Lucerne School to have dual wired and wireless internet system

by Jan McMurray

The SD10 board of education made a compromise between a wired and a wireless internet system at Lucerne School at its November 24 meeting.

The school will be wired throughout with floor-to-ceiling Ethernet cable, providing hard-wired Internet connections to all classrooms. Wireless infrastructure will also be installed, but in the high school section of the school only. Individual high school teachers will have the choice to use the wired or wireless connections, and will be able to turn the wireless routers on or off as will in their own classrooms.

All trustees voted in favour of this except Trustee Rayn Butt-Grant. Concerned about the students’ appropriate use of the Internet, especially on their personal devices, he put forward the idea of having wireless infrastructure in one classroom only. That classroom would function like a Wi-Fi computer lab. "It would be easier to control because it’s only one spot, like the computer lab," he said.

Butt-Grant said it’s been difficult to keep the existing computer lab at Lucerne locked up outside of class time, so he’s very concerned about having several Internet access points at the school.

Although the other trustees said they share Butt-Grant’s concern, they didn’t agree with a Wi-Fi lab because it would defeat the purpose of integrating the Internet seamlessly into lessons.

Trustee Butt-Grant asked if the board was thinking of providing wireless devices for the students. Trustee Quinn De Courcy said he’d like to look at a ‘bring your own device’ program, and to supply devices only to students whose parents cannot afford them.

Butt-Grant pointed out that some students may have programs on their devices that are not appropriate for younger students. "How can we control that? I’ve seen students huddled around a device playing a game at break time, and that concerns me because some parents don’t want their kids doing that, and maybe the games are inappropriate. I think that’s difficult to monitor."

Chair Lora Lee Breidke agreed, pointing out that the IT manager can track school district devices only.

Trustee De Courcy concurred that this is a valid concern. "Even when on task in the classroom, you turn the Wi-Fi on and you don’t know what each student is doing on their personal device," he said. However, he felt that the problem lies less with the personal devices and more with accessibility. "Why are we providing non-educational access to the Internet at any time?" he asked.

The board discussed restricting wireless access to classroom time only, turning it off during recess, lunch, and before and after school.

Trustee Butt-Grant wanted to make a motion that the Wi-Fi be turned on during instructional time only, but the board decided to save this conversation for a future meeting.

Kaslo recycling bins to have bigger openings

by Jan McMurray

There will soon be bigger openings in RDCK recycling bins in Kaslo and other Kootenay Lake communities.

After receiving many complaints about the small size of the bin openings since the October 19 change-over to the new recycling bins in the Kootenay Lake region, the RDCK has decided to work with its contractor, Waste Management, on modifying the bins.

Not all bins will need to be modified, as some have bigger openings than others. RDCK staff plans to modify about half of the new bins in the Kootenay Lake subregion, including some of the bins at the Kaslo and Marblehead depots. Waste Management will find a welding contractor to increase the height of the slot opening, and to join the round opening and slot together, making a key-shaped opening.

"The RDCK will pick up the cost of the modifications, estimated at $5,000."

A statement submitted to the RDCK board at its November 19 meeting looked at two options: increasing the bin slot sizes on the front of the bins, or unlocking the containers to allow access from the top. The board rejected the idea of unlocking the containers due to public safety hazards – the risk of human injury is high because the very heavy bin lids are not designed to be left open. Also, there is increased exposure to rain and snow. When recyclables get too wet, they may have to be token off. Further, with open lids, there is a greater potential for wildlife to access the bins, and a greater probability of contamination – garbage, hazardous waste, etc. – being dumped in them. Contaminated loads end up in the landfill, resulting in higher costs to the RDCK. They also pose a potential safety hazard for recycling contractors and the public.

Many people in Kaslo and area are dissatisfied with the change to the recycling system. A petition with 234 signatures was initiated by Kaslo resident and former Area D Director Andy Shadrick, calling for the RDCK to hold a public meeting and to reinstate the old recycling system. Shortly after the October 19 change, he cut the padlock off a bin in Kaslo and opened the lid to grant easier access. RDCK Chair Karen Hamling reported that the RDCK would be sending him a bill for the repairs. Shadrick held a public meeting on the issue in Kaslo on December 1 – more on that in the next edition of the Valley Voice.
Local climate marches bring out over 900 people

submitted

On November 29, over 900 Nelson, Castlegar and Rossland citizens stood up for climate action through marches, rallies and vigils in the three communities. These community events were organized in solidarity with the global climate marches taking place across the world before the start of the Paris UN climate summit, which hopes to negotiate a global deal to tackle global warming.

In Nelson, 500 community members gathered to walk along Baker Street accompanied by music from a saxo band. Many children and high school students had painted signs and banners to say even as they wanted our leaders to take real climate action to protect their futures.

The high school students from Mount Sentinel spoke about the readiness to take the critical steps to bring about climate action.

Castlegar citizens marched from city hall to Millennium Park for a rally where there were speakers of all ages and backgrounds, musicians, and two choirs. Over 200 people were in attendance and the energy of the crowd kept the community warm in the cool afternoon.

Rossland held a candlelight climate vigil attended by 200 people complete with speakers, music and a petition to leaders to address climate change and transition to renewable energy.

Over the weekend, 600,000 people in more than 2,300 events across 175 countries marched together to call for climate justice and an end to carbon pollution. From the 60,000 people in Melbourne to the 50,000 in London to the 140,000 in India and all the way to the marches in the Kootenays, people power for real climate action and transitioning to 100 percent renewable energy showed its strength. The largest march scheduled for Paris was cancelled by the French government, but 22,000 pairs of shoes, including those of the Pope and UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, were laid out in town plaza, Place du la Republique, to symbolize the 40,000 people scheduled to march.

"Seeing all the thousands of shoes laid out was very touching," says Montana Burgess, Community Organizer with the West Kootenay EcoSociety. "Our 10,000 French friends also stood together today in a human chain in solidarity with front line communities affected by climate change. I’m so proud to be here in Paris and know our communities in the West Kootenay are showing their commitment along with the rest of the world to make the clean energy future we all need possible."
Argenta duo win big at Castlegar Sculpture Walk Gala

by Louis Beckner

Two local artists have won big at this year’s Castlegar Sculpture Walk, which held its sixth annual awards gala event on November 21. Spring Shane and Christopher Petersen, both residents of Argenta, won first place in the People’s Choice category as well as second place in the Artistic Merit category for their piece titled ‘Regeneration.’

With the achievement comes some serious money — the prizes garnered a total of $4,500 as well as a $15,000 purchase price from the City of Castlegar, which will add the piece to its permanent collection.

The sculpture stands nine feet tall and weighs 1,300 pounds, and is represented as a hallowed out, old growth cedar stump complete with springboard nuts and a copper tree growing from its top. The outer bark is made up of 1,300 linear feet of logging cable welded onto a steel armature, while the inside is finished into a box beam and groove and is fitted with a small bench, allowing for two people to sit inside the stump.

Much of the material was recycled, with the cable generously donated by John and Glen Sletten of Kaslo’s Sletten Holdings Ltd. and the cedar boards milled from local trees.

“It’s intended as a celebration of the trees that have helped our communities grow,” says Shane, “as well as the new growth that comes from them.”

Executive Director of the Sculpture Walk, Jay Barrett, says she was happy to see Petersen and Shane rewarded for their efforts. “It was a great moment for me to see Spring and Christopher receiving the People’s Choice Award for 2015. I’ve seen these two talented artists rise through our program with their own individual pieces, and their collaboration — ‘Regeneration’ — is a true melding of two extraordinary artists into one beautiful sculpture.”

Adding that “the City of Castlegar will be proud to have this piece grace their permanent collection.”

Petersen, who primarily works as a timber framer, says the awards and money offer encouragement and incentive to continue producing art in his spare time. “It allows you some freedom to keep doing this kind of stuff.”

Castlegar Sculpture Walk, now going into its seventh year, has brought the city a trademarked title of ‘Sculpture Capital of Canada’ and now sees entries come from across the globe including Calgary, Toronto and China.

Both Petersen and Shane were quick to express gratitude not only to their friends, family and community but also to the other artists and the organizers of Sculpture Walk. “The thought that [the artists] put into their pieces blows me away every year,” says Shane who also does a lot of sculptural work in stone and wood.

“The Sculpture Walk people, man oh man, they are so great,” adds Petersen. “I hope they can keep doing this for years to come!”

With next year’s entry deadline set for May, Petersen and Shane have already started brainstorming their next collaborative piece but aren’t willing to give too much away just yet.

“All I’ll say about our sculpture for next year,” says Shane, “is that it’s going to be big.”

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The Valley Voice | December 2, 2015

OPINION

Recycling in Kaslo going backwards
I fully agree with everything stated in the letter regarding recycling in Kaslo. To think we, the taxpayers, are expected to go along with the “new system” without question is an insult. The hours don’t work, the bins don’t work and the location doesn’t work. How can this be seen as an improvement if we don’t understand and anyone I have talked to doesn’t either. I can’t help but wonder who is really making the decision of this plan. It would seem.

John Allen
Kaslo

Technology, not propaganda, for our students
Hello again! I was at the November 24 SD10 school board meeting (the only ‘public person’) and also at the well-attended November 10 meeting. I had also emailed the trustees regularly. I am celebrating that finally our community appears to have listened to qualified individuals, done serious diligence on submitted and otherwise disseminated information including that published in the Valley Voice newspaper. There was a strong concurrence among most of us that the young kids needed more hands-on involvement by our professional teachers and staff to support correct thinking and learning, especially related to the environment, which are fundamental to our future. The education system leads our society in dismissing fear of the unknown, rejection of what is contemporary, and fostering technology in general.

HUARY

Vadis Vilks
Silverton

Ashley McWhirter
Genelle

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 knowingly publish any letter that is defamatory or libellous. We will not publish anonymous letters or letters signed with pseudonyms, except in extraordinary circumstances.

Opinions expressed in published letters are the opinions of the author and not necessarily those of the Valley Voice.
Open letter to Silverton mayor and council

It has just come to my attention that the Silverton mayor and council has recently adopted a policy of “with respect to planned logging, mining, and other resource development in the Village of Silverton Watershed.” Bravo! Congratulations on taking this ecologically responsible initiative to refrain on a global carbon fee-on behalf of your community as well others living within the Silverton Creek watershed. Thank you for your leadership in creating a local government policy that is a real and demonstrative expression of a culture of stewardship so necessary for the protection and enhancement of Scoan Lake’s water quality as well. Your actions most certainly need not be interpreted as being at odds with our resource development, but rather as a strong message to ‘do it right,’ consistent with ecologically sound priorities.

Given that senior governments have essentially abandoned their environmental protection and enforcement roles and responsibilities in rural British Columbia today, your responsible policy initiative is necessary, practical, grounded in science and will enable long-term sustainable economic benefits for the community. This is extremely encouraging and heartwarming.

Bruce Cottingham
Scoan Lake area resident
Former President of Scoan Lake Stewardship Society (SLLS)

Global warming will require a global solution

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau should call for a worldwide referendum on carbon fee-and-dividend at the COP21 climate change conference in Paris.

The conference will start on November 30 and will last until December 11.

The general consensus is that, while it will make some progress, it won’t make the breakthrough we need.

A worldwide referendum on carbon fee-and-dividend would be that breakthrough.

James Hansen, the man who many consider the dean of climate scientists, has called for carbon fee-and-dividend for many years and with some success.

Carbon fee-and-dividend is elegantly simple – charge a fee on fossil fuels at source, similar to a carbon tax. Unlike a typical carbon tax, however, the money would not go into general government revenue but be distributed in equal dividends to everyone.

For those on the right, it’s a small government solution. Most governments already collect some kind of tax or royalty from fossil fuel production, and so little additional bureaucracy would be needed to collect the fee. Similarly, people who rely on such fees would remain the same, but they are human beings and of a certain age to collect their dividends, meaning minimal bureaucracy on the distribution side as well.

For those on the left, carbon fee and dividend would tend to redistribute income, helping to correct the world’s growing economic inequality. According to Citizens’ Climate Lobby—Canada, two-thirds of people would receive more in dividends than they would spend in fossil fuel fees. The bottom 20 percent of earners could expect to receive 150 percent more than they would pay.

Most economists agree that carbon fee-and-dividend would be our most powerful tool in dealing with climate change. In fact, it is hard to imagine a successful approach that does not include carbon fee-and-dividend as its central pillar.

Here are some ballpark figures.

According to Wikipedia, the world produces about 30 billion tonnes per year of carbon dioxide through the burning of fossil fuels. A fossil fuel fee set at the same level of BC’s carbon tax of $30 per tonne of carbon dioxide would therefore raise about $900 billion per year. Assuming that the dividends would only go to adults, and that 5 billion of the 7 billion people in the world are over the age of 18, then that would mean every adult human being on the planet would get a dividend of about $180 per year.

Carbon fee and dividend might be our most powerful tool, but to have a hope of being effective it would require widespread participation.

National programs, even if they involve major emitters such as the United States or China, are simply not going to cut it.

Put a fee on fossil fuel use in one jurisdiction and certain industries will move to another. If the fee rises high enough, there would be the danger of creating a black market for untaxed oil and coal. Both outcomes could be minimized by global carbon fee and dividend.

Going global implies going through the United Nations. Implementing global carbon fee and dividend would justify and require international cooperation. A good place to start might be by creating a United Nations Parliamentary Draft.

Here in Canada, as in many other nations around the world, we sometimes put important questions to the people in a referendum. One example would be the referendum on transit held last spring in BC’s Lower Mainland.

In 1990, following a worldwide referendum on carbon fee-and-dividend would be a difficult but not impossible task. The United Nations Satellites. Now, with age of 50 candidates in war-torn positions such as Kabul, and East Timor.

Humankind caused climate change is a global problem that requires global solutions. A worldwide referendum on global carbon fee-and-dividend would be a good next step, and Canada should lead the way.

Keith McNeill, editor

Clearwater Times newspaper

Candlelight vigil in Nakusp

December 6, 1989 was a horrific day. It was a day that changed Canada forever.

On the evening of December 6, 1989, a lone gunman entered Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal, a school that he had previously applied to himself. Armed with a semi-automatic rifle and hunting knife, Marc Lepine claimed that he was there on behalf of males and that women had been taking employment and opportunities away from men. He said, “feminists needed to be taught their place” and that he was “fighting feminism.” In reality, he had been denied entry into this school twice because he lacked two compulsory courses.

In just under 20 minutes, Lepine shot 28 people, 24 of whom were women, killing 14 of them before taking his own life. Marc was born into a life of domestic violence as Ganal Gharbi. The abuse suffered by his mother at the hands of his father was passed on to the children. He so hated his father, that at the age of 13, he changed his name to Marc Lepine. Ironically, his actions that day made him a hero to some and a villain to others.

His suicide note blamed feminists for mining his life.

These misogyny killings struck a shockwave through Canada that resonated throughout the world. Eventually, Canada’s grief turned to outrage at violence against all women. Our attitudes began to change.

December 6 was declared “National Day of Remembrance” and “A Day of Action on Violence Against Women.” In the years following this brutal gender-based attack, the White Ribbon Campaign was born in Canada, initiated by men to stop male violence toward women. “We knew that the majority of men in Canada did not beat their wives or sexually assault their partners. We knew that the majority of men had been silent about this violence and through our silence we had allowed the violence to continue,” said Michael Kaufman, co-founder of the Movement.

Since its introduction in 1991, this campaign has become global, including more than 60 countries. Nelson Mandela wore a white ribbon as he led thousands in a march in end of men’s violence against women.

Still, 26 years later, every six days in Canada, a woman is killed by her male intimate partner. Over 85 percent of victims of spousal homicide in Canada are on any given day in Canada, murdered by their 3,300 women (along with their 3,000 children) are forced to sleep in emergency shelters to escape domestic violence. Every night. About 200 women are turned away because the shelters are full. We must do better.

Please join us for a candlelight vigil on December 6 from 4:30-5:30 pm at the Nakusp Gazebo in the park to honour the 14 women who were killed 26 years ago. The Arrow Lakes drumming group will be performing from 4:30-5:00 pm, and hot chocolate and refreshments will be served.

Rosalyn Lindgren

Stopping the Violence Outreach

Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services

Lawsuit against BC Hydro over smart meters

Ah, yes! One of many internationally, and many more to come. To be held in supreme court in Vancouver December 7-11.

Encourage anyone you know who might want to observe this attempt to realize a class action suit, so that citizens have the right to refuse a meter which may harm them.

Here, with many new meters installed, people have started to have trouble with the microwaves frequency (RF) emitted by the meters. The ringing in ears has increased suddenly – that is how I knew. And another local just couldn’t sleep at night until it got shut off. Someone called me yesterday from the Edmonton area where all water meters are now wireless – so no choice – and many are getting sick, but the cost of opt-out is too high. “My sprouts won’t sprout any more – that’s how I know.”

So if you start having troubles, or problems sleeping all of a sudden, the RF-off opt-out is always available.

It’s lunacy, even economically – the new meters last about one fifth as long as the old ones – and initially before the government mandated them, BCUC itself declared the program economically NOT viable. What is it about the collusion between government and big industry – act now, think later?

Let’s think for ourselves. Let’s make a masterpiece with what we still have!

Daphne Fields
Slocan

Living on past glories in BC

I often recall these times, with a group of close friends, when we would reflect on our amazing shared adventures. I am not the only one who has been stranded and artistically comes the need to make the best of the new reality.

When I read about BC’s Premier Clark continuing to float on the past ‘green’ agenda, I can’t help but think that she too needs to step in to the new reality. The current carbon tax, frozen at $30 per metric ton, will not achieve the emission reductions that are required. To be effective, a carbon tax needs to gradually increase to fairly reflect the real costs of carbon on the health of the planet and to send signals to industry to help them transition to a carbon neutral economy.

The current BC carbon tax and Alberta’s anti-in of 30¢ per metric ton should not be interpreted as the final word. It is a very minimal bid to enter the game of effective climate action. In BC, if you place the minimum bid and also invest in new carbon-based industries, it becomes clear there is no serious intent to effectively play the game.

Johanna Sandhell

Recycling in Kaslo and Area D

In the lead front page article of the November 18, 2015 Valley Voice, Kaslo recycling petition presented to BC’s committee. ‘Manager of Environmental Services Utu Wolf is reported to have noted, at the November 5, 2015, RDCK Central Resource Recovery Committee that the system is designed and intended for smaller quantities, and is specifically quoted as saying: ‘We weren’t aware that large loads were coming to our facilities until it changed. It’s not practical or suitable for these larger commercial quantities.”

I think Mr. Wolf and his staff need to re-think that statement, just as prior to leaving office in 2014, a day before attending my last Central Resource Recovery meeting, I provided both staff and the then committee members with a comprehensive overview of the recycling situation. Now, with the act related to non-residential customers of the RDCK’s recycling program.

I think my closings words to the email were profoundly prophetic. This piecemeal approach will create further bureaucracy and cost to both ICI and residential taxpayers.

Andy Shadrack
Kasco

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New Denver council, November 24: Filming at Nikkei Centre approved

by Katrine Campbell

A request from Roayl Roads University professor Geoffrey Bird to film part of a documentary at the NDMC was approved, after much discussion. Canadian Heritage has commissioned two 45-minute documentaries on sites of memory relating to the two world wars and the centre would be in the segment on ‘Heritage That Hurts.’ Councillor Nathaniel Fox asked how much staff time would be involved; CO Catherine Allaway said the filming was scheduled for a weekend. CAO Bruce Woodbury noted Kyowa Society president Sakeyo Hashimoto would be on site, and Mayor Ann Banka said she would be there rather than have a staffer attend.

Bird first contacted the office November 2 to ask permission to film on November 9; this was later rebooked to November 28. Ninety minutes of filming would yield about a four-minute clip, and council had to decide if four minutes of exposure would be worth it to the NDMC and the Village. There is no screenplay or shooting script to explain how the centre would be portrayed.

‘It may hit the cutting room floor, it may be the star – we have no way of knowing,’ Woodbury said. Councillor Nadine Raynolds suggested going about having the society and the NDMC review the clip for approval. Woodbury said council should also review and approve.

“We have a significant historical site, and we will get more of these requests,” noted Councillor David Hodson. “We don’t have a policy in place.”

“As long as they don’t blow anything up, we’re good,” said Banka.

A request for commemoration was referred to the Nikkei Intemment Memorial Centre committee for consideration. Manager Monokoito Ito was contacted by Eiko Eby, whose grandparents’ interment cabinet #5 is now part of the NDMC. The Tokubosi family lived in the home until 1950 and Eby’s mother, Ayako (Irma), is the only surviving sibling. Eby would like the family’s connection to the 1942/43 building acknowledged on site. The Kyowa Society doesn’t want a formal plaque or on the cabinets but would support signage elsewhere in the NDMC.

Mayor Banka reported that she attended the RDCK Rural Affairs Committee meeting because Interior Health reps were making a presentation on changes to small water systems. IH talked about working on a regional level, i.e. regional districts and systems together, to address problems with water systems. The reps were asked about point of entry/point of use systems; there are a number of problems with testing requirements and enforcement. It was suggested that there were enough questions to warrant a workshop on the day before the next Association of Kootenay Boundary Local Governments (AKBLOG) AGM. IH and AKBLOG will work together to make this happen.

For reporting the Slocan District, Kaslo and Nakusp Chambers of Commerce have been working together for some time on the West Kootenay tourism initiative and will formalize the effort with a Memorandum of Understanding.

Councillor adopted Fire Engine Replacement Loan Authorization Bylaw 986, 2016 to allow the Village to borrow up to $255,000 to buy a replacement fire engine. The full estimated cost is $350,000. The directors are paid more than the average amount paid by other regional districts of similar size. In the RDCK, electoral area directors are paid $32,658 per year whereas the annual remuneration for the director of a regional district of similar size is $25,577. Municipal directors in the RDCK are paid $12,636 per year; the average remuneration for the chair of a regional district of similar size is $12,103. The RDCK board chair is paid $27,600 per year in addition to the regular director’s allowance. The average annual remuneration for the chair of regional districts of similar size is $24,058 in addition to the regular allowance. The RDCK vice chair and committee chairs are paid $2,676 per year in addition to their regular allowance.

Tracy Westmorland, the SPCA’s regional operations manager, made a presentation to the board. The organization is seeking donations towards building a new, centralized facility in Castlegar to donate land. The Trail shelter is old and no longer suitable; the Nelson shelter Village conducted an alternate approval process, but received no feedback from electors.

Council gave three readings to the Capital Works, Machinery and Equipment Reserve Fund Expenditure Bylaw 2015-0215. The funds, budgeted in the five-year financial plan, were used by an office copier, fire-proof filing and storage cabinets, a pickup truck for construction of a sand storage shed.

The December 22 council meeting was cancelled.

RDCK board, November 19: Regional food policy council discussed

by Jan McMurray

The RDCK will apply to the Ministry of Agriculture for an assessment of the best structure for a regional food policy council within the RDCK boundaries. The costs of the application process will be paid out of the Community Sustainability service.

The 2016 CBT Community Investment Committee’s application for a Regional Food Grant application will include a note that if a community involvement program results in a project being supported with less than 50 percent of the requested funding, that amount will be returned to the supporting area for allocation in the following year.

The board approved the Nelson CARES Society’s request for $15,000 for its Moving Together Phase 3 project. The society plans to have a Transit-on-a-Roller system to educate seniors about existing transportation options, encourage more service coordination, and raise awareness about the transportation challenges seniors face. The $15,000 will come from the reserve fund for the RDCK’s West Kootenay Transit service.

The 2016 budget will include $45,000 for a Design and Operations Plan for the Oostichea landfill, and approximately $65,000 for a full-time temporary (four months) Waste Educator position. The Waste Educator, a provincially mandated position, would screen waste and educate customers about what is accepted at waste facilities. A staff report about the position states: “By educating customers (both residential and commercial) about disposal practices and resource recovery policies, the RDCK can expect to reduce the amount of prohibited material and recyclable materials deposited in the landfill.” Waste screening events would happen mostly at Oostichea, with random events in other communities.

The board is considering the establishment of a multi-stakeholder Wastewater Management Advisory Committee.

A review of compensation for the directors shows that RDCK directors are paid more than the average amount paid by other regional districts of similar size.

Vancouver

Jordon Mounteatt makes CBC Poetry Prize shortlist

by Arika Joyce

Slocan Valley poet Jordon Mounteatt, who was shortlisted for the 2015 CBC Poetry Prize with his poems, Panadaico and Mounteatt, has once again been shortlisted for the 2016 CBC Poetry Prize. His book, Panadaico: A Cree-English Dictionary, was a finalist for the 2015 BC Book Prizes.

Mounteatt has appeared in numerous literary journals and publications, including The Malahat Review, Arc, Prairie Schooner, Grain, and The Fiddlehead, and was shortlisted for the 2015 Montreal International Poetry Contest. He was also the recipient of the 2014 PRISM International Poetry Prize and the Adirondack Review’s 40th Anniversary Prize. He divides his time between his home in the Slocan Valley and the rest of the world. “Eikling ancient pilgrim trails in Japan, exploring shamanic lakes in Peru or looking for the sun in Saigon,” states the CBC Poetry Prize’s release note. “He has no idea what he’s doing. But it makes for good stories.”

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For more information on the CBC Literary Prizes visit CBCBooks.ca.
Power outages mark advent of winter 2015

by Art Joyce

You know winter has arrived in the West Kootenay when the power outages start. During the first week of winter weather there were three outages with the most serious one affecting the region on November 17-18. Stiff storm winds brought down trees on power lines, impacting customers in FortisBC and FortisBC Hydro and FortisBC jurisdiction.

Service went out in the north Slocan Valley from New Denver to Nakusp, without the worst showing in the extreme north of November 17 and wasn’t restored until 14 hours later for some customers. Fortis customers in Crawford Bay, Coffee Creek, and Kaslo were affected for up to 24 hours in some areas. Two transmission lines serving Kaslo were heavily damaged Rossland, Castlegar, Warfield, Ymir, Salmo and Fruitvale were also impacted.

According to BC Hydro spokesperson Mary Anne Coiles, during winter months the company “receives an increased number of trouble calls from customers with power out, compared to the rest of the year, and we encourage our customers to be prepared for longer outages. FortisBC Corporate Communications Advisor Nicole Bogdanovic in a media release said their crews worked through the night and into the morning to restore service, with extra crews brought in from Kelowna.

Asbestos being removed from Slocan Health Centre

by Karine Campbell

Interior Health has started a major upgrade at Slocan Community Health Centre in New Denver – removing the almost 70-year-old asbestos and replacing it with safer and more efficient insulation.

According to Jonjoe, plant services manager for Kootenay Boundary, there was never a health risk.

“Asbestos does not pose a health risk when it is sealed and not exposed, as is the case in New Denver... The asbestos-containing insulation at Slocan Community Health Centre dates back to the late 1940s. Because the asbestos at STC is sealed in the attic and crawlspaces, there has been no risk to staff, patients or residents at the site.”

Interior Health commissioned Kelowna consultants Peak Environmental to survey the site for asbestos-containing materials. All 31 sites were surveyed and removed 10 years. Peak’s recommendation was to remove the materials from the attic to allow for ongoing maintenance, such as fan repairs and pipe replacement, and for any renovations needed. For example, Jonjoe says, the crew is installing a bathtub in the Pavilion that requires exposing piping which might be connected to an area containing asbestos materials.

The $255,000 project started earlier in November and should be complete by mid-January. The work is being done by contractor NAPP Enterprises from Prince George, supervised by Peak Environmental, which is doing ongoing air sampling.

Jonjoe notes that all such work is conducted in accordance with WorldSafe BC regulations and a notice was filed with them.

“An important benefit to removing the old insulation,” he adds, “will be that the new cellulose insulation being used is more effective – R50 insulation value for the new, R20 for the old – which will reduce energy consumption and utility costs for the health centre.”

Staff have been kept in the loop from the time of the original survey last year, Jonjoe said, and there will be no impact on patients, Pavilion residents or staff.

Despite the fact asbestos’ toxicity has been known for decades (or even centuries), it is still found in Canada. Since 1983, 39 countries including the entire European Union have banned it entirely; in Canada its use has declined since the mid-1970s, and it is regulated, but still legal.

For more information, please see the Inside Section of our website at www.kocus.com.

COMMUNITY

Kootenay Savings continues to strive to fulfill our vision:

To be the best provider of financial services and the best place to work in the communities we serve.

At Kootenay Savings MoneyWorks, we have one goal: to offer straightforward, no nonsense financial planning. We pride ourselves on building successful relationships with our clients - success that results from our employees’ genuine interest in helping people meet their financial needs and goals. We have the same genuine interest in providing our employees with opportunities to grow and develop in meaningful careers.

We currently have an opportunity to hire a part-time Administrative Assistant to provide administrative and marketing support to our Financial Advisor in Nakusp.

If you are a team-oriented individual interested in growing with an organization where you can demonstrate your talent for building strong member relationships, we’d like to hear from you.

For full details about this position including qualifications and information about how to apply prior to December 11, 2015 please see the Careers Section of our website at www.kocus.com.

Better, Together

Kootenay Savings

FORTIS BC

A downed power line can be deadly

Electricity is silent and invisible. Downed power lines can still be energized and deadly. If you see a downed power line, keep back at least 10 metres (33 feet), and call our 24-hour emergency line at 1-866-436-7847 or 911.

For more electricity safety information, visit fortsbc.com/downedlines.
The RDCK’s Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission has chosen four Slocan Valley organizations to receive a combined $251,000 over two years from the Slocan Valley Community Directed Fund. The fund is a partnership between the RDCK and Columbia Basin Trust, which provided the money.

“We believe that funding these organizations will result in long-term and widespread benefits to the Slocan Valley community,” said Leah Main, Chair of the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission (EDC).

**COMMUNITY**

The Commission engaged with the community extensively to determine how valley residents wanted their funding used for their economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being.

The commission allocated $40,000 to the Seniors’ Housing Society project which plans to build long-term housing for seniors in Slocan City. The society’s committee will share its knowledge and design with other groups that wish to develop similar housing projects in other parts of the valley.

The WE Graham Community Service Society will receive $46,000 to purchase a youth/community bus. The bus will be used for specialized transportation in the valley for day trips, evening events and other activities that occur outside of the summer months.

One major thing to come out of these meetings is that there are a lot of people dedicated to this community. A lot of people are looking for more ideas and bodies. If you are looking to volunteer we have a list of groups doing very interesting and important things in the valley.

**Novice growers invited to learn how)**

Are you interested in cultivating a career in the cannabis industry? Would you like to know more about cannabis and the future of the industry in Canada? You are invited to the ‘Women Grow, Kootenay Chapter’ kick-off event on Thursday, January 7 in the St. James Hotel in Nelson. This educational evening features presentations by distinguished individuals in the cannabis industry, as well as Mayor Deb Kozak discussing the current state of cannabis-related issues in Nelson.

Early bird tickets are $25, and can be purchased online at bit.ly/women-grow, or at the door.

Women Grow is created to connect, educate, inspire and empower the next generation of cannabis industry leaders by creating professional and social events for aspiring and current business women.

**Food for Thought: The forest sustains us**

From the Mushroom to the Tree, Forest and Water: the forest sustains us, do we sustain the forest? This is the title of a Food for Thought talk by Herb Hammond at the Kootenay National Park in New Denver, Sunday December 13 at 7:30. The event is sponsored by the Kootenay National Park, admission is by donation to benefit the gallery.

Hammond, who lives in Vallecito, is a Registered Professional Forester and Forest consultant with 35 years experience in research, industry, teaching and consulting. He holds a Bachelor of Science in forest management from Oregon State University and a Master of Forestry from the University of Washington.

Over the past 20 years, much of his work has focused on the ecological and economic potential of the pacific coast forest ecosystem. His expertise includes forest ecology, forest management and forest economics.

**IH delays privatizing laundries**

Simon Fraser University economist Marvin Shaffer says IH has failed to establish a valid business case for privatizing the service. Hired by the Hospital Employees Union to study the proposed sale of IH’s laundry operations, Shaffer practiced 10 document obtained through a Freedom of Information request and disputed IH’s conclusion that outsourcing laundry operations at hospitals in Kelowna, Vernon, Kamloops, Penticton and Nelson, along with services in six smaller communities.

IH has delayed its decision several times.

Non-profit organizations have agreed to collaborate on their projects.

The Slocan Valley EDC believes that by supporting the growth of a local food economy, we will strengthen the social fabric of our valley,” explained Main.

**Mayor’s Message from New Denver’s Andy Bunka**

Here we are, approaching the end of another year.

Council and staff held 20 meetings with the local societies and groups that we interact with during the year. These meetings are a key component of our work at the City, and they help us to look at the community’s suggestions and hopes in the near future.

This year saw some interesting events in New Denver. Of note, the Health Centre welcomed a nurse practitioner who shares her time between New Denver and Sloan. We had a visit from the Lieutenant Governor and a few more mayors and some provincial level officials.

Finally, we had the yearly events: May Days, Get Together, Slocan Valley’s Annual Art and Craft Show, Murchans’ Night. The school held its annual Harvest Festival and community members gathered for a day of festivities around the lake from the Sloan Lake Stewardship Society, Harvest Share and WildSafe.

If I missed anyone (and it’s likely I did because of the number of events) I apologize. All of these events take an enormous amount of work from people in our community and they make New Denver a wonderful place to live.

Council would like to take this time to say “Thank you!” to all those folks who make such a huge impact to the quality of life in our community.
Nakusp council, November 23: Trails Master Plan to cost more than expected

by Jan McMurray

• A $50,000 application will be submitted to CBT for a Nakusp and Area Trails Master Plan. Council had previously agreed to apply for the $20,000 CBT fund. They had advised that the mayor and CAO that these plans usually cost $50,000-75,000. Area K Director Paul Peterson will contribute $2,000, and the Village will provide in-kind contributions, “especially staff time,” said CAO Taylor Terry Welsh. Nakusp’s Director of Parks and Recreation has extensive experience preparing recreation and trails master plans.

• Mayor Hamling reported that the volume of recycling materials picked up in Nakusp’s curbside program has increased three to four times since the RDCK recycling depot was moved to the landfill. “That is a positive step for our community and our MMBC contract,” she writes in her report. Later in the meeting, she said several businesses had contacted Director of Operations Warren Leigh to discuss recycling issues that have cropped up since the relocation of the bin, and have questions with the bin. “We can work something out that works for everybody,” said Leigh.

• Director of Operations Warren Leigh reported that the crew has had to repair damage done by vandals. Several street signs have been reinstalled, the stand pipe at the marina san-dump was repaired, and damage at the ball fields was addressed. He reported that a rock was thrown through the window of an excavator on the PRN project job. “I think there is someone up the hill who is angry,” he commented.

• Council received an assessment of the arena roof by MacLeod Nine Consultants in Nelson. Director of Recreation and Parks Terry Welsh explained that the pitch of the roof is not steep enough for the existing metal roofing to be effective. SBS or EPDM roofing is recommended. Council agreed to consider the liability/entrance roof remediation work, estimated at $93,750, in the 2016 budget. The replacement of the main arena roof, estimated at $306,250, will be included in long-range capital plans.

• Mayor Hamling and Councillor Mueller attended a dinner with the Kinmanza on October 29. People from the area are working with the Kinmanza on an industrial site.

• Hamling and the CAO have met with local business representatives Bart Chemuz to discuss the Licence of Occupation for the walking trail.

• Also at the meeting, water levels were expected to reach a low of 138 feet at the end of November and then rise to 130 feet in December. “The bottom line is that they must meet the treaty requirements,” she said. There are also dam spillways undergoing inspection and maintenance, and this is also affecting water levels.

Welsh also gave thanks to staff for the excellent clean-up of the park for the Remembrance Day ceremonies, and recognized Richard Cann for donating his time to set up the audio system at the Legion since 1994.

• The Employee/Member Volunteer Appreciation Policy was amended. Welsh explained that senior management staff realized the policy was not being followed well, so reviewed the policy and recommended several improvements. One of the amendments is to give employees a pin a and a monetary award at 5, 10, 15 and 20 years of service. The financial impact of the policy, with 22 employees, is $330 per year. Councillor Mueller asked if fire department members could be treated the same way as Village employees. Welsh said Chief Warren was involved with the policy review, and the fire department has its own recognition program. Mayor Hamling said this could be looked at during budget discussions, as this would include the Area K director.
Hanukkah and Solstice celebration in Silverton

submitted

The Slocan Lake Gallery Society is throwing its fifth annual Hanukkah party, and all traditions and expressions of the season are invited to participate in the open mic segment. It takes place at the Silverton Memorial Hall on December 11; doors open at 5:30 pm, and the program gets underway at 6.

What makes this family-friendly event exciting for young, old and older alike? Entertainment, dancing and a potluck dinner! Live music will be provided by members of the Nelson Hanukkah Ensemble, folklorist and broadcaster Catherine McGrath on accordion and vocals, and Nicola Everett of the Kootenay Symphony on clarinet. Haya Moar, a folk dance professional and master of all things Hanukkah, is back by popular demand, and will lead circle dances.

Please bring a main course, side or dessert dish to share for the potluck feast; the society is issuing a special call our for latkes or potato pancakes, as they are also in high demand. Apple sauce and sour cream, coffee and tea provided.

The program for the evening features an open mic. The Lumiere Elementary School Choir led by Francis Oldham will perform, along with singer-songwriter Rebecca Fudge.

There is still room for a few more acts, so if you have a seasonal song, story, poem, riddle or skit to share, call Cada at 250-358-7108.

Hanukkah and Solstice are both Festivals of Light celebrated at this time of year to bring light into the long winter nights.

COMMUNITY

The Winter Solstice is the longest night of the year, occurring around December 21 in the northern hemisphere. After this dark, cold time, the sun returns. Each day is progressively longer, heading towards the spring when the hours of sunlight will finally surpass those of darkness. Humans around the world have, since times immemorial, marked the Winter Solstice, rejoicing in the return of the light.

Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday lasting eight nights, commemorating the victory of the Macabbes resistance to Greek occupation of the temple in Jerusalem back in 160 BC. The story is told of how, when the temple was re-dedicated, there was only enough purified oil for the sacred nine-branched temple lamp but it miraculously remained burning for eight days. More than 2000 years later, Jews still celebrate Hanukkah. December 11 will be the sixth night of this holiday.

In addition, the Slocan Valley Food Bank and the Vachel Whole Community Choir offer their annual community choir concert and seasonal sing-along, on December 20, 6-8 p.m. at the Silverton Community Hall. Admission is by donation and proceeds will be shared between the Slocan Valley Food Bank and the Vachel Whole Community Choir. Supervised children are welcome at this family affair.

We look forward to sharing the beauty of what we have been learning, as well as filling the air with familiar songs of the season. Add your voice! Or just come to listen.

Seasonal songs at the Vachel Whole

submitted

Solstice, Christmas, Kwanza, Hanukkah – there is so much to celebrate in the dark of winter!

On December 20, the Vachel Whole Community Choir hosts two Doublechoir choirs for a shared concert and seasonal sing-along. We will be singing in English, Russian, and even Zulu! More than 10 new members have added their lyrical voices to our own choir, and the sound is delightful.

We invite everyone to join us at 6 p.m. at the cedar-bough-decked Vachel Whole Community Centre, 3762 Little Slocan South Rd, from 3 to 5 p.m. Sunday afternoon. We will provide mulled apple cider and welcome your gifts of baked sweets and savoury treats to share for this festive occasion.

Admission is by donation and proceeds will be shared between the Slocan Valley Food Bank and the Vachel Whole Community Choir.

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They offer more than just short-term symptom relief. They also promote whole-body wellness for your life.

Dr. Brennan will be bringing the foot scanner to New Denver December 8 & Nakusp December 9. Call today to book an appointment for a free 3D foot scan.

250.352.5135

FREEZER PACKAGES

#1 PACKAGE
8 lbs Pork Chops Centre Cut
8 lbs Chicken Breast - Bone in
2 Whole Fryers
8 lbs Lean Ground Beef
5 lbs Sirloin Tip Roast
$160

#2 PACKAGE
8 LBS Lean Ground Beef
5 lbs Rib steaks
5 lbs outside round roast
5 lbs Chicken Breast - Boneless
5 lbs Beef Stew
8 lbs Pork Chops Centre Cut
$215

#3 PACKAGE
10 lbs Pork Sirloin Steak
10 lbs Pork Breaded Cutlets
8 lbs Pork Tenderloin
10 lbs Center cut Chops & Roast - Boneless
10 lbs Ground Pork or 7 lbs pork sausage
$225

#4 PACKAGE
10 lbs Rib Steaks - Boneless
8 lbs Top Sirloin Roast
8 lbs Top Sirloin Steaks
$275

#5 PACKAGE
20 lbs Lean Ground Beef
10 lbs Beef Stew
10 lbs Outside Round Roast - Boneless
5 lbs Rib Steak
10 lbs Whole Chicken Legs
10 lbs Chicken Breast - Boneless
5 lbs Pork Chops Centre Cut or Roast
$360

We also have fresh sausages made in store.

New Market Foods 6th Avenue • New Denver, BC
250-358-2270 • shop@newmarketfoods.com
Head downtown New Denver for Merchants’ Night on Thursday, December 10

Submitted

Merchants’ Night is quickly approaching. Get ready for a social night on the town in New Denver!

On Thursday, December 10, starting at 5 pm, New Denver’s Main Street merchants (on both sides of the highway) will be open late, offering all kinds of specials and fun activities. See the ads on this page and the back page to find out what each store is offering.

New Denver’s May Queen Royalty will be serving free hot dogs, hot chocolate, and goodies baked by Robin McNabb at a table outside Kootenay Savings Credit Union (KSCU). Of course there’s also the much anticipated visit from Santa, who arrives on the fire truck at 6 pm. Join him outside KSCU by the treat table to make your Christmas requests.

The carolers will be out doing their rounds. Rory’s and Nuru will be open for dinner, and the kids won’t want to miss this year’s cookie decorating at the Youth Centre. The Hidden Garden Gallery will be open, too, with ‘Botanical’ show and sale, featuring paintings by Nadine Stefan and textiles by Morgan Berlot.

Rory’s on Main
Open Dec. 10 for Merchants’ Night
5 pm to 8 pm
Reservations Recommended
Check out www.rorysonmain.com or friend us on Facebook to see the menu!!!
Please call 250-358-2449 for reservations

New Market Foods
6th Avenue • New Denver, BC
250-358-2270

New Market Foods
OPEN TILL 8:00 PM
10% OFF EVERYTHING IN THE STORE 5-8 pm
SAMPLING OF APPIES, CHEESES

Welcome to all from 5-6 pm to enjoy Hot Cider and Cookies!
Rutabaga’s Whole Foods
Main Street, New Denver

2nd Annual
Mercant Night Special:
14-hour smoked pulled pork, maple-ale baked beans, buttermilk biscuits, cole slaw & caramel gingerbread cake
$12 per person

Warm holiday wishes to all our friends and customers!
Nuru Coffee Bar
513 6th Avenue, New Denver 250-358-2733
Proudly serving BC Wines & Beer
In 2015, the Hills Emergency Services Society (HESS) acquired new equipment for the fire brigade, thanks to support from the Hills Recreation Society and the Kootenay Savings Community Foundation. This included new hoses, a portable water pump, fire-resistant foam and other essentials.

At the HESS AGM on November 22, president Wayne McCrae reported on the society’s efforts during the year to improve readiness in the event of a fire. It will sponsor residents willing to take structural firefighting training and one person has already stepped forward. The community now has a functional fire truck thanks to the RDCK, a community hall/fire hall built by volunteers, and a dedicated group of volunteers in the Hills Fire Brigade. They continue to upgrade their equipment and training.

The two fires attended by the Hills Fire Brigade in 2015 were reviewed—a grass fire and the serious house fire that occurred in mid-July. New Denver fire department members’ assistance was invaluable. Hills resident Tom Watson was also thanked for attending and using his personal firefighting equipment.

The tiny community of Hills does not have a large enough population or tax base to support a formal RDCK-supervised fire department, and thus does not qualify for 911 coverage for house fires. HESS will mail a flyer to remind residents of the phone numbers of contacts to call in the event of a fire; they will immediately alert all members of the Hills Fire Brigade. McCrae stressed that Hills residents should immediately call 911 for police or ambulance, or if a fire involves personal injury or threatens to start a wildfire. He said it was fortunate Hills survived a very high-hazard season without a forest fire. If the July house fire had happened several days previous to a summer rain or if there had been a wind that night, the community could have had a serious forest fire on its hands in addition to a tragic house fire.

HESS urges residents to invest in sprinkler systems and to learn how to properly install them as a proactive safety measure for interface wildfires. In the new year, HESS plans to distribute information on sprinkler systems and on FireSmart procedures to remove combustible materials near homes. They also remind everyone of the need to have chimneys cleaned regularly to prevent the build-up of combustible creosote, a common cause of chimney fires.

For the coming year, Linda Fitchett and Joe Cick will share the fire chief role with McCrae. At the AGM, New Denver resident Kamil Akcroyd was acknowledged for his donation of an emergency evacuation stretcher and mechanical Ray Schenck for donating his time to repair the fire truck. HESS is mainly supported by the Hills Recreation Society through proceeds from the renowned Hills Garlic Festival.

Rec 8 presents 33rd seniors’ Christmas Tea

Saturday, December 5
Front Street closed 3 pm - late

• Parade starts at 6 pm
• Scavenger Hunt
• Santa’s Workshop
• Bonfire
• and much more!

The generous sponsorship of many local businesses, as well as a great crew of volunteers.

A free bus, provided through the support of the RDCK, is available to pick you up at your door; so call today to reserve your seat. For more information or to reserve your seat on the bus call Slocan Valley Recreation at 250-226-0008.
Kaslo celebrates Light-Up this Saturday, December 5

by Jan McMurray

Downtown Kaslo will be bustling with all kinds of activities happening all day and evening on Saturday, December 5 for the Kaslo Light-Up celebration.

Santa and his helpers will be at the Langham from 9 am to 11 am, and again the next Saturday (December 12). This event is free to all children and young at heart! Here is your opportunity to enjoy the community holiday exhibition at the Langham, “Inspiring Celebrating Youth Creativity,” running to December 13.

Check out the craft fair at the Legion from 10 am to 4 pm. The kids’ scavenger hunt is happening from 1 to 5 pm at participating stores – watch for posters on the entrances of the participating merchants.

The road will be closed at 3 pm to create a festive market style atmosphere. The bonfire across from the hotel will be lit at 4 pm. The stores are open late and most are offering something special to visitors.

Kaslo Minor Hockey will be selling hot dogs and treats outside of Front Street Market. There will be carolers, and live music at various locations downtown Kaslo.

Be ready to line up along the main street for the parade, which starts at 6 pm. Participants are asked to line up at the Mayne at 5:30 pm. Last-minute participants are always welcome.

Immediately following the parade, Santa and Mrs. Claus will be holding Santa’s Workshop at the Kaslo Youth Centre directly across from the Blue Belle Bistro.

The Kaslo and Area Chamber of Commerce organizes the Light-Up celebration every year. This year, the event is sponsored by the generosity of the Columbia Power Corporation and the Village of Kaslo.

Come Celebrate
Light-Up in Kaslo!

New Items for the holidays
Parthena Olive Oil
Divine Chocolate
Nud goji chia banana crisps
Koukia Delights Gluten Free Brev Dr. Kumbucha
In store specials all day
Saturday Dec. 5
Drop by for a coffee

Kaslo Clothes Hanger
Affordable Choices for Gift Ideas & Stocking Stuffers
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Kaslo Community Pharmacy
Ring in the holidays with specials on
Atoma and Diem house brand products!

Stay warm, Enjoy your fragrant herbal tea and toasty snacks

Join us for Light Up Ceremony and the Magical Eve specials!

404 Front Str., Kaslo

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Light Up Sale!

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on facebook
250-353-2224 (ph)
240-353-2356 (fax)

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Arrow Lakes Better at Home program officially launched

by Jan McMurray

Nakusp and area seniors can now access light housekeeping, light home repairs, and snow shoveling services at an affordable price through the Arrow Lakes Better at Home program. The new program, delivered by Arrow & Sloan Lakes Community Services (ASLCS), was officially launched at the Seniors Hall in Nakusp on November 26 with various speakers and a lovely luncheon catered by Deb Guest.

Tim Payne, executive director of ASLCS, welcomed everyone to the launch, and thanked the community for coming together to get behind the Better at Home program. He explained that ASLCS approached Better at Home a little more than a year ago to express interest in delivering the program in Nakusp, but the community was too small to qualify. He was pleased to receive a call from the organization a few months later, adding if Nakusp would like to be involved in a Better at Home pilot project for small, rural communities. Nakusp and the Arrow Lakes is one of six communities in the pilot project.

The goal of the Better at Home program is to help seniors remain independent at home. It is funded by the provincial government, managed by the United Way, and delivered locally by ASLCS. ASLCS received $56,500 for the one-year pilot project, which ends March 31, 2016. Payne has applied for funding to extend the program for another year.

Payne introduced Rosalyn Lindsay, the project coordinator. It’s Rosalyn who put the boots on the ground and got this project going,” said Payne. “She has met with people, has made the phone calls, and has been recruiting volunteers and contractors.”

Lindsay, who has worked as a nurse for six years, said she feels the Better at Home service is needed in the Arrow Lakes communities of Nakusp, Burton, Faquier, and Edgewood. She urged everyone to get the word out about the program.

She said seniors can call her for housekeeping, light home repairs and snow shoveling. Snow shoveling will be offered at no charge by volunteers, and a fee will be charged on a sliding scale for light housekeeping and light home repairs. Lindsay said seniors will be eligible for subsidies based on their income in the previous year. All volunteers have a criminal record check and reference check done, with the costs covered by the program.

Lindgren said not all of the services are available in Burton, Faquier or Edgewood yet either, but she is working on it. She is also working on recruiting volunteer drivers to take people grocery shopping or to medical appointments, and hoping to offer that service in the future.

Kathie Lalić and Firikka Brandon from the Burnaby Better at Home office at United Way, both attended the launch as well. “It’s a community initiative and will grow to be what you make it to be,” Brandon said. “The money is there to provide subsidies to the seniors in your community to have these services...I hope you will all be ambassadors of the program.”

As far as other communities in the region having the opportunity to have a Better at Home program, Lalić said United Way has a list of 37 communities that would like the program. He said mayors and community leaders can call the provincial office to discuss this.

“The program was designed to complement and augment existing services, not to replace services, so we need to look at a collective approach,” he said.

Brandon added that they have 60 “mainstream” projects and are now looking at whether or not the model makes sense in small communities through the pilot project. The intention of our work is to build a case to government for more funding for the existing sites and to continue expanding so these services are available to every senior in the province.”

Contact Rosalyn Lindgren at 250-625-8747 or Rosalyn.Lindgren@aslcs.com.

Moonlight Madness – open late
One day only – Friday Dec 4th
30% off Ladies wear and fabric
20% off Yarn

Bon Marché
DOLLAR $ DOLLAR
496 Broadway, Nakusp 250-265-3644

Candlelight Blue Christmas
Honouring those we miss; but also a time of support and understanding for all walks of grief. Please join us as we reminisce about our losses and look with hope toward enjoying the festive season once more. This is an event for all ages and faiths.

Robertson Memorial United Church – 117 3rd Avenue, Nakusp
Tuesday, December 15th, 2015 at 7:00 pm
Refreshments graciously offered by the United Church Workers following the service
To arrange transportation please call Kem at (250) 265-4600

VFH

Minto Bus changes hands; service remains the same

by Jan McMurray

The Minto Bus changes hands from Interior Health to Arrow & Sloan Lakes Community Services last month, but there has been no change in service. The bus continues to run from Nakusp to Vernon and Kelowna on Wednesdays, leaving from the ASLCS office.

Tim Payne, executive director of ASLCS, said the organization is looking for funding to be able to do more with the bus. “We’d like to incorporate the bus into the Better at Home program to address seniors’ transportation issues – coordinating seniors’ days for shopping, banking and recreational activities,” he explained. A run to Revelstoke is on the wish list, as is a shopping day at Overwaits in Nakusp.

Susan McCombs, Interior Health manager in Nakusp, said that the bus was transferred to ASLCS in the hopes that it would be used more often. “There is exciting potential to use it for the Better at Home program in the future,” she said.

She also explained that bookings for the Wednesday run used to be handled by the Activity Coordinator at Minto House, and was taking too much of her time. “So it seemed a good fit for ASLCS to take over the bus,” she said.

The bus was purchased by the Arrow Lakes Hospital Foundation and the CBT 10 years ago. It was used for the Wednesday run to Vernon and Kelowna, and for taking Minto House residents on outings. It can still be used for outings for the residents, McCombs said.

The Valley Voice December 2, 2015
Lucerne student film project to premiere at North Valley Mountain Film Festival

submitted

Throughout the fall months, local professional film maker Isaac Carter worked with Lucerne senior outdoor education students to build skills in the areas of script writing, filming, and editing. The partnership was spearheaded by the North Valley Mountain Film Festival, which is celebrating its tenth annual event at the Silverton Memorial Hall March 5, 2015.

“We wanted to help build the capacity of locals to create high quality films,” said Myles Berney, coordinator for the festival and the filming workshop. “Some of these students have been submitting films to our event for many years, and it is nice to be able to help them build their skills.” Funding for the workshop was provided by the Turner-Zion United Church. Isaac Carter helped LESS outdoor education students create their film scripts based on a rock climbing trip to the Stocum Bluffs climbing area. For all of the students, it was their first experience rock climbing, and the filming process added to the adventure. Your Shandro-Gosselin was the rock climbing "actor," and he described his first rock climbing experience as, "another exciting outdoor activity."

“Going up was fine, but when it was time to come down, I had a hard time trusting the gear and my belay," stated Shandro-Gosselin. Students belayed each other, adding to the seriousness factor.

Quade Nicholson-Chatot not only climbed, but also filmed while on the rock wall. "Enjoyed climbing, and would like to try something harder next time," he said. Isaac Carter was satisfied with the results of the project, noting that each student created a unique edit that reflected their individual styles. One of the students' edits will be selected by Carter and the class to premiere at the North Valley Mountain Film Festival.

The North Valley Mountain Film Festival will be accepting submissions for its tenth annual event until January 31, 2016. As always, locals are encouraged to create short films that reflect their unique mountain experiences and perspectives.

Helping People Live Better Lives

Peoples Pharmacy would like to welcome Joyce Manarin to the Peoples Pharmacy team.

Joyce, Pharmacy Manager, has over 15 years of experience in hospital and community pharmacy. She is dedicated, and committed to helping you live a healthier life.

Come in and meet Joyce. She can arrange for a medication review or answer any questions you may have regarding your medications.

2015 Celebration of Light

Friday, December 4

All Day Festivities

7pm at the Court House
Food vendors, Fire Barrels, Choir Carollers, and Bad’s Chili cook off. (to enter call 250-742-7800)
“Music By DJ Matt McKee”
5:30pm Parade Float Judging
6pm Parade Starts
5:30pm UGLY sweater contest
6:30pm Youth and Adult PRIZES!!
6:45pm Misty maker Fire Dancers
9:30pm Live music at the Leland
‘23 North’
Argenta fundraiser raises money for Syrian refugees

by Art Joyce

More than half of the world’s refugees are children – most of the world’s child refugees are from Syria’s violent conflict, affecting 12 million people. On September 24, thanks in part to the organizing efforts of Meadow Creek resident Pat Lawrence, people gathered in Argenta from the small communities around the north end of Kootenay Lake to raise money for the Al Salam School for Syrian refugee children. The idea arose at a meeting of the Argenta Friends Association this summer.

“We asked ourselves how we could do something that would help alleviate the vulnerability of children displaced by warfare,” says Lawrence. “My hope was to raise $2,000 for Al Salam School. Instead, our marvelous musicians, cooks, and magnificent participants from local villages collectively raised more than $6,000.”

Musicians brought their instruments to the Argenta Community Hall while many others brought salads and steaming trays of lasagna. Square dancing brought together all ages on the dance floor. Marty Hamilton’s jazz music graced the room while dinner was served. Cookies, gingerbread squares, brownies, and goodies from home ovens and baked by students at the local elementary school were sold and enjoyed.

Donated items were auctioned, including original paintings and other art pieces, authors’ publications, a solar lamp, hand-crafted glassware, great tools, as well as a massage and Befalshusk session. A Jim Lawrence landscape photograph with a stunning view of Shuswap Bench, Kalo Point, and Pilot Point raised $350. The event continued late into the evening with a dance featuring Jerry Hamilton and the Jan Van Gelder Band.

When the last remaining plate of cookies was passed around the Friends Meeting the following morning, “says Lawrence, “we talked about how good it felt to contribute to a good cause. Some thought it should be an annual event.”

After communication with a number of international agencies and humanitarian organizations, the Friends learned about the Al Salam School (Al Salam means “peace”). The school is situated just across the main border crossing from Syria inside Turkey. Communication with this school was better than with international organizations inside Syria, where ongoing conflict has continuously disrupted by violence. Funded through private donations, the school provides multi-level schooling for more than 2,000 students.

The teachers are passionate about the quality of education offered at the school, “says Lawrence, who has a long history of working for overseas humanitarian initiatives. Between the lines of the Al Salam School’s vision statement, one can read the need to heal the injury of war, along with appreciating the alternatives to violence. It states, “We are committed to providing the healthiest and most secure environment for children; where their creativity and joy can thrive; where every child is respected, loved, and given the opportunity to develop strong character and positive relationships. The school teaches alternatives to violence that can dissolve cycles of retaliation killings; the school’s teaching staff and students are motivated by their lived experience as survivors to learn about other ways of resolving conflict.”

In Europe says the recent terrorist attacks in Paris may overshadow empathy for refugees fleeing from reigning civil wars and instability in the region. But ISIS has now diminished for its caliphate. But a clampdown on Muslims and refugees in Europe and North America will only provide ISIS with more fuel for attacks, she says. “Ethnic violence cannot diminish humanitarian assistance to survivors who are grasping with the suffering of war – indeed, what is needed most is the confidence that war itself is the real enemy.”

For more information about the Al Salam School visit syrianskids.ca.

Kaslo writer Don Page releases first novel

by Art Joyce

Long-time Kaslo resident Don Page recently released his first novel, titled *Feanson*. The title character is a kaslo who encounters a woman whose flatboat has crashed behind Mt. Lolo and is desperate need to help of survival. Page sets it as a Young Adult (YA) novel.

“We’re finally opening up to the fact that animals have consciousness, so that prompted the idea for the storyline,” says Page. “Feanson is about the sasquatch, and what it could be for us to develop a sensitivity to them as creatures so that if and when we are discovered they will have a chance.”

The novel’s story revolves around a teenage girl named Sandy. Feanson and his friend Boo, a mime deer, are on the mire when the flatboat has crashed her flatboat. Boo wants nothing to do with the rescue but Feanson decides he’s going to go out for all his brothers and help with the rescue. There’s also a pack of wolves that has exited its old leader and the new leader wants to taste her blood, so they start tracking her down. Feanson helps her not only by applying forest medicine, but also by protecting her from the wolf pack. The story happens over 24 hours until the rescue helicopter arrives and she must decide whether to tell the world about her strange experience. There’s a covert conservation message in the story: Sandy empathizes with the sasquatch, whose habitat is threatened by logging.

As a writer, this naturally meant using the device of anthropomorphism – imputing human thoughts and actions to animals. Often criticized as imposing a false view of life on creatures we can’t possibly understand, the technique is somewhat controversial. Page says a recent TED talk by author Laurel Braitman actually defends anthropomorphism, saying that it’s at least a place to start for developing empathy for other animals. Braitman’s book *Animal Madness* claims that animals can suffer loneliness, heartbreak and depression, just as humans do. Meanwhile Page admits that having a sasquatch as a central character isn’t an easy sell.

“A sasquatch is not romantic; if it were a werewolf or a vampire it would be an easier sell. Of the three, the sasquatch has the most probability of being the real thing. Some say it’s giganotosaurus, but it couldn’t be because that creature went extinct thousands of years ago. But it could be an evolved form of that.”

Page may have underestimated his audience – it turns out there’s a whole subculture around sasquatch hunting. Of the considered hot spots for sasquatch sightings such as Harrison Hot Springs, the BC Scientific Cryptozoology Club makes regular forays into the forest in search of the creature. Club member Adam McClure has been an avid member since he was ten years old.

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School District 10 receives good news from ministry

by Jan McMurray

Funding from the Ministry of Education for two new buses, a new boiler at Lecumier School, and LED lighting upgrades has recently been approved for School District 10 Arrow Lakes.

“We are thrilled!” said Superintendent Terry Taylor at the November 24 board of education meeting. The board agreed to write a letter of thanks to the ministry.

“Given the major issues we have had this year with bus breakdowns and rising costs of repairs on our fleet, these replacement buses are fantastic news,” she writes in her report.

The funds are coming through the ministry’s new Routine Capital Funding program. The ministry has committed to providing funding through this program for three years.

Annual Facility Grant funding is being provided to school districts for many years, but in small districts it is not sufficient for more serious or routine maintenance costs. "Routine Capital Funding, in part, acknowledges that smaller rural districts are disadvantaged through the Annual Facility Grant process," states Taylor in her report.

The 2008 district propane bus, which has not functioned for many years, will be replaced with a 20-20 passenger bus. This new bus will likely be used on the Edgewater run. Another 12-year-old bus will also be replaced.

The Lecumier School boiler is 24 years old. The ministry will provide $33,400 to replace the boiler and heating system.

LED lighting will be installed with a $245,000 grant at the two Nakusp schools, the board office, and the maintenance shop.

• The school district has received a $2,000 grant from the ministry and has applied for $10,000 from ArtsStarts for a new educational project called Design Thinking: “Making” a Difference in the World. Thirteen artists, artisans, makers and trackers who live in local communities will do classroom residencies of two days to two weeks across the district. Most of these people graduated from SDH schools and have moved back. “A focus on exploring careers in the arts and trades that can allow students to return to their home communities is also envisioned,” says Taylor.

• The district is working on a shared use partnership agreement with the Health Community Society of the North Shuswap Valley (HCS) to formalize the partnership between the two organizations. HCS has been involved in establishing and maintaining the school garden and greenhouse, and provides a breakfast and lunch program at the school. The society also works with the school and community to create learning experiences on horticulture, food security, and nutrition.

A meeting about the possible subdivision and sale of the Fauquier School property was scheduled for December 1. The district intends to honour the community’s wish to keep the building, which it has been using since the school closed in the 1990s. Superintendent Taylor reported that BC Hydro cannot provide sewage hookups to any prospective lots in Fauquier, so a contractor will be hired to assess potential lay out based on septic regulations.

IH expands HIV/AIDS testing and treatment

Interior Health says its work to expand access to HIV testing and treatment in this region has led to significant increases in screening for the disease, a critical step in controlling and eventually ending the AIDS epidemic. Since 2013, HIV testing in the region has increased by 50 percent with HIV testing rates now exceeding 1,500 tests per 100,000 population.

The results come as Interior Health marked World AIDS Day on December 1 and the one-year anniversary of the ‘My Health Is Sexy’ campaign which aims to provide HIV testing and reduce stigma.

Interior Health has launched several initiatives including: a Health Outreach Activism against gender violence in Nelson

November 25 was the start of 16 Days of Global Activism against Gender Violence. Nelson marked the day with a Take Back the Night march, and two more events will take place.

On Friday, December 4 at 4 pm, there will be a gathering and candlelight vigil at City Hall for the National Day of Remembrance and Action to End Violence Against Women, marking the Montreal Massacre at École Polytechnique in 1989 when 14 women were murdered and 13 wounded.

On December 7 at 4:30 pm, Selkirk College will host a discussion panel at its Tenth St. Campus 4 pm. People from the college, Anks and the women’s centre will discuss gender inequality and gender-based violence.

CORRECTION

In the article, ‘Arrow Lakes Historical Society launches series of interview by Milton Parent’ in our last issue, we incorrectly stated that Kyle Knecht has a Master’s degree in cartography. His Master’s degree is actually in social and historical geography.

CLARIFICATION

The article ‘Nakusp’s old fire hall comes back to life’ in our November 4 issue says that only food made in a commercial kitchen can be sold to the public. In fact, “Love is the best cook” can be prepared in homes kitchens for sale at temporary markets. ‘The Guidelines for the Sale of Foods at Temporary Food Markets’ can be found online.

The Arrow Lakes District Arts Council Presents
A CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION
A Community Artists’ Concert showcasing local artists
Sunday, December 13 at 2:00 pm at the Bonnington Arts Centre
A fundraiser for our Concert Series Donation Jar at the door.
Doors open at 1:30 pm

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Nakusp Secondary School Gym (Please see gym door)
Nakusp Badminton Club Membership Fee: $30/year plus $15/year insurance to Badminton BC $3 drop-in rate

BADMINTON

For Adults & NSS Students
November 3, 2015 to April 10, 2016
7:00 to 9:00 pm Tuesday & Thursday evenings
Nakusp Secondary School Gym

North Kootenay Sport & Recreation Report
Drop-in Soccer in Slocan: Sundays at 3 pm, all ages and levels welcome. Call Gord at 226-7062 for more information.

Funding for Kids Aikido Tuition is now available courtesy of White Pines Dojo children’s bursary. To apply for funding, please contact info@whitepinesdojo.com or stop by the dojo to observe a class! More information is available at whitepinesdojo.com.

North Kootenay Sport and Recreation Council are looking for Board Members. If you have ideas on how the local Sport & Recreation groups could be supported? Do you want to help better the area with activity? Contact us for more info.

Become a member of the North Kootenay Sport and Recreation Council for grant support, promotion and more! www.nkosrc.ca

Nakusp Secondary Sport and Recreation Council for grant support, promotion and more! www.nksrcouncil.com

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Kaslo Council Nov. 24: Nelson Kootenay Lake Tourism presentation

by Louis Roekner

Diana Duce, executive director of Nelson Kootenay Lake Tourism (NKLT), gave a presentation on what NKLT is and does, saying that it acts as a voice for six communities on Kaslo Lake including Kaslo. She would like to see more involvement and partnership from Kaslo and feels that the “unique culture and vibe” of the area is one of its greatest strengths. Council referred discussion of possible municipal participation as a NKLT stakeholder to a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

Council passed recommendations from the Health Care Select Committee.

- Elizabeth Ross and Kate O’Keefe were appointed to the committee, and Tom Humphries and Glen Stewart were re-appointed. Councillor Glorioso, who had asked that the appointments be tabled, voted against the motion.

- The December 9 Health Forum will be funded using a combination of municipal committee funds and deferred RDCK Area D funding provided to the committee in 2014.

Council will discuss amending the Health Care Select Committee’s terms of reference so that members of the public can serve on the committee in 2016-17.

- Council directed the Health Care Select Committee to answer questions from Tony Frary regarding the December 9 Health Forum. His questions include whether or not council formally debated the decision that the Village of Kaslo be held responsible for half of the funding for the forum and, if so, what the cost to the Village would be. He also wanted to know whether members of the public were able to discuss the answers prepared by the Interior Health Authority citing his concern that if there is no discussion it can hardly be called a forum.

- During public question period, Tony Frary asked for a commitment that the Health Care Select Committee would answer his questions quickly. Council said that a response would likely come from the council at the next meeting as no meeting had been scheduled to discuss them.

- Laurie Miss also expressed concern over how an interactive discussion between members of the public and IHA representatives would be carried out at the forum.

- Mayor Hewat said she is hoping IHA will answer follow-up questions for clarification but says she has not received confirmation from IHA as yet.

- Council received a response from Minister of Health Terry Lake, which acknowledged council’s concern over the loss of 24/7 emergency care in Kaslo. Lake, says, “The Village’s work with Interior Health to re-establish primary care services in the community is certainly a positive step forward, as is the recent addition of two new part-time physicians and a Nurse Practitioner in Kaslo.” Council referred the letter to the Health Care Select Committee and the RDCK, and will invite the Health Care Select Committee to draft a suitable response to the letter for review by council that reflects the actual personal situation at this time. There is no Nurse Practitioner currently practicing in Kaslo.

- Councillor Lang reported on RDCK recycling and waste issues. Openings on the recycling bins will be made bigger in the near future through some welding work which has yet to be contracted out.

He also reported that there will likely be no increase in tipping fees at the transfer station in 2016, and that a pilot program will be launched next year to educate the public about recycling acceptable for garbage before heavier penalties for recyclables in garbage are introduced. Part of this program will involve the installation of cones around the recycling bins; Lang admits he is curious as to how this will be set in motion.

- Council received an invoice for $4,749 from the GCFL Corporation in exchange for 100,000 units of the new recycling bin.

- RDCK draft budget for 2017 was released, which includes the Cow Finance for further discussion.

Kootenay Lake Local Conservation Fund

by Art Joyce

Conservation projects in the Kootenay Lake area will have a new source of funding starting in March 2017. The Ministry of Environment has announced new terms of reference for the Kootenay Lake Local Conservation Fund at its November 19 board meeting.

- The fund will be provided by residents of Areas E, D, and A of the RDCK in a referendum during last year’s local government election. Property owners in the three electoral areas will contribute $15 per parcel per year to the fund until 2024.

- The first call for proposals will occur in March 2017. Organizations interested in the project will be able to submit a proposal to complete by November or December.

- This will be followed by an RDCK board review in January and final project approvals in February 2017.

Successful applicants will be notified in March 2017, with agreements finalized in March or April. Land acquisition or covenant proposals for creating protected areas can be submitted at any time during the year provided sufficient notice is given for a full RDCK site visit and technical review of the application.

The terms of reference list the fund’s themes as aquatic systems, water conservation, wildlife and habitat conservation. Projects that reduce threats to a ‘biodiversity target’ will be given priority. Biodiversity targets are: connectivity of hydro-ecosystems, wetlands, native fish and habitat, old growth cedar hemlock forests, dry interior cedar hemlock forest, upland marshes and shallow open water, and cold springs.

- Issues identified as having the highest relevance to the area around Kootenay Lake includes: residential and commercial development, climate change, terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, natural system modifications (dams and water management use), transportation and service corridors (causing wildlife mortality and habitat fragmentation), and human recreational activity.

The funding is designed for projects that are currently not the responsibility of the federal, provincial or local governments, “with a focus on integrating the variety of projects into a cohesive approach that will have greater impact.” Although the primary focus will be on private land, Crown land projects will also be considered.

New IHCEO visits Kaslo

by Jan McMurray

The new CEO of Interior Health, Chris Mazurkewich, made a stop in Kaslo on November 30 on his tour of IH sites and programs. The Valley Voice spoke to him by phone while he was there.

“Right now is the best it’s been in years in terms of stability in Kaslo,” said Mazurkewich.

Reputation and retention of physicians has been difficult in Kaslo for the past 10 years, but things are looking up. Two new half-time physicians have just joined the one full-time physician at the community’s health centre.

“Recruitment and retention is an issue in a number of communities - it’s not unique to Kaslo,” said Mazurkewich. “We have to be creative, and to be realistic about what we’re asking of physicians in order to attract and retain them in rural communities.”

Mazurkewich said the old days are gone. “The old-style physician who put the community’s needs above his own at a great personal cost is no more,” he said. “People are looking for more of a work life balance. Everyone needs time off to have a rest from whatever job they do.”

Kaslo is not the only community without 24/7 emergency services, either. “That’s been a growing trend over the last 10 years,” said Mazurkewich. “Most groups figure you need four or five physicians to provide 24/7/365 coverage, unless you have doctors going above and beyond the call of duty. We don’t want burn-out of doctors and nurses, either.” And with the shortage of doctors across the country, increasing the number of doctors in communities to ensure 24/7 emergency service is not realistic, he said.

Kaslo and Area D Health Forum

December 9 • 6:30 pm

JV Humphries School, Kaslo

What is the current state of our health services in North Kootenay Lake? What are we doing to improve them?

Agenda:
1. Introductions from the Mayor and Area D Director
2. Interior Health Authority
3. BC Ambulance
4. Questions from the community
5. Summary for next steps

For more information, contact Mayor Hewat at mayor@kaslo.ca or Area D Director Watson at awatson@rdck.bc.ca

IHF president and CEO Chris Mazurkewich (right) talks to Veleron Community Health Centre nurse manager Robert Nold during a visit to Kaslo on Monday, November 9.
MP's message from the Hill with MP Richard Cannings, South Okanagan-West Kootenay

News from Parliament Hill has been overshadowed in the past two weeks by news of tragic events in Beant, Paris, and Mali. The terrorists that carried out these attacks may have had different local political goals, but they had one overarching aim in mind — to sow fear. And here in Canada the fear generated by these mass killings, especially those in Paris, has led some to question the plans to welcome thousands of Syrian refugees to Canada.

We must not let ourselves fall prey to this fear. We must continue to open our hearts and our communities to these people who have suffered so greatly and risked so much in leaving their homes. They will have been screened at multiple levels by the UNHigh Commission on Refugees and the Canadian government, and initial plans are to bring in, women, children, and families.

I have heard from all sides on this debate, but the overwhelming majority of messages I receive are very positive, including several requests for information on how to privately sponsor refugees. My colleague Nathan Cullen has put together a concise guide on sponsoring refugees on his website, so for more information go to: http://nathancullen.ca/refugees.

• I have been given the roles of Critic for Post-Secondary Education and Deputy Critic for Natural Resources. These are interesting and important portfolios with direct pertinence to this riding. During the campaign, I met with the presidents of both Okanagan College and Selkirk College to better understand the issues they face in providing appropriate and affordable education. I also heard from many students who face increasing tuition costs and crushing student debt burdens.

• Since most jobs now require some form of post-secondary education, we need to ensure that people making the right skills.

And natural resources — forestry and mining — are also critical to the economy of South Okanagan-West Kootenay, from the smaller in Trail, the pulp mill in Castlegar, to forestry operations and mines throughout the riding. Issues are similar across Canada, and I look forward to working with industry leaders and land managers to find the policies that bring the greatest benefit to Canadians in developing these resources while protecting the natural environment.

• On Monday, November 23, I was given the opportunity to ask a question about the environment in the House of Commons: "When will the government release the environmental impact report for the proposed Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline expansion?"

One month later - Kootenay - Columbia MP Wayne Stetski

Thank you to the 63,203 Kootenay-Columbia residents who voted in the October 19, 2015 election. Almost 74 percent of eligible voters in Kootenay-Columbia took that walk to the polls, which was the highest in all of Canada! This election was an excellent example of how every vote counts, and it is an honour to serve you as your Member of Parliament. So what’s been happening in the first month?

Starting out as a Member of Parliament is incredibly busy. One of the first things we do is go through the list of all our constituents who are21 years old and running. Every MP is responsible for the constituents in their riding. So I have to get started at once, find out who is in the riding, and start building a relationship.

We are assigned office locations in Ottawa based on ‘standing,’ so for this 42nd Parliament, Liberal MPs picked their offices first, Conservative MPs second, and we are in the process of picking our offices now. The next uptick will include my Ottawa office information — even if we’re picking third, it is an honour to have an office on Parliament Hill.

I also have to hire the staff. The NDP has minimized Constituency and Parliamentary Assistants and since we went from 103 seats to 44 in the election, there are several hundred qualified people in Ottawa who, under the contract, get the first opportunity to bid on the jobs both in Ottawa and across the country. That process is underway.

The MP has to serve their constituents whether permanent staff is in place or not. In the last month I have attended meetings and events in Fernie, Cranbrook, Castlegar, Invermere, Nelson, Kaslo, and Johnson’s Landing. There have been phone calls (250-419-9104) and emails (wayne.stetski@parl.gc.ca) and letters (PO Box 872, Cranbrook VIC V1C 4R0 until January 1 and then send mail to Unit B - 111 7th Ave S, Cranbrook VIC V1C 2V3) to answer.

There have been about 100 letters so far including those waiting for me in Ottawa. Experienced MPs have told me that once everything is up and running, an MP can expect to get between 300 and 500 emails per day. If you have sent me some correspondence and haven’t heard back yet please be patient — you will get a response! Phone me if it is urgent.

In the last month I was also in Ottawa for five days participating in an intensive orientation focused on finance and administration and the non-parliamentary aspects of being an MP. We are given a budget that includes staff salaries, office leases, providing information to constituents, in-riding travel, etc. If we go over it, we pay for it out of our own pockets.

On average we spend over six months of the year in Ottawa participating in Parliament and other national responsibilities (for example I am the NDP critic for National Parks) so I also have to find accommodation in Ottawa. The balance of the year is spent travelling around the riding meeting with constituents.

Our job as the Progressive Opposition is to make government and Canada better, and that is exactly what we will do.

Parliament begins on December 3 and continues until December 11 before breaking for Christmas. My next update will include a look at what it’s like to sit in the House of Commons as your MP. I’m sure it will be an exciting and humbling experience!

Have a happy Holiday Season and a great New Year! I hope to see many of you during the break when I start my Coffee With Your MP sessions around the riding.

Robert James Varaleau (Bob), known as many as Telebobb, passed away on November 6, 2015 after a brief illness. He was 66.

He was born in Ottawa, Ontario on October 17, 1949. Because his father was in the military, the family moved many years, living throughout Europe and Canada.

Bob lived in Vancouver as a young man while working for BC Tel. It was there that he met me, Myrna, while I worked for BC Hydro. The hydro and phone people had a favourite little pub close by where we congregated on Fridays after work.

In time, romance blossomed and Bob and I decided to keep each other. After moving to Victoria in 1978, we were married and started a family. Heather was born there.

Wanting to raise our family in a smaller community, we moved to New Denver in 1981. Katy was born here.

Bob worked for BC Tel and Telus for 38 years before happily retiring eight years ago.

He always enjoyed the community spirit here in the Slocan Valley and felt great satisfaction from living at our home in the country.

He was predeceased by his parents and sister, Patricia.

He is survived by his wife Myrna, daughters Heather and Katy, sister Darlene and half-sister Ruth.

Bob’s passing has left a big, empty space in the hearts and lives of those who loved him most: Myrna, Heather and Katy.

There will be a Celebration of Life in his honour at Bosun Hall in New Denver on Sunday, December 13 at 1:00.

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

Take notice that Christopher and Andrea Ryman, of Crescent Valley, BC, have applied to the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (MFLNRIO), Kootenay Region, for a Crown Grant — Extension to Holdings for Residential purpose, situated on Provincial Crown land located in Crescent Valley, BC, and containing 0.001 hectares more or less.

The Lands File for this application is 4405846. Written comments concerning this application should be directed to FrontCounter BC, 1902 Theatre Road, Cranbrook BC V1C 7R1 or email to: AuthorizationAgency.Cranbrook@mpl.gov.bc.ca. The comments will be reviewed by MFLNRIO up to December 18, 2015. MFLNRIO may not be able to consider comments received after this date. Please visit the website at http://arl.gov.bc.ca/ApplicationPosting/index.jsp for more information.

Be advised that any response to this advertisement will be considered part of the public record. Access to these records requires the submission of a Freedom of Information (FOI) request. Visit http://www.gov.bc.ca/foi for more information.
What it means to be ‘special’:
Caring for a Down syndrome child

by Art Joyce

It’s unlikely you’d understand unless you’ve been there. For Castlegar artist and Art and Design Education student, a Down syndrome child has had its share of both challenges and blessings.

Burt was already mother to a two-year-old son, Man, when her daughter Miele was born March 8, 1990 and diagnosed with Down’s. Burt has published a story of her mother-daughter journey in a 96-page hardcover book—Snapshot of a Soul Place—in the Land of Special Needs—with painting, drawing, photography, poetry and prose. Burt will launch the book locally at the Castlegar Public Library on Saturday, December 5 at 11 am.

“Perhaps the greatest obstacle faced by a person with special needs is being misunderstood and judged on life’s processes and events,” says Burt. “This book is my way of bridging that gap, celebrating the people, places and images that have shaped our lives and inspired my art.”

Burt’s initial reaction to her daughter’s birth surprised her and led to an awareness, a process of recognizing her mothering a special child but not of personal spiritual growth. Snapshot of a Soul Place offers a deeply touching and personal insight into the life of a family touched by Down’s syndrome. “I remember how painful it was when Miele was younger and some kindly person would have to tell me that she couldn’t participate in a class or program because the required one-to-one attention,” she recalls in the book. “I had to look to my skills and praxes to create a corner or window in this wall, to see it as an opportunity more than a struggle.”

With 40 original artworks and 60 photos, the book unfolds the story from birth to womanhood of 25-year-old Miele who moved to Castlegar with her mother in 2008. A graduate of Emily Carr University of Art and Design, Burt owns and operates Muddy Ticks Organized Crime & Garden Art landscape and garden service. Miele’s grandparents Henry and Rick Scott of Penticton have been supportive from the beginning. Scott has been the longtime Goodwill Ambassador for the Down Syndrome Research Foundation. When Miele was five, she stared in a video of the song he wrote for her called Angels Do, which ran for ten years on Treehouse TV and can now be seen on YouTube. Scott also co-wrote another song, The Upside of Down, for Down’s syndrome families with children’s entertainer Fred Penner and Pentium alumni Stuart Urban.

“I spent 20 years ago before ‘downs’ became part of our vernacular,” says Hennell. “Many people with Down syndrome were hidden away in an atrophicial inhuman. There are very few positive, if any, images of people with special needs in our culture. What makes this book’s artistry approach a unique and much-needed window.”

Burt is using her art to fill that gap in our culture. “My artistic sensibilities are put to good use in how I interact with Miele and how we unfold our lives together,” she writes. According to Hennell, Burt’s watercolours “float off the page and into the heart. She illuminates matters of grit and grace with simple honesty and humour.” However, she is a writer, producer, editor and songwriter in her own right, edited and curated the artwork for the book.

Burt attended the day program of Kootenay Society for Community Living, an excellent program for the developmentally challenged that keeps them active and engaged in community life. Kootenay Society for Community Living in Castlegar, Other Books in Nelson, and from www.snapshotofasoulplace.com. The book is funded in part by an Indiegogo campaign and a grant from Columbia Basin Trust and Kootenay Kootenay Cultural Alliance (KCKA).

Music and stories to celebrate Christmas in Kaslo submitted

Christmas Remembered in Kaslo is a holiday celebration in music and story at St. Andrew’s United Church Heritage Hall, Thursday, December 10 at 6:30 pm. This is the third annual Christmas Remembered concert presented by the Suzuki violin and guitar students led by Stephanie Judy and David Stewart.

There will be Christmas remembrances read by three local personalities—Andy LeCouffe, Gerald Garnett, and Mandy Bath. The music students present several pieces from their own repertoire and the audience is invited to raise their voices in the sing-along carols accompanied by the musicians.

A brief social with refreshments follows the concert. Admission is by your generous donation to benefit the North Kootenay Lake Food Cupboard c/o North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society.

$500 REWARD

You are invited to enter our contest to design a new logo for Spectrum Home and Family Care

Entries must be submitted before January 31, 2016

Call or email for details
250-265-3842
spectrumanes@snel.net

Local Shopping Savings

True Value $3.78 Antifreeze — SALE: $ 9.99/bottle
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PowerBuilt Multi function 14 in 1 Tool and Locking Knife — SALE: $17.95
Creekson 8 pc Soft Grip Ratchet Straps 1200 lb. — SALE: $34.90
Xmas Lights in stock { many marked down } $7.99

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Katrine Conroy, MLA
Wishes everyone Season’s Greetings and a Happy New Year for 2016

Please join Katrine for a Holiday Open House on
December 17, 2015
1:00 PM—5:00 PM

Light snacks and refreshments
will be served!
Please bring a non-perishable item for the food bank if you are able.

# 2 - 1006 3rd Street
Castlegar, BC
250-304-2783
1-888-755-0556

OBITUARY

ROHNSKY, EDWARD (Ed)
May 21, 1934 — November 14, 2015.

Edward “Ed” Roehnsky, a long-time resident of Kaslo, passed away on November 14, 2015 at the Trail Hospital at the age of 81 years young. Born in Visous Dakota Saskatchewan, he was the eldest of 10 brothers and sisters. Ed moved to Kaslo in 1954. A longtime resident of Kaslo, Ed owned and operated BEK excavating as well operated eromes for Firth American Contractors. Some of his more noticeable crane jobs were installing 40 foot Fred at Ricketts City on the corner of McLean Rd as well as installing the steeple on the renovated Bovenslins Heritage Church. Ed was also an accomplished musician and played accordion in his band “The O’C Rambles” at many functions up and down the Okanagan Valley. Above all, Family was everything to Ed and he also made sure he stayed in touch with everyone he knew along his walk of life. Ed and his wife Del of 59 years of marriage, set out on a new adventure in 1992 and moved to the Shuswap Valley where they built a little piece of home and enjoyed hosting their kids, grandkids and great grandkids creating forever fond memories for all. Ed was predeceased by his mother and father Joe and Gerelis, his brothers Ron and Clarence (Lorraine), sisters Vivian and Noleen. Forever remembered by his loving wife Mill, his kids Cheryl, Bernie (Shelley), Michelle (Keith) (Al) and Laurie (Ken). Ed was predeceased by his loving wife Mill, his kids Cheryl, Bernie (Shelley), Michelle (Keith) (Al) and Laurie (Ken). Ed was predeceased by his loving wife Mill, his kids Cheryl, Bernie (Shelley), Michelle (Keith) (Al) and Laurie (Ken). Ed was predeceased by his loving wife Mill, his kids Cheryl, Bernie (Shelley), Michelle (Keith) (Al) and Laurie (Ken). Ed was predeceased by his loving wife Mill, his kids Cheryl, Bernie (Shelley), Michelle (Keith) (Al) and Laurie (Ken). Ed Alzheimer’s disease, Nena Lee, Wilma and Arlene (Sharon), sister-in-law, Janice and numerous aunts and nephews. Ed was a special young than his years read, he gave unconditional love to his family. His bond with his grandkids and great grandkids was insurpassable. He could fix anything and was content patting around his little castle in Shuswap or just having coffee with friends and family. Funeral Services were held at St. Thomas’ Catholic Church, 750 N Rutland Road, Kaslo on Saturday, November 21, 2015 at 11:00 am with Father David John as Celebrant. In lieu of flowers please make a donation to Heart and Stroke Foundation in memory of Ed. Condolences may be sent to the family by visiting www.firstmemorialfuneralhomes.com. Arrangements entrusted with First Memorial Funeral Services, Kelowna, BC 250-762-2290.
December full of festive events at the Langham Gallery

The Langham Gallery in Kaslo invites all to its festive holiday events during December. Santa and his helpers will be in the gallery lobby on two Saturdays, December 5 and 12, from 9 to 11 am. This event is free to all children and young at heart. Here is your opportunity to meet Santa and to enjoy the new community holiday exhibition, ‘Inspirational: Celebrating Youth Creativity,’ running to December 13.

COMMUNITY

10 and Friday December 11, at 7:30 pm. Bring in 2016 at the annual Langham Polar Bear Swim on January 1, 2016, at noon. Celebrate the New Year with a dip in the lake at Kaslo Bay beach. There will be a fire with hot chocolate, hot dogs, fun and fellowship and a special guest you don’t want to miss! The Polar Bear Swim is the Langham Cultural Society’s well loved and biggest annual fundraiser. Bring your family, friends and pledge sheets or come with a donation to support the Langham, now celebrating 41 years of nurturing arts, culture and heritage in the Kaslo community. Throughout December pledge sheets can be picked up at Willow Home Boutique, Sunnyvale Naturals, and Front Street Market, Kaslo.

Please note, the Langham will be closed December 21 through to January 5.

Updated community profiles now available

reprinted from Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute newsletter

2015 community profiles for each of the 28 municipalities in the Columbia Basin-Boundary region are now available. The profiles feature statistical data drawing on a variety of sources, including purchased data and primary sourced local data.

"These profiles will be of interest to a cross-section of users, from investors looking to buy a business to social non-profit working on finding proposals to businesses developing their business plans," says Dr. Terri MacDonald, BC Regional Innovation Chair in Rural Economic Development. "We are working to source the best available data at a community level and that is not particularly easy in a rural context. We'd like to work more closely with partners in our rural communities who are collecting data to find ways to standardize data collection across communities and make that data available and comparable region-wide. A significant first step was securing multi-year data sharing agreements with our municipalities and regional districts in 2014."

Exhibition explores legacy submitted

An award-winning exhibition on the history of the Columbia River Treaty is now on at the Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History, 502 Vernon Street, Nelson. "Roll On Columbia: Exploring the Landscape and Culture of the Columbia River Treaty" explores the complex legacy of the 50-year-old Columbia River Treaty. With the treaty up for possible renewal or renegotiation in the near future, the exhibition provides present-day understanding of the region’s trans-boundary watershed ecosystem, a vast landscape draining water from the BC Rockies to Astoria, Oregon.

Winner of the Canadian Museum association award of excellence and funded by the Columbia Basin Trust, the Basin initiative," says MacDonald. Users are encouraged to contact the RD1 to provide feedback. Communities that are interested in customizing the profiles with community-level logos are also encouraged to contact the RD1. Community Profiles can be accessed at www.cfrdi.ca/resources/community-profiles.

Slocan District Chamber of Commerce & Area Merchants

Welcome you to their Annual pre-Christmas Merchants’ Night!

Thursday, December 10
5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Downtown New Denver

- Free hot dogs, hot chocolate & goodies (Outside Kootenay Savings)
- Santa arrives via fire truck at 6:00 pm (Outside Kootenay Savings)
- Christmas Carolers
- Cookie decorating
- Late night shopping & dinning until 8 pm

Sales & Fun Activities offered by Shops & Groups

Enter the Merchants’ Draw
To win a basket of items from New Denver’s Shops!

Pick up a card at any participating New Denver store. Get the card initialed at each of the stores on the card and drop your completed card at the Valley Voice office. Draw will take place at 8pm at the Valley Voice office.

The Valley Voice December 2, 2015