boat launch warning of a sudden drop at the end of the concretes ramp.

Councilman Henning von Krogh said wave action has removed gravel and rocks and created a drop of at least a foot, causing a hazard to boats that go too far. Extending the ramp with more concrete slabs would be difficult and von Krogh pointed out there is “a bad angle” at the end, leading directly into the drop-off.

• Bunks reported the Regional District of Central Kootenay has finished its budget; the Village’s requisition is down $4,500. The RDCK will sponsor the BC Rural Network Summit, which will be held in Kaslo in mid-June, for $8,000.

Sliverton has discontinued its electric pay recycling program.

• Council rescinded a resolution approving an application for funding to realign the Carpenter Creek channel and reinforce the north side. Since the application was made in September, the Ministry of Highways has undertaken work to mitigate the risk of damage to the bridge. And this will increase the risk of damage to Village infrastructure and improvements. The Village will proceed with a smaller project, which has been estimated at $8,000.

• After much discussion, Gayle Swanson’s request for an increase to the campground applicants’ proposed reservation fees for the site group was not granted.

• Regarding the Village of Slocan’s request for approval to withdraw from the RDCK regional parks service, council decided to table it until the April 8th council meeting. The council does not want to have more information, such as the process involved and the time frame.

• Councillor Fox reported the Healthy Community Society is setting up a bursary in memory of Lane Haywood.

• The Village’s draft 2013 multiannual financial statements, and was reviewed and approved.

• A letter from William Anderson, explaining about time limits on building permit renewals, will be dealt with during discussions with the RDCK regarding the Building Inspection Service.

• Council approved Public Works staff Ryan Butt to attend a ‘Smart Driver in the City’ workshop and Fire Chief Leonid Caley to attend a FireSmart Representative workshop.

Writers’ Weekend author and activist Keith Wiley.

RDCK Resource Recovery Management Facilities
EASTERN HOLIDAY SEASON 2014

ALL Resource Recovery facilities will be CLOSED on:

April 18, 2014 Good Friday and April 20, 2014 Easter Sunday

For more information, contact the Recycling Council of BC Hotline at 1-800-667-4321 or RDCK at 1-800-266-7325

Convergence Writers Weekend 2014
Writing for the Wild
May 2, 3, 4, 2014 Heart’s Rest Retreat Centre New Denver BC Registration due April 15.
Website http://www.slocanliterature.com/convergence-writers-retreat
What is Convergence?

Since 2012, the Convergence Writers’ Weekend each spring has brought together people interested in improving their ability to write, with a focus on how best to write about social justice and the environment, while developing the skills needed to feel not overwhelmed by the difficulties we face as writers and concerned citizens.

This year the Writers’ Weekend theme is Writing for the Wild. Besides workshops Saturday and Sunday that consider your own writing, there will be Friday evening panel and discussion and a Saturday evening reading and discussion of community work. The weekend is a time to come together.

Convergence Writers’ Weekends are located at Heart’s Rest Retreat Centre, located in a breathtaking setting in New Denver, B.C. To allow maximum attention to your writing and ideas, the Weekend is limited to 25 participants.
Kootenay Farmers speak out against changes to Agricultural Land Reserve

by Jan McMurray
Kootenay Farmers gathered at the steps of the legislature in Victoria Monday morning to oppose proposed changes to the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

“The bottom line is that there has been no consultation on Bill 24, it’s hurting farmers and the future of our province, and needs to be stopped today,” they said in their statement.

The proposed changes would establish two zones. Zone 1 would include the Island, South Coast and Okanagan. Zone 2 would include the Interior, Kootenay and North regions. In Zone 1, where land is in greater demand and there are development and population pressures, ALC decisions would continue to be made on the basis of the original principle of preserving agricultural land.

In Zone 2, where growing seasons are shorter and there are lower value crops, the ALC would be given broader flexibility to consider non-agricultural horse-based businesses. Acceptable uses would be determined through regulation in consultation with the ALC, the agricultural sector and UBCM.

The proposed changes are a result of the government’s Care Review of the ALC, led by Minister Bill Bennett.

The NDP says these changes “will break apart the Agricultural Land Reserve, removing protections from 50 percent of BC farmland and putting it at risk of industrial development.”

MLA Michelle Mungall took Minister Bennett to task on Bill 24 in the legislature last Thursday. She says that the week before, when Bennett was discussing the government’s legislation, he was quoted saying, “I get a kick out of the hodded-male dirt except, where I live, you’d have to eat hay.”

Mungall reminded him that he had been to Creston “so he should know that there is much more than hay growing within 50 miles of his house.”

On their trip to the legislature Monday morning, the Kootenay Farmers brought a basket of food for Bennett, all grown in his region. “We want to provide him with a good meal so he doesn’t go hungry and can make better decisions,” they said.

They also brought letters from farmers and farm organizations, who “want to be heard before it’s too late.”

COMMUNITY

Burton house provides training for fire departments

by Katrina Campbell
The Burton and Kaslo fire departments recently got the chance to practice their stuff in a smoke-filled building, without any risk of getting hurt.

The crews used an abandoned house and a non-toxic smoke generator to rehearse entering and moving through a building with their breathing apparatus, using their radios, safely breaking out a window and using a ladder to enter and exit.

After the practice, the fire fighters set the pecknest infested house on fire and watched it burn.

Burton Fire Chief Brian Harrop said the owners of the house gave their permission to use and demolish it, and Area K director Paul Peterson obtained the necessary clearances and permissions.

NOTICE OF AGM

The Slocan Valley Co-operative Association

Sunday, April 27th, 2014 - 1:00 PM
Passmore Community Hall

TO BE PRESENTED

• Reports from the Board of Directors
• General Manager and FCL reports
• 2013 financial statements
• Nominations and Director election
• Appointment of Auditors
• Special Resolutions
• Transact further business as needed

YOU CAN WIN!

Attending Slocan Valley Co-op members will have a chance to win one-of-two $50 Gift Cards, or one $100 Gas Card, or other prizes from our sponsors drawn at the end of the meeting.

A light lunch will also be provided with assorted beverages and sandwiches.

SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS

BYLAW AMENDMENTS

1) In light of federally-regulated changes audit requirements, to update Rule 36 to accommodate for the time required for the completion and audit cycle of the year-end financial statements, it is then resolved the Association propose to change holding the general meeting from within four (4) months, to within six (6) months after the end of its financial year.

2) Due to the high risk of not holding each annual meeting due to minimum quorum requirements, it is then resolved the Association propose to change the minimum quorum to hold the general meeting to 10% of the total number of members entitled to vote, or fifteen (15) members, whichever is less.

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS? There will be three Director positions up for re-election this year, and one vacant position available.

If you are interested in helping shape the future of your Association, and would like to know more about how to become a Director, please contact us by sending an e-mail to the President at:

president@slocanvalleycoop.ca

Come down to show your support and hear how the Slocan Valley Co-op is making a difference in the community.

You’re at home here.

Copies of the Annual General Meeting Agenda, Financial Statement, Special Resolutions, and Statement of Nominations are available at the Co-op Administration Office 3024 - Hwy 6 - Slocan Park or online at www.slocanvalleycoop.ca
The West Kootenay Teacher Education Program goes to school

submitted

Starting in September, student teachers from the University of BC will spend three days a week in schools in the West Kootenays, for the 20/21 school year.

Working in partnership with the four regional school districts (8, 10, 20, and 51), West Kootenay Teacher Education Program (WKETP) staff will deliver a unique program immersing student teachers into school life. Host schools will adopt student teachers who will learn to teach alongside experienced educators, support K-12 students, and develop with peers on organized hub days that link them to UBC courses and community experiences.

WKETP coordinators and instructors, UBC teacher educators and school district leaders believe the place is right for a bold step forward.

Andy Leathwood, SD8 Director of Learning, is enthusiastic: “Through this immersion experience, student teachers will get to know the life cycle of a school year, form more ongoing and meaningful learning relationships, and be able to observe and take part in many more types of classes and extra-curricular activities.”

“This is a teaching and learning adventure,” says Linda Far Darling, UBC advisor to WKETP. “We have gifted coordinators in Kristi Crowe and Geoff Burns, a creative team of instructors, and wonderful mentors in all four districts. Working together we can enrich education for teachers and students, our teacher candidates, and the communities we serve.”

Lucerne principal resigns
by Jan McMuray

Drew Neilson has decided to resign as Lucerne School principal, but to stay on in School District 10 as a teacher. He will carry on as principal until the end of July to help transition the new principal into the position.

Neilson was principal of Lucerne for just one school year.

In a message from Superintendent Terry Taylor in the school’s April newsletter, he says that Neilson “feels it is not the best fit for him to be in the principal role at Lucerne” and that he “misses the classroom and has chosen to step back into a teaching role instead.”

Neilson said he and his family plan to stay in the Kootenays, and that he has been guaranteed a teaching position with the school district.

Neilson says in his message to the newsletter: “I have been incredibly fortunate to work with your children here at Lucerne and feel you should know that, while this was in the end a family decision, the key factor in the decision centered on what would be in the best interest of the children of the school.”

Taylor reports that the principal position will be posted as soon as possible, and he hopes interviews will take place in early May. She will meet with interested parents and staff on April 14 to look at the criteria for the position.

Food specials

Romaine Hearts
Organic

Spinach
Fresh Express Pack

Red Grapes
Seedless & Delicious

Pineapple
Ripe & Ready to Eat

Blackberries

Nabob Coffee
Traditional or Full City Dark

Kellogg’s Mini Wheats
Cereal

Chef Boyardee
Bolognese or Ragu

Duncan Hines Cake Mix
Deluxe White or Devil’s Food

Duncan Hines Brownie
Cheesecake Fudge Mix

Clove Leaf Oysters
Smoked - Canarded

Swanson Frozen Dinner
Chicken - Turkey - Steak - BBQ

Fuel Up to Win!

There are still plenty of big, big prizes to be won. Those very rare collector tickets are still out there! You could find yourself behind the wheel of a 2014 Ford Escape or win the Grand Prize of $50,000!

The annual general meeting

The Slocan Valley Co-op will hold its AGM on Sunday, April 27th at 10:00 AM at Passmore Hall. A light lunch is provided. See in-store for details or check our website: www.slocanvalleycoop.com

Slocan Valley Co-op
3024, Hwy 6, Slocan Park
Ph: 250-226-7433

APRIL
Fri Sat Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu
11 12 13 14 15 16 17

Prices effective April 11 - 17, 2014. While supplies last.
STORE HOURS: 6 am - 9 pm DAILY
Hills teen raising funds for hockey tournament in Budapest

by Art Joyce

Imagine the excitement – you’re 14 years old and you get the call to play hockey at a tournament in Budapest. That’s what happened to Reese McCrory of Hills, who was recently invited by the Northern Alberta Hockey Association to join a select group of 16 bantam level girls and compete overseas. There’s only one catch – she has to raise about $8,000 for travel expenses for herself and mom Sandy King by the end of June.

Reese was scouted for the team while playing at the BC Winter Games in Mission in February.

“I’m really happy that she was even seen out of all the regions that were competing in the BC Winter Games, that somebody noticed her,” says King.

This is the first time this competition has included bantam girls in the U16 (under 16) category, so Reese feels lucky to have been invited.

She’s been playing hockey for about eight years as a right-winger. Hockey seems to be in her blood, and the Gretzky principle for excellence applies here – get them on skates as young as possible.

Reese’s skills are in demand locally. For the past two years she’s played for both the Castor Kildows and the Nakusp Falcons. That’s meant a busy life for her mom, with ice time almost every weekend.

When asked what she likes about hockey, Reese says “everything. Basically my whole life has been on the ice.” Sportsmanship and fair play is important to her, and her mom says Reese is known as a clean player in the Gretzky tradition. “She doesn’t get very many penalties,” says King.

“You’d be surprised how brutal the game can be for girls sometimes.”

Reese and her mom are doing a bottle drive to raise money and will accept donations of bagged bottles at the Sun Valley gas station in Nakusp or at their home at 4610 Highway 6, Hills. Bake sales and car washes are planned for fundraising and sponsors are being sought. Sponsors can receive a tax deduction; cheques should be made out to North Alberta Hockey Association with a note management plan for the area, signed off by the Province and the federal Department of Fisheries. This is a five-year plan intended to lessen the vegetation and to alleviate the threat of debris being caught up. In this plan, trees of a diameter greater than three inches at chest height can be cut. Fisheries has mandated that they be backed and left on site. This work must be done at low water so expect to see the crew out in early spring and late fall.

I would like to remind folks that the cline bridge is an off-season area for dogs. Everywhere else Howard replied. “That’ll be the day!” When she told them they should come in 10 minutes early, they just laughed at her.

Then Tanya handed Tamara a meal and told her she’d have to take it out to the customers.

That’s when Tamara decided to go back to Nuna, and everything went back to normal.

Almost everything, that is – Tosalie and Ronco continued wandering around town all morning playing “who’s who” and confusing the heck out of everybody.

It’s amazing how gullible people can be when their morning coffee routine gets messed up!
Corporation formed to operate and develop the Kaslo Airport

by Jan McMurray

A group of local people has formed the Kaslo Community Airport Management Corporation, expected to enter into an agreement with the Village of Kaslo to operate and develop the airport.

Representatives from the corporation were present at the Kaslo Aerodrome Open House on March 29 at the seniors’ hall, as were the CAO and mayor. CAO Neil Smith said he would likely have a draft agreement between the Village and the corporation prepared for council consideration this month. “It’s not that different from our agreement with the golf club to run the golf course or the historical society to run the SS Moyie,” he said.

Windborn live at the Blue Belle

At 8 pm. Admission is by donation.

The Blue Belle has toured as a one-man band for many years under the name of Windborn. See and hear him at the Blue Belle Bistro in Kaslo, April 17

Money management for the rest of us

If you live on a low income and need some help managing your money, the Circle of Habouda volunteers have a series of workshops for you.

Starting Friday, April 25, from 1 to 3:30 pm, the society is offering a free five-part financial literacy workshop for those living on low incomes. They will be held at the W.E. Graham Community Services Society in Nelson. The volunteers say they all found the classes to be empowering and want to help others.

“Every person has patterns of habits and attitudes (habitudes) about money,” says Sybille Solomon. “Those habitudes automatically influence the decisions you make all day, every day. For some, those habitudes lead to saving for security, planning to meet targeted goals or being selfish by giving money away to help others.

“Other habitudes result in spending for status in order to look good in the eyes of others, spending impulsively or spontaneously react in the moment or responding as a spine spirit and not being concerned about making or managing money.”

Sybille Solomon is the creator of Money Habitudes; the society says “we will be employing her wisdom and playing cards in the workshops.” For more information telephone Denise at 250-355-2699.

Colleen Emery at Winlaw library outreach

Springtime brings us flower buds and blooming trees but for some, it also brings the dreaded spring allergy season. Colleen Emery of Emery Herbals for an informative session detailing strategies to strengthen immune health and reduce the impact of seasonal allergy symptoms. Emery will be at Winlaw School Library on Thursday, April 17, during the Nelson Public Library outreach from 3 to 7 pm.

Emery is the owner and Master Herbalist of Emery Herbals in the heart of Winlaw. She is passionate about empowering individuals and families to take charge of their wellness through fostering traditional skills and knowledge.

ARGENTA FILM NITE: A SHOW OF SOLIDARITY

Saturday, April 26, 7:00 pm, Argenta Hall

We proudly present from local multi-award winning film artists.

1. Marion Neodoboa’S EYES IN THE FOREST – The Portraits of Jim Lawrence – a restrained study of landscape and wildlife and a conversation between two artists and their art forms.

2. Jim Lawrence’S LIFE ON CLEAR WATER – A contrast in composition that focuses on the gentle ways of the water using clips of daily life along Kootenay waterways with lyrical scores to soothe the soul.

Following last autumn’s Argenta screening of “Gold Fever,” We now Showcase.


For more info visit www.defensoreselfilm.com or www.facebook.com/Defensora.

Next Intergenerational cooking night is May 1

Join us at WE Graham Community Services in the youth center and learn the art of making Sushi Following with a delicious Chocolate Mousse!

Call Holly 250-355-2494 or Alson 250-359-6897 for more information

BC HYDRO COLUMBIA AND KOOTENAY OPERATIONS CONFERENCE CALLS

BC Hydro will be hosting two conference calls on Wednesday April 23, 2014 to provide information regarding forecast 2014 reservoir and river operating conditions for the Columbia and Kootenay systems.

Kootenay System: The conference call regarding the Kootenay system incudes Libby Dam/ Kootenai Reservoir, Duncan Dam and Reservoir, Kootenay Lake) will be held jointly by BC Hydro and the US Army Corps of Engineers, and will take place from 8:30 am to 9:00 am PST (8:30 am to 10:00 am MST).

Columbia System: The conference call regarding the main streams Columbia system incudes Kinbasket Reservoir and Mica Dam, Revelstoke Reservoir and Revelstoke Dam, and Arrow Lakes Reservoir and Hugh L. Keeneleyside Dam will be hosted by BC Hydro and will take place from 9:30 am to 10:00 am PST (10:30 am to 11 am MST).

Government, First Nations, Businesses, non-governmental organizations, and stakeholders with an interest in BC Hydro’s operations are invited to attend.

HOW TO REGISTER:
Please email dayle.hopp@bc-hydro.com to register by noon on Wednesday April 16, 2014 and receive conference details, presentation materials, and dial-in information by email in advance of the meeting.

BChydro FOR GENERATIONS

for more information

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Court dismisses Ktnuana Nation’s petition re Jumbo Development

submitted

The BC Supreme Court has dismissed the Ktnuana Nation’s petition challenging the Master Development Agreement of the Jumbo Glacier Resort. “The decision of the BC Supreme Court is unfortunate,” said Robyn Duncan of Wikwitsel: “It was a missed opportunity to recognize the spiritual and cultural rights of the Ktnuana Nation.”

The Ktnuana Nation has opposed the resort development within its sacred territory. Q̓ utníl, since the initial proposal was brought forward. "In one week, we’ve learned of the plan to give one million taxpayers’ dollars over five years to support the appointed council and development of the Jumbo Glacier Mountain Resort Municipality, and now the court has decided that the pipe dream of promised investment, jobs and development is more important for British Columbia than recognizing the cultural beliefs of the Ktnuana Nation and the biodiversity values of the Jumbo Valley,” said Duncan.

“Their support is strong for the Ktnuana as they move forward. We’ve seen bad decision after bad decision on the Jumbo Glacier Resort, and if we’ve learned anything from them, this isn’t the end. The Environmental Certificate will expire on October 12, 2014 unless 195 legally-binding conditions are met and substantive construction is taken place. “The proponent’s plans appear to have gone from a four-season, four-month project to a six-month project to a multi-year project. We believe they cannot afford $1 million to help victims of the Johnson’s Landing mudslide with a buyout program similar to the one offered to North Vancouver residents in 2005. They also said that they have no money to run the CT scanner at Kootenay Lake Hospital 24/7 or literacy programs in the region or for Trail College and Selkirk College.”

Mungall’s concerns about the Liberal’s priorities were first raised by fellow Kootenay MLA Norm Macdonald. Neither had their concerns addressed by Minister Colin- Lee Odds who appeared to be laughing about Mungall and Macdonald’s questions as he responded. “This government has time and resources to spend on a resort in the Valley, but not on the health and education priorities of Kootenay communities.”

The government found $1 million for this fake municipality without a single resident, said Mungall referring to Jumbo. She then listed Kootenay priorities she has raised in the legislature that the Liberals have ignored.

“Either they have the resources and time to build a casino in Nelson or to build the Kootenay ELC. They have to make a decision. “The government said that they [Kootenay] had a good chance to get a casino, but it would cost a lot of money to build a casino, so they said no.”

Anyone interested in softball?

submitted

Rick Galbrath wants to play softball, and he wants to hear from anyone else who loves the game, or perhaps wants to try it.

“There’s a void here, so I’m just trying to garner interest in any form of game. I’m trying to facilitate this fantastic social game in the valley,” he says. “Should we form a mixed adult slow pitch team to play against Nelson or Castlegar teams? Or just scrimmage locally? Maybe a contingent of 55 players to enter the BC Seniors games. “Or, why not put together a slow pitch OR fast pitch team to play in tournaments? “Or even a cookout for players, and so far has one ‘maybe.’ To play or to sponsor, contact Rick at 780-380-9821 or rickdrake46@gmail.com.

RDCK buys fire trucks, saves money

submitted

The RDCK will add four new fire trucks to its fleet “at a significant cost saving for taxpayers,” it says. The fire halls at Crescent Valley, Slocan, Otiscohia and the North Shore will welcome their new rapid response/crew transport vehicles in mid-April. The RDCK has a policy of maintaining a fleet of safe and effective apparatus,” said Regional Fire Chief Terry Swan. “Standardized design and group purchasing enabled us to procure custom built trucks for a total saving of $200,000.”

Swan points out that Village of Slocan’s current vehicle is not road-worthy, while the apparatus in Crescent Valley and the North Shore are “vintage 1970s.” The Otiscohia vehicle will be an addition to its fleet.

Temporary Full Time
Hot Springs Pool Operator

GENERAL OUTLINE – Hours of work will vary depending on scheduling and will require evening and weekend shifts. Duties are specific to the operation and maintenance of the Hot Springs Facility.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS – include grade 12, RPABC Pool Operator Level 1, first aid, chlorine handling, WHMIS, and food safe certificate. A detailed description and list of minimum requirements is available from the Village.

RATE OF PAY – As per the Collective Agreement, rate of pay will be $19.33 hour for the probationary period.

This Temporary Position is available April 2014 to October 13, 2014.

Applicants are requested to submit resumes with copies of all certifications to the Village of Nakusp Box 280, V0G 1R0 or drop off in person at 91-1st Street NW Nakusp BC. The Village thanks all who apply however only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted. This posting will remain open until the position is filled.
Village of Slocan presents five-year financial plan

by Barbara Curc Mullady

Slocan council shared its five-year financial plan at a public meeting in council chambers on March 31. These resolutions passed:

Mayor Madeleine Perriere reported that because of the Springer Creek Forest Products sawmill demolition, the Village expects to receive about $100,000 less from sawmill taxes in 2014 than it did last year. So, 2014 will be the first year that the majority of the Village’s tax burden falls on residential homeowners.

However, property taxes will increase only slightly, as the Village plans to use reserve funds to make up the shortfall.

Mayor Perriere said the Village would hold the line on expenses and, in the short term, dip into its savings. The Village plans to withdraw $57,987 from reserve funds this year and $45,781 next year. Then from 2016 to 2018, the microhydro project is on stream, the financial plan shows a withdrawal of only $1,000 per year from reserves.

Slocan expects to have a budget of $191,087 this year. Property taxes account for 41.5 percent of total revenues, the sale of services for 2.9 percent, income from such things as licences and rentals for 5.9 percent, unconditional grants from the province for 23.5 percent, a conditional grant (to cover the cost of the wildlife prescription) for 23.8 percent, transfers from the Village’s savings for 6.3 percent, and taxation collected for others (RDCK, hospital, schools, etc.) for 23.1 percent.

The last item, although part of the budget, is money that is passed directly to other governments. Connie Myers asked whether the Village was going to tender with the grants money it is money that is passed directly to other governments. Connie Myers asked whether the Village was going to tender with the grants money it is

COMMUNITY

Biologist Dick Cunnings speaks on corvids to full house in Kaslo

by Art Joyce

You know birding is a passionate pursuit in the West Kootenay when 100 people turn up for a talk by a respected bird expert. It happened last Thursday night in Kaslo.

Dick Cunnings filled the house at Kaslo’s Langham Theatre April 1 for his presentation Corvids of the Kaslo Area. Cunnings is a biologist, conservationist, educator, birder, and author, was born into an Okanagan family with a passion for nature. His latest book, co-authored with son Russell Cunnings, a field biologist, is Birdfinding in British Columbia, from Greystone Books.

The genus Corvus includes ravens, crows, jackdaws, rooks, jays, magpies, mittens, and choughs; New Zealand is the only country in the world without corvids. They’re sometimes classified with songbirds even though they don’t really sing. Close relatives include drongos, whipbirds, shrikes, vireos, Old World nightjars, birds of paradise, finches and finches. Many crows are fast, with wings that are sometimes 1.5m across. Crows are among the most intelligent of birds and can copy songs of different species. Corvid biologists find no clear links between songs in songbird populations and crow

or raven predation. These birds are omnivores, so if other, easier sources of food exist besides bird’s eggs, they’ll go for that instead.

Anyone who’s watched the antics of crows ‘shredding’ in winter or using tools to get food will appreciate the intelligence of this bird. They rate at the top of the scale in bird intelligence along with parrots. In fact, in terms of their problem-solving ability, corvid biologist John Marzluff says crows and ravens are more like ‘flying monkeys’ than birds. They also engage in play.

“As a biologist I was taught never to use the word ‘play’ because it’s considered anthropomorphizing,” said Cunnings, “but Crows do engage in play, like shredding.”

Many use helpers in the nest, evidence of complex social structure. There can be up to two million crows in a single roost – more evidence of a busy social life. Some west coast rookeries attract 20,000 crows every evening before they disperse for the night. Crows are known to mob predators such as owls. Mobbing is a learned behaviour, so corvid young are taught to recognize predators. Researchers have noted the crows call and mobbing.

A close relative of the crow is the Steller’s jay, the most common jay of BC’s coniferous forests. Steller’s jays will often imitate hawks in a bid to scare other birds away from food sources. “They come up with all sorts of weird calls; if I hear something I don’t recognize I usually assume it’s a Steller’s jay, they’re great mimics.”

They’re found on the western coast of North America from Alaska to BC and south to Guatemala. Most of them occur in rainforests on the BC coast and southeastern Interior, not many on Chilcotin Plateau where it’s very dry.

Climate change is having unpredictable effects on bird ranges, Cunnings said. Even blue jays, whose traditional range was east of the Rockies, are starting to show up in the Kootenays. They started nesting in Invermere in the 1980s and have moved south to Cranbrook and Creston. One birder in the audience said he’d spotted a blue jay locally. They occasionally interacted with Steller’s jays, resulting in a hybrid with unusual markings.

They’re adapted to broadleaf forests but being very close to urban areas has taken its toll. They tend to be found in urban areas. Crows and ravens will often come into towns and cities to scavenge food from garbage cans.

John Marzluff’s books explain how corvids and Steller’s jays have been implicated in our mutual history. Common ravens, “the crow of crows,” are found throughout BC, and experienced a quantum shift of their populations starting in the 1980s with the introduction of landfill. Crows experienced a similar population boom in the 1970s linked to increasing human development and the ease of obtaining food from urban streets and alleys. Both populations have since levelled off and now are part of a West Nile virus outbreak a few years ago that seriously reduced particularly crow numbers.

Cunnings also spoke of other corvid species such as the magpie or ‘whisky jack,’ also known as a ‘cwm robber.’

“These friendly birds tend to prefer drier climates than those typically found in the Kootenays. Another one more likely to be found in dry climates such as the Chilcotin in north-central BC is Clark’s nutcracker, one of two such species globally, including the Eurasian nutcracker. Clark’s nutcrackers have been affected by the pine beetle epidemics, since pine seeds are their primary food source. A third corvid species discussed by Cunnings and not found here is magpies, which are abundant in the Okanagan.

Land Act: Notice of Intention to Apply for a Disposition of Crown Land

FrontCounter BC Cranbrook has accepted an application made by Gravity Sports Ltd. of New Denver, BC on behalf of the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources (MFLNRO), Kootenay Region, for a Licence of Occupation for cat-skiing purpose situated on Provincial Crown Land in the vicinity of Silverton and containing 483 hectares more or less.

The MFLNRO File Number that has been established for this application is 4405259. Written comments concerning this application should be addressed to FrontCounter BC, 1902 – 2nd Avenue East, Cranbrook, BC V1P 3C7. Formal notification: AuthorizingAgency.Cranbrook@gov.bc.ca Comments will be received by FrontCounter BC until May 5, 2014. FrontCounter BC may not be able to consider comments received after this date. Please refer to our website http://www.arf.gov.bc.ca/ ApplicationPosting/index.jsp -> search -> Search by File Number -> 4405259 for more information.

Be advised that any response to this advertisement will be considered part of the public record. For information, contact the FOI Advisor at the Ministry of Forests, Land and Natural Resource Operations regional office in Cranbrook.
MOF invites public input on expansion of area-based tenures

COMMUNITY

A comprehensive public engagement process on converting some volume-based forest licences to new or expanded area-based tree farm licences will take place over the next two months. Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Minister Steve Thomson announced today.

People are invited to participate in a public discussion on the expansion of area-based forest management until noon May 30, 2014, at: http://engage.gov.bc.ca/forestanums/

This site has reference material, questions and answers, a discussion paper and an interactive blog where a conversation will occur online.

To keep the engagement open and neutral, an independent facilitator has been hired. The public engagement process will be led by veteran professional forester Jim Snedding, who will compile the feedback and provide a report to government by the end of June. Snedding, a former provincial chief forester, will also travel to at least 10 different BC communities to meet with stakeholders. First Nations, local governments and members of the public who express interest in contributing to the discussion.

The meetings will focus on the potential benefits that proponents seeking conversions may be able to provide, the criteria for evaluating applications, and the process for implementing conversions.

Conversations are not being considered on a province-wide basis. They use one tool in the toolbox that may help with small- and medium-scale timber supply issues in parts of the interior that have been impacted by the mountain pine beetle.

The results of the engagement process will inform how government proceeds and whether legislative changes are needed to support the need for the feedback. To read the discussion paper, learn more about the consultation process, or to offer your perspective, go to: http://engage.gov.bc.ca/forestanums/

Quick Facts:

- A forest tenure, or licence, is an agreement between the provincial government and a person, company or other legal entity that provides logging rights on Crown forest land.
- Multiple volume-based forest licences may operate in the same timber supply area whereas an area-based forest licence has virtually exclusive logging rights within defined area.
- All forest tenure holders are required to make payments to the province for the Crown timber harvested under that licence. These stumpage payments are calculated on volume of timber harvested by the tenure holder.
- Forest tenure holders also have specific obligations to care for the land base for which harvesting rights are provided.

Proposed Local Food Act something to chew on

Food security groups across the province are cheering a bill tabled in the BC legislature April 2, which, if passed, would promote local food systems by removing barriers to the availability of farmland for the next generation of new young farmers.

The BC Foods Systems Network, a local food advocates and farmers across BC in welcoming the bill, similar to one passed in Ontario in the fall of 2013. That bill aims to increase awareness of local food, support local food procurement in public sector institutions (schools, municipalities, hospitals, etc.). The proposed BC Bill aims to achieve objectives of growing the local food economy.

The Local Food Act was tabled by Lana Popham, MLA for Saanich. Unlike Bill 24, the bill to dismantle the Agricultural Land Reserve Act, which currently sits in the house awaiting second reading, the Local Food Act recognizes the need to boost local agriculture and ranching to ensure food security in the face of the increasing vulnerability of food systems in regions from which BC imports 50% of its fruits and vegetables, and climate change. As well, the Act proposes to invest in agriculture, a vital and growing industry contributing $1.87 billion to BC's economy and provide the necessary support to local communities.

“BC’s Food System is fragile. We need a comprehensive food policy and one that ensures food is grown locally. The Local Food Act is a step in the right direction,” says BCSFN rep Linda Gagnon, BCSFN Food Policy Chair.

“We have been working for many years towards something like this for BC. This is an exciting development. We support any action by provincial decision makers which strategically contributes to healthy food systems and ensures BC can feed its growing population on renewing years, especially in the face of an unpredictable changing climate.”

BCSFN has also been vocal in raising concerns about changes to the Agriculture Land Reserve proposed in Bill 24. The BCFSN stands beside farmers and ranchers in bewilderment that such an act could be brought forward in the very same debate. In an earlier press release, BCFSN Co-Chair Brent Mannsfeld said, “This is potentially disastrous: it could leave just over half of the (0.9%) of BC’s land base with the present standard of farmland protection. That is not enough.”

The BC Food Systems Network’s complete analysis of the changes proposed by Bill 24 can be found on the BCSFN website at BCSFN.org.

The BC Food Systems Network (www.healthyfoodbc.org), co-chaired by Altra Bryce of Nelson, includes 300 members in over 20 organizations representing farmers, food producers, health and community food organizations around British Columbia who are concerned with farming and food security in the province.

Regional Hospital Board, March 26: Hospital taxes to decrease in 2014

by Jan McMurray

Hospital taxes in the district will decrease this year, as capital funding needs have been less than last year.

The average tax rate for households will be 29 cents per $1,000, down from 35 cents per $1,000 last year. Taxpayers will still receive credits to help with their capital reserve fund once again this year, bringing their share of the total reserve fund to $7.7 million.

Among the capital projects in the district this year are a chemotherapy and floor ceiling lifts for the Slocan Community Health Centre and an MRI machine for the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital in Trail. The Regional District board has written to Cheryl Whitton of Interior Health to ask that they support the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital in Trail that have been identified with floor and space issues - ambulatory care, the pharmacy and the day surgery department. If representatives will attend the board’s June meeting with the findings.

- The Ministry of Health has released a revised request for an interpretation of the word ‘operate’ in the Hospital District Act where it states that Regional Hospital Districts are to “operate hospitals and hospital facilities.”

The reply from the Assistant Deputy Minister states that the ministry is currently reviewing the Act and is preparing revisions to omit the word ‘operate’ to avoid confusion. The ministry letter states that the role of Regional Districts has historically not been to administer day-to-day operations at health facilities, but rather to provide cost-sharing funds (tax levies) for capital projects at health facilities.

The board has written to the ministry to ask what other amendments are being considered for the Act, and whether or not Regional Hospital Boards will be consulted about the changes.

The Regional Hospital Board is made up of representatives from the Mayors of Trail, Montrose and Nelson, in response to the request for input into a strategic plan for acute care in the Kootenays. In March, the Regional District has historically not been to administer day-to-day operations at health facilities, but rather to provide cost-sharing funds (tax levies) for capital projects at health facilities.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS


NEW DENVER MAY DAYS is approaching! It’s time to start considering “The Citizens of the Year” nominations. Please send nominations to May Day Committee, Citizen of the Year, Box 458, New Denver, B.C. 205-355-2610. 1985 TOYOTA 2WD Flatdeck truck, yard material, etc. 500-255-3773. BUDGET OPPORTUNITIES THINKING OF STARTING, buying or expanding your own business? Community Futures offers business loans, counseling & training, and delivers the Self Employment program in the Arrow & Nakusp Lakes area. For more info leave a message at 250-365-6018 ext. 201 or email Nakusp@futures.bc.ca.

CARSEY’S THANKS YOU to serve Minister for coming into work early at the health centre so that he could be on hand to perform some life-saving procedures when Dr. Buxton brought in his case with a heart attack. Scott did the emergency work, Dr. Brian Buxton immediately arrived to take over and with the help of electrophysiology and defibrillation, the patient’s heart started to beat again. The weather was too bad for helicopter evacuation – for which I am grateful, since I am on record as being personally willing to trade a hundred metres of chooper proximity for social housing and supported living units. What I was not so happy about was the presence of 24-7 erase TV service. The staff and cardiology at KGH were wonderful... nobody asked DJ! or me for money or to see how much insurance coverage I had... in Canada great that way! THANKS to everyone who called, sent cards, helped DJ, and never once told me “you’re right!” I have now been retried, and am only slightly the worse for wear. See you at the Post Office soon.

GARY WRIGHT

CARDED ADS

THE WHOLE SCHOOL sends out a big Thank You to all the folks who supported our Valentine’s Day Entourage including the many local artists who donated their face art for the Auctions AIF Crosby, Pete Corbett, Pamela Nagay Stavrovics, Robb, Sandy Stavrovics, Vanessa Este, Cindy Moser, Babsie, Christina Smith, Tonya Pixie Johnston, Teresa O’Neary, Julie Delaney, Clady More, Geige Stone, Condie Nauga, Rachel Abbey, Nicole Hobbs, Sandhill McKay, Rebecca Tucker, Eliza Starrial, Rhoda Harvey, Steph Keller, Erica Conord. To the entertainers who provided with their talents: BoCoutlin, Carol Street, Sally S and Rob, Catalyst DJ Synhythm, Table Rock Entertainment and Farina Dancers. To Moe Ljones for the fab assistance job here, to RADIO for offering the use of the space, Whole Community Centre and to all our generous supporters. Thank you Thank you Thank you!

COMING EVENTS

ROSE LUKENDA, NAKUSPHOTOGRAPHY, invites you to celebrate her colourful and inspiring spring show with food and music at Gabe’s Fairlyaye Cafe in Nakusp, Friday, April 11 starting at 6 pm. Show runs to May 11. TEXAS HOLD’EM TOURNAMENT April 15, 8:30 pm sharp. Sicamous Legion Hall 552 Harrold St. Sicamous 530 Bay Bn. Admission tickets at Mountain Station. Station in Sicamous or phone 250-355-2672 to reserve. Welcome members & guests. HILLS COMMUNITY DOOKHOBOR SOCIETY Annual Meeting Sunday, April 27, 2014 at 1 pm. Hills Community Hall.

BASIC PROPOSING COURSE: Chamber of Mines of British Columbia 215 Hall St., Nelson, April 28-May 4 M-F 7-10 am to 5 pm, Sat, 9-5, and all day field trip on Sun. 8:30-5:30, $220 includes text book and supplies. For more information or to pre-register, contact the chamber weekdays 9-4 or 250-352-5242, or chamberoffice@nelson.net. Thanks to AMI BC for sponsorship.

HISTORY OF SLOPARK - Join the Sicamous Valley Historical Society at the Provincial Hall on Thursday, April 24 at 7 pm to hear local author Jake Conkin present the history, characters and stories of the community his family has intimately known for almost a century. Call 250 293-2877 for information.

FREE FINANCIAL LITERACY workshops on Money Management for people living on low incomes. Starting Friday April 25, 2014 at 10:30-4:30 every Friday for five weeks Presented by Circle of Habifordic volunteers, using the Momentum teaching guide, hosted at WE Graham Community Service Society. Others have found the classes to be very empowering; we hope they will help you and your families too. For more info, call 250-355-2699.

HARVEST SHARE NEW DENVER is hosting a spring planting workshop Saturday April 12 from 9 am to 11 am led by Nicole Nedickson. The workshop will focus on planting young fruit trees for successive and maintenance. Please call Bree to register 250-364-1120.

ROSEBERRY PARKLANDS DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY will hold its AGM in May and is busy planning the annual last supper at Knox Hall in New Denver. Memberships will be available at the door to the public at the meeting. For information call 250-355-2909.

THE NEW DENVER RESCUE SOCIETY will hold its Annual General Meeting in the conference room at the rear of the fire hall, 115 Sicamous Ave., New Denver at 9 pm on Thursday, April 17, 2014. Public welcome.

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SPONSORED WANTED – to help send local girl Reese McCready to play on a Western Canadian all girls band team in the International Invitational Hockey Tournament in Budapest, Hungary this summer. All sponsors will receive a tax deduction and Reese will receive a lifetime experience. Cheques can be made to the Northern Alberta Hockey Association (NAHA) RE: Reese McCready and mailed to 15190 - 72 St NW Edmonton, Alberta T5Z 2Y3. Thank you for your support.

SLOAN VALLEY RECREATION

Brasil Weave a Baby Chair Braided (Ages 9-13) Just in time for Mother’s Day Sat. Apr 26, 1:30-3:30 pm, Stoney Park Hall, $35.

After School Theatres For Kids! (Ages 7-12) 9 weeks of fun, no fundraising required classes! Tues. May 1-May 29, 3-5 pm, Wawsl School, $55.

For Theatre Classes: Making: Utilitarian mosaic making involvingowes with stories and history. Sat. April 26, 10 am to 1 pm, 2-4, 1-4 pm, Stoney Park Hall, $75.

Therapeutical Touch Level 1: Assist people in their healing through touch. This is a certificate program call for more info.

CORE – Hunter Training Certificate: Mandate for those wishing to obtain their BC Hunting License. Sat. May 3, 8 am to 5 pm, 115 State St. Wawsl.

General Grant Writing: Learn the tricks in preparing the best application. Sat. May 3, 9:30 am, Stoney Park Hall, $45.

Drunken From The Heart: Learn the fundamentals, techniques and rhythms of Afghan旬/Qashqai旬drumming. Mon’s at WFC Graham School, May 5-16 or Tues at Stoney Park Hall, May 6, June 10 - 6:7 pm, $45/session or $10 drop in.

Travel Talk – Crop Circles and Stonehenge: Pictures and stories of a travel expert’s experiences with these intriguing phenomena. Thurs. May 8, 7-9 pm, Stoney Park Hall.

250-358-9288

Classifieds listed at $10.00 Call 250-358-7218 for details

Kaslo Concert Society presents David Kendall Stewart in recital

The Kaslo Concert Society is pleased to present David Kendall Stewart in the 2014 Jack G. McDowell Memorial Concert at St. Andrew’s United Church on Friday, April 25 at 7:30 pm.

Throughout his professional career David Stewart has freelanced as an accompanist,atorio soloist, recitalist, and professional choister. He made his professional vocal solo debut in 1964 with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra under Dr. Charles March in a performance of Berlioz’s Damnation of Faust. Early in his career he performed regularly on CBC radio and television under in collaboration with such celebrated conductors as Sir Ernest MacMillan, John Avison, and Mario Bernardi.

Broad and broad jobs included singing in the Vancouver Opera Chorus and Theatre Under the Stars, and conducting musical theatre and community choirs. In 1970 he was co-founder of the Vancouver Chamber Choir, and in 2001 he received the Willard Foundation Award for outstanding long-term service to the BC Choral Federation.

His program for the Kaslo Concert Society is a retrospective of his 50 years as a performer and includes opera, oratorio, musical theatre, British musical hall, and a few surprises.

Tickets at $22 are available at Figments in Kaslo or at the door. School-age children are admitted free when accompanied by an adult patron. Further information at 250-366-4623, 250-366-6623 or sjd@kaslo.org.

The Kaslo Concert Society acknowledges the generosity of its sponsors: The Village of Kaslo, BC Tooring Council, Kaslo & District Community Forest Society, Community Forest of North Kootenay Lake, Columbia Basin Trust, and Columbia Power Corporation.

Next Valley Voice Deadline: April 18, 2014

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Village of New Denver
PUBLIC NOTICE
CHANGE OF COUNCIL MEETING DATE
The public is requested to take notice that the Village of New Denver’s Regular Meeting Council originally scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 22, 2014, will take place at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 29, 2014, in Council Chambers.

classified/news

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Next Valley Voice Deadline: April 18, 2014
Another BladeRunners program being planned for Nakusp

by Jan McMurray

Selkirk College in Nakusp is planning to run another BladeRunners program, hopefully in the fall.

“We just got word that Selkirk College has been approved to run the program for another six years for 30 students per year,” said Uli Mueller, coordinator at the Nakusp campus.

She explained that the approval is for the entire Selkirk College region, not just Nakusp, but that Nakusp is well positioned to offer the program. Not all Selkirk College locations can offer it because other organizations, such as the school district or the Kumax, hold the contract to deliver the program in some areas where there is a Selkirk College.

“I’d like to do another one in Nakusp, using the first one as a model,” said Mueller. The BladeRunners program is designed to get youth 15-29 years old, who are facing barriers to employment, into the workforce. Living in Nakusp and area is considered an employment barrier. The program involves 35 hours of life skills instruction, a minimum of three certificate programs, and 320 hours of paid work experience.

Ten students recently graduated from the first BladeRunners program in Nakusp, which was extremely successful. The Adult Basic Education instructors at the Nakusp campus taught the life skills segment, and the youth completed 10 certificate programs, including first aid, chainsaw safety and operation, traffic control and flagging, fall protection, WIEBS, construction safety training systems, and transportation enforcement.

For the work experience portion, the community came together to set up a firewood business as a social enterprise, and hired the BladeRunners participants.

“The firewood business idea came out of a forestry workshop held in Nakusp in November. Dave Costes, a Nakusp native who supplies firewood to lodges and restaurants in Calgary, was willing to purchase as much firewood as the BladeRunners could provide. Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services (ALCS), NACFOR (Nakusp Community Forest) and the Nakusp and Area Development Board (NADB) put up loans of $10,000 each to start the firewood business. NADB also provided a $3,500 grant. The start-up funds were used to purchase three chainsaws and all the required safety gear, and to pay the young workers. Once the firewood was paid for, the loans from the three organizations were paid back.

“It took a lot of people in the community to make it happen,” said Mueller. “It was just the best thing to see how the community pulled together and stepped up to the plate. Everyone was so generous.”

John Chamoff provided the property. The logs were donated by NACFOR, Reinerman Logging, Convergence Management Group, and the Skaha Bay Islands. Interest looked after scaling and stumpage. Tom Zelezniak provided some scaling services. Two woodcutters were hired to the project. Training costs to get the wood to Chamoff’s property was also donated.

The students bucked up, split and stacked 150 cords of wood in two weeks, from the beginning of March to April 7. “They were just fantastic workers,” said Mueller.

Almost all of the participants have been placed in jobs. Some were hired by Waterbridge to paint the new ferry; one was hired by Box Lake lumber; and a local logging contractor is looking at training some of them to work in the forest industry.

The BladeRunners program is flexible so that it can be tailored to fit in with the community’s needs. Mueller says she would like to see another social enterprise set up for the next Nakusp program – it could be the firewood business again, or it could be something else that the community needs. Mueller says she is gathering ideas now, by talking to the people at the youth centre, and reviewing data from the Business Retention and Expansion study and the Kootenay Workforce Roundtable.

“I’m trying to see what the community needs. What does the workplace require right now? What training do we need in the Nakusp area?” she said.

The program is funded through the Canada/BC Labour Market Agreement and the Aboriginal Career Counselling Employment Services Society.

The Valley Voice, April 9, 2014