The Valley VOICE
Free!
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"Your independently-owned regional community newspaper serving the Arrow Lakes, Slocan & North Kootenay Lake Valleys."

Village moves closer to re-opening Nakusp Hot Springs

by Jan McMurray

With the Nakusp Hot Springs shut down since January 20, people will be happy to know that the Village is now moving ahead to do what is necessary to re-open the facility. A public information meeting has been scheduled for March 7 at the seniors hall, 7-8:30 pm.

A complete facility audit was done by Fairbanks Architects Ltd. and presented to the hot springs committee, members of council and senior staff on February 15. The report estimates the cost of the work required to re-open the hot springs at $375,000. A press release issued by the Village states that Nakusp residents will not be taxed to pay for this. The Village will borrow the money from the Municipal Finance Authority and will service the debt from future hot springs revenue. Although a timeline has not yet been determined, the press release says, "Council's intent is to re-open the hot springs as soon as humanly possible."

At the Nakusp council meeting February 23, council authorized the borrowing of the funds required to re-open the facility. It also decided to employ Fairbanks Architects as the project manager. Fairbanks will be asked to move ahead immediately with the preparation necessary to put the job out to tender.

Over and above the work that is required to re-open the facility, the Fairbanks report also recommends additional work at the hot springs worth at least $238,000. The Village press release says that the cost of the additional work "may affect taxation, as debt servicing will depend on the ability of the hot springs to generate enough revenue." Council decided not to act on the additional work right away, as the report indicates that this work is not necessary to re-open the facility. Also, new CAO Bob Lafleur pointed out that going ahead with this additional work requires consultation with the public and with the Ministry of Health.

As health officials will be the ones who decide exactly what work must be done before the facility can re-open, council asked staff to schedule a meeting with the Ministry of Health as soon as possible. Lafleur said that although the report recommends $375,000 worth of work to re-open, "we don't know that for sure until we review this with WCB and the Ministry of Health."

The facility has been completely closed since January 20, when health officials ordered it be shut down because of a lack of a filtration system and gutters. It had been shut down by the Village before this, in December, when the pool liners failed. Just the small pool was re-opened on December 22.

Work that Fairbanks says needs to be done to re-open the hot springs includes the removal of unsound concrete, replacing the pool liner, providing proper deck drainage and gutters, extending the pool deck heating, fire separate the basement and boiler room, mechanical upgrading (including filtration), plumbing and electrical work.

The transit bus that was going to Nakusp Hot Springs on Wednesdays from Silverton, New Denver and Nakusp is now going to Halcyon. The bus leaves the Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services office in Nakusp at 11 am and returns at 3:30 pm. The cost is $1.25 one way. To make a reservation, call 1-877-843-2877.

Kaslo Skatepark project roadblocked

by Jan McMurray

With funding, engineered plans and construction schedule all in place, the Kaslo Skatepark Committee is anxious to get going on building the skateboard facility at Vimy Park before timelines for spending grant funding run out. The Village, however, is not moving as quickly as the committee would like. Mayor Holland has presented new information that dredges up the old, tired and controversial issue of the skatepark location.

At a special meeting on February 21, Mayor Holland explained that due process was not followed back in February 2004 when council passed a resolution to accept the Vimy Park location. Holland said he was concerned that a skatepark near the waterfront was not in keeping with the Village's Official Community Plan (OCP), and that Tom Lancaster of SmartGrowth BC had pointed this out to him on his recent visit to Kaslo. Holland said that part of the proposed skatepark area had been designated as a picnic site in the OCP, and that the OCP did not allow for permanent structures on the waterfront.

Area D director Andy Shadrack, who was in the gallery, took exception to this interpretation of the OCP, saying he had been involved in creating the document in the late 1980s. He said the picnic site showed that permanent structures had been planned for the waterfront. He also said the waterfront was designated as a recreation area, so the skatepark fit nicely into the plan.

Holland asked council and the representatives from the skatepark committee and other members of the public in attendance if they could come up with alternate locations for the skatepark. He said that a petition containing about 100 signatures of people against the Vimy Park location had recently been submitted to the Village office and that when public concern is shown like this, council is legally obligated to act on it.

Councillor Suzan Hewat pointed out that during the time leading up to the 2004 council resolution approving the Vimy Park location, petitions had been received with about 100 people against the location and about 500 people in favour. She said that at that time, council looked at the pros and cons of three locations.

"Everyone on council is in favour of Vimy Park except you," she said to Holland. "There will always be NIMBY (not in my backyard) no matter where we propose to put the skatepark. It is unfair to re-visit it now. We're beating them [the skatepark committee] up over this."

Councillor Molly Leathwood said that the other two locations council had looked at were ruled out because of safety issues. She emphasized that safety was the most important issue, and made it clear that she would not entertain any more discussion on the arena or public works yard locations.

In the end, council decided to contact the Village's lawyer, Lorena Staples, for an interpretation of the OCP as it pertains to the Vimy Park location. Council also passed a resolution to give the skatepark committee permission to go ahead with construction at the Vimy Park location as long as the response from the lawyer was acceptable to council.

Nominations for Citizen of the Year sought

The Rotary Club of Nakusp is looking for submissions to nominate the 2005 Citizens of the year in Nakusp and area. Nominations seek a person of any age who has made an outstanding contribution to the community. This may include our youth, couples or individuals. Please include in your nomination as much supporting data as possible. Deadline is Friday, March 3, 2006. Please mail nominations to: Citizen of the Year Award Committtee, Box 62, Nakusp, BC V0G 1R0. For more information, please call 265-3373.

Hills' Nicholas Garmulewicz (centre) is the only cross country racer to have won two gold medals at the BC Winter Games. See full story page 7.

Over 100 girls attended the 10th annual Three Sister District Cupcakes and Candles sleepover event at the Nakusp Arena, February 24-25. The theme for this year's Girl Guides of Canada event was the "Pineapple Express." In this photo, a dozen Sparks participate in the parachute games.

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Undercover Tourist rates Nakusp high as place to visit

by Jan McMurray

The "undercover tourist" who has been assessing how our local communities measure up as tourist sites, was really taken with Nakusp.

So much so that he wants to put the village into a book he is writing called *Hidden Treasures of the West*. The book will feature a dozen small towns "with indomitable spirit, charm, fascinating characters and a great story to tell," according to Roger Brooks, the "undercover tourist" of Destination Development in Olympia, Washington. "They are not tourist stops, not towns that people would find easily on their own."

He was generally very impressed with visitor friendliness in Nakusp. He applauded the town for having an RV parking sign, pointing out that RVing was the fastest growing sector of tourism. He loves the village's logo, as well as the banners and the blue and white signs downtown. He thought many of the shops on Broadway were really charming.

"You have colour, life. You're a bit funky and fun. That's what I loved about Nakusp," he said.

Nakusp's primary lure to bring in visitors is the hot springs, he said, and acknowledged that having the facility closed was difficult. He encouraged promoting Halcyon Hot Springs. A general rule of thumb, he said, was to always be helpful — visitors really appreciate it and it leaves a lasting positive impression.

Brooks said the next step was to create some itineraries, including diversions such as the waterfront walkway, which he recommended be called a "promenade."

He said that Nelson was too far to be a day trip. "You have to become the destination," he said.

Especially because most people nowadays plan their trips from information found on the internet, Brooks said that Nakusp's number one priority was to re-design the Village and Nakusp Hot Springs websites. Brooks rated them way below the websites for Halcyon Hot Springs and Ainsworth Hot Springs.

He had lots of practical suggestions, like having hanging baskets and planters along Broadway with plants in the winter as well summer. An annual calendar of events such as the Nakusp Music Fest behind glass on a big sign was another idea. He said he thought it would be helpful to have an interpretive sign at the marina explaining the fluctuating water levels.

Brooks said people love ferry rides — the biggest attraction on the International Selkirk Loop driving tour is the longest free ferry ride in the world at Balfour. Unfortunately, the sign with the Galena/Shelter Bay ferry schedule on it was no help at all to Brooks or to four others from his office who had visited Nakusp a few months earlier. "None of us could figure out your ferries at all," he said. "How far away is Galena? Shelter? How much is the ferry? How long is it?" He suggested there be a brochure holder attached to the ferry sign so that clear ferry information was available.

He said visitor information should be available 24/7 in brochure racks in a few locations, such as the marina, the bulletin board near the General Store and the Visitor InfoCentre.

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Regional hospital district approves 22% increase in taxation

Arrow Lakes Hospital gets 10-bed expansion

by Jan McMurray

After approving a 22% increase in tax dollars to pay its 40% share for equipment for the four hospitals and three health centres in the West Kootenay-Boundary regional hospital district this year, board members decided to express their "serious concern over continuous requests for double-digit local property tax increases to the Ministry of Health, Interior Health and fellow regional hospital districts."

New Denver director Gary Wright put this motion forward at the February 15 meeting. His motion also called for a limit on the total tax amount to a maximum increase of 5% per year, but that part was voted down.

Slocan director John Gates explained why: "It was defeated because we'd never get anything in our little hospitals." He said directors felt the 5% limit would mean budget cuts, with a good chance that the smaller facilities would be the losers.

Wright explained that by tabling the motion, he was "trying to point out how much downloading is going to the local tax base." He also pointed out that regional hospital taxes are rising at a great rate.

In 2004, regional hospital taxes were $24.43 on a home assessed at $100,000. In 2005, that figure jumped to $39.75 per $100,000. In 2006, it is up 9% to $43.39 per $100,000.

Nakusp director Janis Dahlen, when reporting on the hospital district meeting to Nakusp council, described the increase as "not too high, considering what Nakusp is getting." The budget includes about $2 million over three years for ten more complex care beds at the Arrow Lakes Hospital in Nakusp. An architect's conceptual drawing of the hospital with the expansion shows space for ten more beds again, indicating a possibility of more expansion in the future. The budget also includes $135,125 for emergency generator upgrades at the Nakusp facility.

Other items included in the budget are an emergency electrical generator upgrade for Boundary Hospital in Grand Forks and the health centre in Castlegar; two anesthetic units and an ultrasound for Kootenay Lake Hospital in Nelson; a C-Arm imaging system, chemistry analyzer, urology imaging system and Gamma camera for the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital in Trail.

Also on the agenda was a request from Area D director Andy Shadrack for $20,000 for the Kaslo Volunteer Fire Department to pay for medical equipment needed for the Lardeau Valley and North Kootenay Lake First Responder program. This was denied, as it is not in the hospital district board's mission statement to fund such projects. The board funds equiment and buildings as defined in the Hospital Act.

Each year, Interior Health submits to the hospital district a list of equipment it wishes to purchase for the facilities in the district, and asks for the district's 40% share of the funding. The other 60% comes from the province. The hospital district essentially rubber stamps IH's request.

Thank a feminist!

In celebration of International Women's Day (IWD) March 8, the West Kootenay Women's Association and the Nelson Women's Centre invite the community to step up to the stage for *Five Feminist Minutes*.

This year's *Five Feminist Minutes* will be at the Royal Pub. Doors open at 6:30 pm.

Women who want to perform sign up the evening of the event. You have five minutes to sing, dance, recite prose or poetry, sew a pair of pants, perform a skit, body paint yourself or a friend or what have you. Basically anything goes. But you must be done in five minutes or you're literally pulled from the stage by a giant hook.

You can sit back and enjoy the show or be the star that you are. The show starts at 7 pm with admission by a sliding scale: $5—$500. Come out to support your local Women's Centre and honour the exceptional women in your life! Men are welcome in the audience but only women are asked to perform.

• International Women's Day (8 March) is an occasion marked by women around the world. This date is commemorated at the United Nations and designated in many countries as a national holiday. Women on all continents, divided by national boundaries and by ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic and political differences, join together to acknowledge and celebrate their day.

Hired Equipment Registration
West Kootenay District

We are now completing our Hired Equipment lists for the upcoming fiscal year. **All individuals or companies who are currently registered through the Ministry of Transportation office in Nelson or Grand Forks will be receiving invitations to re-register their equipment for the coming fiscal year by mail by the end of February.**

Individuals or companies who were NOT registered in 2005, and wish to have their equipment listed, are hereby invited to visit the Nelson or Grand Forks office to obtain the appropriate registration forms. The Nelson office is located at 4th Floor, 310 Ward St., Nelson, BC. The Grand Forks office is located at 7290 2nd St., Grand Forks, BC. Alternatively, you may phone 1 800 665-2515 (Nelson) or 1 800 665-2699 (Grand Forks) to have the forms mailed or faxed to you. You may also re-register your equipment, or register new equipment electronically at: www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca

You will be required to have Commercial (Comprehensive) General Liability Insurance with minimum $2 million third party liability, and a WCB clearance letter prior to starting work on any ministry projects. Dump trucks must provide a current weigh slip, front tire size, and manufacturer's front axle rating.

Equipment can only be registered in one area in any given year, and must be "owned or lease-to-own" in order to be eligible for registration. Seniority is not transferable from area to area.

The deadline for new registrations for fiscal year 2006/2007 is 4:30 p.m. on Monday, March 20, 2006. Late registrations will be accepted, but may appear at the bottom of the Open list. Note that there is no charge for registering new equipment, or for changing or deleting equipment already listed.

Jacques Dupas,
District Manager, Transportation
West Kootenay District

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Ministry of Forests
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TIMBER SALE LICENCE A77732

Pursuant to section 20 of the Forest Act, a Timber Sale licence is being offered for sale.

Closing Date: March 23, 2006 @ 11:00 AM (LOCAL TIME), BC Timber Sales, Kootenay Business Area, Nelson, BC

Geographic Location: Limpid Creek, located approximately 40 km southwest from Salmo, within the Arrow Boundary Forest District

Estimated Volume: 37,786 cubic metres, more or less

Upset Stumpage Rate: $12.61 / cubic metre

Term: Two (2) years

Estimated Species / Volume: Grand fir 18,373 m^3, Lodgepole pine 6,477 m^3, Douglas fir 5,307 m^3, Balsam 3,170 m^3, Cedar 2,148 m^3, White pine 917 m^3, Larch 691 m^3, Hemlock 535 m^3, Spruce 168 m^3,

The upset stumpage rate was determined by Variable Rate Calculation. The Bonus Bid applies to ALL coniferous sawlog grades including Gr. 3.

Tenders will only be accepted from individuals or corporations registered as a BC Timber Sales Enterprise, Category 1, 2 or 3.

Stumpage rates will be fixed for the duration of the licence term and for the duration of any extension to that term.

Comments: Harvesting method is clearcut with reserves, utilizing a combination of ground-based equipment and overhead cable-yarding equipment. The licensee will be required to construct approximately 3.7 km of permanent and temporary roads within the timber sale area.

This licence is subject to, among other things, Take or Pay Waste Billing requirements, new maximum term limits and extension fee and surrender provisions. Applicants are advised to carefully consider the impact of these changes when formulating their bids. Further information on these changes may be found in Advisory Bulletin 06/28/04.

Applications will be accepted by the BC Timber Sales Manager, Kootenay Business Area, 1907 Ridgewood Road, Nelson, BC V1L 6K1 no later than 11:00 AM on March 23, 2006.

In respect to this proposed timber sale licence, there is additional material which the applicant must consider in their application. This material and application forms may be obtained from the above BC Timber Sales Office or the ministry web site at: http://www5.for.gov.bc.ca/notices/init.do Specify Timber Sale Licence A77732.

COLUMBIA BASIN TRUST
Arts, Culture & Heritage Funding Programs 2006-2007

The Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance, in partnership with the Columbia Basin Trust, invites individuals of all artistic disciplines, arts, culture and heritage groups in the Canadian Columbia Basin to apply for project funding.

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Deadlines: March 24 & April 7, 2006

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BC Hydro accepts responsibility for Arrow Lakes boat launches

by Jan McMurray

BC Hydro has decided to comply with the Water Comptroller's order to provide and maintain boat launching facilites at seven locations on the Arrow Lake Reservoir, including Nakusp.

Cam Matheson, senior operations manager at BCH, said, "We're glad that the order was issued because it finally sets aside the question around what our obligations are in terms of access on the Arrow Lake reservoir. We want to use it to leverage better relationships with the communities on the Arrow Lakes, including Nakusp."

During the many years of lobbying to have BCH take responsibility for the Nakusp ramp, most notably by former Area K director Helmut Klughammer, BCH always felt the ramp was outside its responsibility because it has never belonged to the company.

Matheson explained that BCH would like clarification on two items in the Water Comptroller's order that present the company with legal difficulties, and has issued an appeal as a way to get that clarification. But he assured, "This will not prohibit us from complying. I cannot emphasize enough that we see this order as a very positive thing and as an opportunity to start to build long-term relationships with the communities."

The aging Nakusp boat ramp needs to be replaced.

History of boat ramps on Arrow Reservoir

In 1965-66, BC Hydro and BC Parks agreed to collaborate in the creation of a park system on land surrounding the Arrow Reservoir. In 1977-78, further negotiations resulted in an agreement for BC Hydro to provide recreation facilities as well as land to BC Parks. Hydro constructed boat launch facilities at four sites — Shelter Bay (1977), Burton (1968), Edgewood (1975-77) and Fauquier (1968), and transferred the 20-30 acre waterfront sites at these locations to BC Parks in a 1980 agreement. This agreement also included the transfer of a development fund of $610,000 to BC Parks to construct facilities at Blanket Creek, MacDonald Creek and Shelter Bay. In a separate 1980 agreement, BCH agreed to construct roads, launch ramps, parking lots and turnarounds at Burton, Fauquier and Edgewood, and to contribute $30,000 for future maintenance.

The reason Hydro and Parks entered into this agreement was that they believed it would fulfill the requirements of clause (m) of BC Hydro's licence. Clause (m) states that the "licensee shall provide public access to the reservoir area as may be directed by the Comptroller." BC Hydro constructed or funded the development of boat access facilities in collaboration with BC Parks and then transferred the land and improvements to them for operation within the parks system. BC Parks was viewed as the appropriate public sector provider of recreational opportunities and the custodian of the land and facilities for that purpose.

When asked why this arrangement did not work out, BC Hydro communications manager Diane Tammen said, "In terms of laying the foundation for a system of public waterfront parks on Arrow Reservoir, I think it was a success. Where it came apart was in the lack of maintenance and upkeep of the facilities provided. This may be because of fiscal constraints of BC Parks and the communities, and the long delay in getting clear direction from the Comptroller on clause (m)."

The Nakusp ramp was not part of the agreement with BC Parks. It was built by BC Hydro for the federal Department of Public Works (DPW) in about 1969 as compensation for the old ferry dock that had to be removed to make way for the new reservoir. BC Hydro constructed the new ramp in accordance with plans and specifications provided by DPW and transferred it, together with the land it occupied, for $1 to DPW. DPW operated the facility under Small Craft Harbours Branch until about 1995 when it was transferred to the Village of Nakusp together with a maintenance fund.

Today, MacDonald Creek, Shelter Bay and Syringa Creek are Class A provincial parks. The sites at Burton, Edgewood and Fauquier, to the best of BC Hydro's understanding, are now Class C Provincial Parks, operated under Park Use Permit by the respective communities.

One of the tricky legal issues for BCH is that all of the existing boat launch facilities on the reservoir are owned by third parties and on lands occupied and owned by third parties. "There is no stipulation in the order about how we would be able to fulfill our obligation to provide access when we don't have rights of access, property ownership or facility ownership at this time," said Matheson. "We have to figure out how to resolve these things — if not, we'll have to rely on our appeal to figure it out."

The other part of the order that BCH has appealed is the swimming lagoon at Blanket Creek Park, on the Revelstoke side. Matheson says this site is not attached to the reservoir. "We don't feel it serves the public or us to provide a swimming lagoon inside a public park that is not attached to the reservoir. Part of our concern here is there are potential public health issues, so we need to talk to the Water Comptroller and figure out if there is a better way to deal with this particular element of the order," he said.

Matheson said he hoped to solve these two issues with the Water Comptroller before the hearing date for the appeal, but "we'll go to the appeal board if we have to. The order as it has been articulated is not workable."

He said that in the meantime, the company will start to develop the terms of reference for each of the seven sites where BCH has been ordered to provide boat launching facilities — Nakusp, McDonald Creek, Burton, Fauquier, Edgewood (Eagle Creek), Shelter Bay and Syringa Creek. The terms of reference are due within six months.

Matheson speculated that the company may have to ask for an extension on the six-month deadline, describing what is involved in the terms of reference: "We have to make an assessment of the condition of these boat launch facilities, what maintenance is required, and if upgrading is required."

Matheson also mentioned that the draft Columbia River Water Use Plan (WUP) is sitting in the Water Comptroller's office waiting for approval. "The water use plan is also a piece of this — the consultative committee in the Columbia agreed that BC Hydro should do some additional work on the boat ramps, like extending them and the like," he said, indicating that it would help BCH in its process if the Water Comptroller would make a decision on the WUP.

BCH submitted the draft WUP to the Water Comptroller in August 2005. The goal of water use planning is to find a sustainable balance between the competing uses of water, taking into consideration environmental, social and economic values. The consultative committee that met with BC Hydro over the four-year-long process to draft the WUP consists of several local people — Area K director Paul Peterson, Janis Dahlen of Nakusp, Jim Forbes of Edgewood and Penny Dewar of Arrow Park.

At the February 23 Nakusp council meeting, Mayor Hamling thanked Councillor Janis Dahlen for her work on the consultative committee and especially acknowledged former Area K director Helmut Klughammer for "never giving up" on this issue. Council also recognized current Area K director Paul Peterson's efforts, as well as the support from the RDCK board.

Brilliant dam leading performer in North America

The Brilliant dam and generating station, co-owned by Columbia Basin Trust, was recognized as a leading performer against other hydro stations in North America at the recent Hydro 2005 conference.

A study commissioned by the owners compared the operation with 325 similar operations across North America.

"The overall results are very positive, as we performed well in all areas compared to our peers," said Neil Muth, CEO of the Columbia Basin Trust. "We are especially pleased to have been awarded 'leading performer' status in the area of maintenance for the Brilliant dam and generating station."

The Brilliant dam, constructed in the 1940s by Cominco Metals Ltd., was purchased by joint venture partners Columbia Power Corporation (CPC) and the trust in 1996. Work to rehabilitate and upgrade the dam was immediately undertaken and reached completion in 2003. The upgrade work increased the generating capacity of the power plant by 20 MW (megawatts), for a total capacity of 145MW.

In 2005, CPC, as joint venture manager, engaged the services of Haddon Jackson Associates, Inc. (HJA), a leading management consulting firm specializing in hydro performance improvement, to provide benchmarking services that would allow the partners to compare their operating and maintenance performance against peer organizations across North America. CPC participated in a study led by HJA, which compared performance data from 325 stations.

"The study provided information on a number of functions, such as operations, plant, waterways and dam maintenance, investment, public affairs and regulatory requirements," said Wally Penner, executive director of Community and Regional Affairs for CPC. "The information gathered was segmented into groupings that allowed for valid comparison, based on factors such as energy output, number of units, and age. Many major utilities in North America, such as BC Hydro and the New York Power Authority, also participated."

FortisBC currently provides maintenance and operational services at the dam under a long-term contract with the partners.

The partners' Arrow Lakes generating station (ALGS) also participated in the benchmarking study. The 185MW powerplant is constructed 400 metres downstream of the Hugh Keenleyside Dam near Castlegar. Construction began in 1999 and the powerplant went into commercial operation in 2002. In May 2004, damage to the powerplant's intake channel was detected.

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CLOSING DATE: March 13/2006
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YRB yellowhead road & bridge

YRB (Kootenay) Ltd is proud to congratulate RoseAnne Sopow from Lucerne Secondary School as the recipient of the 2005 YRB Scholarship of $1000.

Our employee owners encourage 2006 graduates to apply for one of four such scholarships made available throughout the Kootenay Service Area.

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Voices from the Valleys

Locating Kaslo's Skatepark...

A large number of Kaslo residents oppose locating the skatepark in Vimy Park by the village's waterfront. Personally, I tend to favour the proposed location. It's central so that all the kids can use it, close to downtown so they can patronize local business. It gives them some beautiful mountain vistas to enjoy during their breaks from boarding. Spectators will be treated to the same views. That part of the waterfront doesn't really get used that much, and with a little landscaping it could be quite beautiful.

Nakusp's skatepark is one of that village's best-used sports facilities. It's a huge success — drawing kids and their parents from all over the area to a point about two block's from downtown. It's proven to be a great attraction.

As a focal point for youth culture, it makes enormous sense to locate the skatepark in Vimy Park. There's playgrounds and a variety of other sports facilities there already

I have to agree with Mayor Holland though, when he says that the process for approving the skatepark was flawed. There should have been public meetings. If there was substantial opposition to the waterfront location, alternative sites could have been examined. The matter could have been submitted to a referendum. Instead, Village Council passed a resolution supporting the construction of the skatepark at its proposed location, subject to the skatepark committee's finding the money to build and engineer it.

It's a little late in the game to be calling for public meetings at this point, though. In fairness to the skatepark committee, who've busted their buns raising the money to build the facility, and who face deadlines from their funding agencies, it would be wrong to deny them the location at this point.

Dan Nicholson, publisher

Why avoid planning?

The question "Why do we avoid planning in the Slocan Valley" that I heard expressed at the Smart Growth community meeting in Silverton is interesting. What has been our past experience? Someone described the "Can the Plan" campaign 20 years ago as "brutal." How many community planning types did we lose in the CORE process? In mid valley the LRUP planning process (Perry's Ridge) pitted neighbours against neighbours with slashed tires and smear campaigns.

These all were, I believe, planning processes instigated and led by agencies from outside the valley. What would a planning process that was instigated and led by community residents look like? As individuals, business owners and members of the caring community (non-profits) — in short, as citizens — how will we decide how we want our communities to look/feel/sound like?

We clearly need communication agreements set at the beginning of meetings. We must avoid the "us" versus "them" attitude and screaming matches of community meetings in the past. I favour face-to-face conversations, dialogues, forums.

We need to allow ourselves to express with full emotion, passionately. We do get worked up — not because we are nasty, but because we care. We can find community solutions that include everyone.

People are not our problem; outdated provincial regulations and bylaws, and real estate grabs are the problem. We need to work solidly with our local decision-making bodies — the municipal councils and Regional District — to put systems in place that work for people and not necessarily for bureaucracies.

But try being a village councillor. There is so much that is urgent to deal with that important things, like changing bylaws to regulate growth, can get pushed to the back of the agenda. As citizens, we really have no choice but to plan, to talk to each other long enough to figure out an action, however small. These are our issues and we must insist that our decision makers pay attention and do what can be done.

Someone commented in the Silverton meeting that it is always the same old faces at the meetings. My response — I love those same old faces and don't see them nearly enough. It seems the stars might be in our favour — we have beautiful people as village councillors and mayors, and we have Corky Evans and Alex Atamanenko to work with as elected representatives.

In the Regional District study a few years back, I think it was over 90% of the people said they live here because of the beauty and clean water. Our values are shared and our lives are intertwined. Let's build on our assets and look squarely at our liabilities. Sometimes your greatest liablity turns out to be the greatest asset.

Laverne Booth
Winlaw

The Valley Voice welcomes letters to the editor on any topic of interest to our readers. All letters must be signed and have a daytime phone number.

We will not publish anonymous letters, nor may you use a pseudonym, except in extraordinary circumstances. We will not knowingly publish any letter which is defamatory or libellous.

Please type your letter, and e-mail it if possible. Many handwritten letters are impossible to read. Any letter may be edited for brevity.

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

What can Nelson do for the region?

As a former rural director on the RDCK, I read with interest about Nelson's attempt to further extract money from the regional district for tourism promotion.

Nelson benefits more from the RDCK than the rest of the district put together. It's a cash cow for the city.

The RDCK provides the second largest payroll of high paying jobs for Nelson. They have a large office complex that further benefits Nelson. All functions are centred in Nelson to provide sometimes questionable benefits to the rest of the region.

The boundary expansion Nelson exercised for a tax grab on the dams is obscene. This has left the rural people of that area without a taxation source for their future service needs. Without the wealth that comes from the rural areas, Nelson would not exist.

I suggest Nelson forget their "What can the rural areas do for us?" and change it to "What can Nelson do for the region?"

Larry Greenlaw
Meadow Creek

Health care — for people or profit?

Premier Gordon Campbell is taking brother-in-law Dr. Vertesi to Europe to look at health care systems. The NDP health critic was asked by the Minister for Health if he was disappointed that the tour did not include Cuba. Perhaps we should all be disappointed. Cuba survived a very difficult time in the 90s without closing a single hospital or school, a skill the Campbell government clearly doesn't know and should be very interested to learn. Campbell could also benefit greatly by extending his trip to include Venezuela, which is working on getting a 100% free public medical system. Doesn't that get you excited, Gordon ?

But of course a neoliberal would not have the ears to hear about any systems that merely benefit people, only how best to discreetly turn health care into cash for corporations. That's what it's all about really, isn't it ?

Keith Newberry
Slocan

Peacekeeping?

It nearly drives me crazy whenever I hear the media or a member of the public refer to what our troops are doing in Afghanistan as peacekeeping.

In order for a military operation to be true peacekeeping, one very important condition must be met. That is the principle of strict neutrality. For obvious reasons, a peacekeeping force cannot be seen as being on one side against the other. My own experience as a peacekeeper was in Cyprus (twice) where neutrality was not a problem. It was quite easy to feel equal contempt for both sides (Turks and Greeks). But the point is that, in Afghanistan, our troops are on one side against the other. The Canadian government has decided (rightly, I think) that the survival of the current Afghan leadership is not only in the best interests of the Afghan people but, by extension, the world at large, including Canada. Whether or not the survival of that leadership is likely or even possible, time alone will tell. But I believe it is worth the effort because, if for no other reason, any conceivable alternative is, well, scary.

It is, however, a legitimate debate. There are strong arguments both pro and con for Canadian involvement. But one misapprehension under which we should not be labouring is the idea that it is a peacekeeping operation. It is not.

John Banta
Fauquier

Skatepark boondoggles

It's not easy to get good people to participate in the political process, much less young people. So, when a group of Kaslo youth decided they wanted a skatepark and approached the Village for land, by the lake, that was interesting.

At that time we might have said, "No, absolutely not" or "sure, anywhere but there, that spot is definitely unacceptable."

Instead, we said, "Well, okay, if you can demonstrate 'broad public support' and if the facility is engineered and if you can raise the money."

The kids did not give up; they submitted to the political process!! They got the "support," they got the engineering study and they raised the money and they did all of this in good faith. It's no good trying to hide behind more engineering studies, Official Community Plans, petitions or legal tricks. A bargain was struck, a promise made. If construction is now going to cost a little more, we'll just have to suck it up.

Ultimately, our kids and our community are merely a reflection of us. So, Kaslo, what do we want our kids to be — citizens or cynics? Maybe it's time to let our elected officials know what we expect of us.

Gary Cockrell
Kaslo

Let's control development

I'm very thankful to the various Slocan Valley governing bodies and citizens' groups for their initiative in planning for future development.

Development is happening, but if we start now, we can direct it before our valley's desirable values are completely destroyed. I'm thinking of the quality, timing, and flow of our water, the air quality, soil quality and stability, noise, visual landscapes, wildlife, sustainability of the natural environment and the tourist attractions that help us to live here and have the necessary services (hospitals, schools, and the like). We live in a green jewel, so precious that we are in great danger of losing it to uncontrolled residential and tourist development: We need development plans that will protect us!

Three studies that captured and guided me to thoughts of a "Green" Slocan Valley are: the "Silva" study which provides a lot of the information necessary to protect sustainable forest values and define the area; Dr. Stan Rowe's "Manifesto for the Earth," which is a list of self evident truths necessary for our survival; and Dr. Thomas Power's "Economic Benefits for Protecting the Environment," presented at the last "Flow" conference here. He is professor and chairman of the Dept. of Economics at the University of Montana. Simply put, he shows that businesses that want to participate in such "Green" plans can expect a very good investment, and it will benefit the residents and landowners.

Achieving this kind of plan may involve some tough decisions, but very few areas have a unique jewel to protect as we do. It is folly to compete with services and attractions available outside this valley.

Eric Faulks
Hills

Will Kaslo council learn anything from the skatepark experience?

The proposal to build a skateboard park on the waterfront of Vimy Park in Kaslo first appeared two years ago. There was a call for a public meeting to discuss the proposal. There was no public meeting. Instead, there was an open house at the Kaslo Community Hall, where citizens could view a very attractive drawing of the skateboard structure and sign a petition in support of the proposal.

A small group of Kaslo citizens finally got a public meeting of sorts when Mayor Jim Holland allowed members of the audience to take part in council deliberations on the proposal at a special council meeting on February 22.

Clearly, this is not the way to conduct a democracy. When a significant proposal, such as the skatepark proposal, comes to council, council should provide a public meeting and advance information.

Will council learn anything from the skatepark experience?

Right now council has three big-ticket tax increase proposals on its plate and the three are closely related: the need for a new fire hall at a new location; a proposal to restore the city hall building; and a proposal to buy the provincial building, which might

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Voices from the Valleys

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provide a temporary or permanent home for village offices.

The requirement for a new fire hall can proceed through a well-oiled RDCK process which provides information and the possibility of a referendum.

What about information and public meetings on City Hall restoration and purchase of the provincial building? Not likely, folks.

There will be a "think tank" on the provincial building on March 1, with no advance information, just the sort of thing that was done for the skatepark proposal.

No sign of a public meeting on the City Hall restoration project. Instead, a facilitated Let's Get Organized workshop on February 18 with a $10 entry fee and no advance information.

Without meaningful public participation, another step was taken in a move to a full-blown, ill-defined, million-dollar restoration project.

Brace yourselves, council, for repeat performances of the skatepark debacle.

Jane Lynch
Shutty Bench

Meeting was a circus

The special meeting of Kaslo Village Council held last Tuesday February 21, which aired over the Kaslo Community channel the following day, was an eye opener for the way in which Mayor Holland can turn the due process of governance into a three ring circus, with himself as ringmaster. The most obvious theme to emerge in that horse and pony show was the skatepark committee's mistrust of the mayor. Even council members pointed to several incidences where Holland acted as if on their behalf, but without their consent. They too questioned the validity of some of his information.

So, on just whose behalf is the mayor acting? We all know the Kaslo Jazz Etc. Society is bursting at the seams and is looking to expand its venues about town. We can all appreciate their love of the beach setting. We also know that Mayor Jim Holland is also a director of the Kaslo Jazz Etc. Society.

My question to all of this is: When Holland acts on his own and pursues his tangents to find ways and means to derail the skatepark committee's momentum, is he in reality not acting on his concerns for the interests of the jazz festers instead — with or without their consent?

That meeting on February 21 demonstrated Holland's skill as a circus juggler and his ability to wear a variety of public faces. Is he guilty of juggling two conflicting concerns on the skatepark issue? Is he actually wearing the face of director of the Kaslo Jazz Etc. Society under his mask of the mayor of Kaslo?

Larry Braley
Kaslo

Will karma come around for Jumbo?

Preservation of the environment is vitally important to the well being of human existence.

Native elders have said their elders told them as children that the day would come when we would not be able to drink the water from the streams or eat the fish. Hopi prophecies claim that the day will come when mankind will not be able to control their inventions and so realize they cannot eat money.

History has proven that karma exists. Buffalo Bill slaughtered the buffalo to near extinction, not only for their hides. The slaughter of the buffalo was also motivated by the federal government to leave the meat to rot in order to starve the natives. Today, the forest industry has justified harvesting all pine beetle infested trees. The karmic return is when these infested trees are transported, the infestation is spread.

Jumbo Glacier, which is proposed as a site for a large alpine resort, is an area respected and used by many who have been long-time residents and have proven, by following the government's guidelines, that this area is used to hike and retreat in by thousands who live here and vacation here in the Kootenays. We have been good stewards who have peacefully protested the proposed resort by following the government's guidelines. That those in Nelson and Kaslo area, who were included in the municipal meetings for the "final input," have been suddenly excluded by this governing process is like pulling the carpet out from under us as rudely and inconceivably as Buffalo Bill proudly exhibited the slaughtering of the buffalo.

I and all who have put in their time over the past 15 years to see to it that Jumbo Glacier is preserved will not turn our backs until preservation is accomplished with respect and dignity. Why? Because we have rightfully followed the government guidelines proving that Jumbo Valley is largely used by over 2000 people for recreation and the proposed project is not environmentally sound.

Should this become an example that the government must honour its own guidelines and adhere to our rights over a foreign investor's, at last karma is a reality. It is my prayer that this government does not repeat history with dishonour.

Jana Harmon
Kaslo

We have to take care of ourselves

My 93-year-old Mom died. Always a young woman at heart — a sweet dancing party girl in fact — she lived through hard times, successfully thriving as a single widowed mother at a time when single women were less in vogue. She remained actively independent until she could dance no more. Hers was a simple life well lived, her longevity a pillar of hope for anyone life threatened: Mom was a healthy 50-year survivor of cancer.

Immersed in nostalgic family matters these past months, Katrina broke my heart, witnessing another result of the rapid unravelling of North America's social, political, judicial, medical, and economic institutions.

The neo-Conservative / Liberal obsession with budgets while ineptly squandering billions in taxpayers' money, your money, is as hypocritically destructive as all their moral and economic judgements, lies and fabrications civilized society is forced to endure daily. Every six-figure, top-level executive has proven totally incompetent in doing their job. Their inadequacies and corruption unleashed those who lust for Absolute Power absolutely, who rely on massive indifference, manipulated ignorance and legitimized secrecy from clandestine back-room deals, without which modern multinational capitalism cannot compete or survive: so it came to be capitalists all lie, all the time. In Canada, Harper's reckless folly to impose outdated social controls and economic models on us will be no different because it can be no different.

My Mom reminisced about being a survivor: her family's financial struggles; her poor mother dying of sepsis after an operation performed on her kitchen table; a genocidal war which touched our Jewish family intimately; building a successful family business until my Dad died. Eventually the Vietnam War fractured our then adult family: my upwardly mobile businessman brother, brash New York sister, ex-US Air Force Military Police officer older brother...

Through it all — several wars, big deliberate lies, racial bigotry, institutionalized violence and cruelty beyond belief — there were tangible aspirations, if ever so delicate and frail, towards a world without war, real movement towards a world of health and prosperity offering blessed hope internationally. Not overnight, but moving effectively forward over time.

Our palpable uneasiness today is perhaps knowing that hope has been stripped from our children's futures by impertinently intrusive government and not enough effective governance, by bungling bureaucrats who have failed to plan for our general prosperity through universal access. These fascist criminals, combining the military, government and multinational corporations, represent the driving neo-conservative capitalist ideology of the 21st Century: perpetual war, heinous propaganda continually broadcast everywhere, available anywhere 24 hours and omnipresent, destabilizing, intimidating fear, the neo-conservative tools of social control. My Mom just called them crooks.

It's time, before there is no time, for the Canadian people to provide leadership for its Canadian government to govern effectively, re-establish Canada's leading international role in negotiations to end warfare and return to our common quest for world peace and prosperity. Instead of friendly Canadian troops prepared to kill or be killed we need to send our scientists, doctors, nurses, educators, free medicine, housing and water purification stations. Let the local people protect us.

My Mom, who was an active volunteer, always said, "We have to take care of ourselves, we can't trust anyone else to do it for us any more!" And Mom was always right.

Joel Harris
Passmore

The Bible was never meant to be taken literally

Re: For The Love of God – Ron Bowman, Feb. 17. The Bible is an archaic collection of writings that was put together in its present form (ignoring many other Christian writings of the time) under the guidance of Emperor Constantine's whim and political aspirations. That it is accurate and non-contradictory is a belief based on ignoring anything that contradicts that opinion.

Mr. Bowman's statement that the Dead Sea Scrolls are 95% identical to the present day translation of the Bible can only be an assumption based on someone else's opinion because if he read them himself, he could not still hold to that belief.

There have been many books written over the past few thousand years that claim to be the result of direct communication with God. One classic example is the Koran written by the prophet Mohammad. Has Mr. Bowman bothered to read the Koran to ascertain whether the prophet was divinely inspired or not? I doubt it. I doubt that Mr. Bowman has read anything that did not attempt to justify his belief in the Bible as the word of God.

I also doubt that he has bothered to check into the other Christian writings of those times, the Gnostic Gospels. No. It might mean having to change his perspective somewhat. I wonder if he ever considered that possibly, just possibly, he is wrong.

I am not saying the Bible is wrong or inaccurate. What I will say is that it is not what the "faithful" think it is. The book was never intended to be taken literally. The Catholic Church objected to its being translated into the vernacular because they knew it would be misunderstood and would be a dangerous weapon in the hands of the ignorant (something they knew from personal experience).

None of the books of any of the great religions were ever intended to be taken literally. All were written as metaphors, allegories and myths. In the *Power of Myth*, Joseph Campbell, the world's foremost authority on the subject, states that the biblical myths are identical to many that preceded it by hundreds or thousands of years.

The stories in the Bible, especially the New Testament, are, to my understanding, myths about reaching personal enlightenment and ascension. They were not written as historical fact. The teachings are guideposts pointing the way home. There is nowhere in the original Greek texts, from which the New Testament is translated, where Jesus says he was the only Son of God. He did say he was a son of God. He also said we are all children of God. He never placed himself above anybody. He came to serve and show us our potential for being miraculous. The belief that we are all sinners is a hindrance to reaching that potential.

I think the problem lies with Paul who started a religion about Jesus instead of one based on his teachings. I prefer to call that religion "Paulianity" instead of Christianity because it is based on Paul's misunderstanding of the message. Besides, it sounds like a nice double entendre.

This is, of course, only my opinion (based on over 30 years of study). I believe everybody is entitled to one. I do think, however, that to maintain that one's personal opinion is superior to anybody else's is a gross act of egotistical one upmanship. I understand that Jesus supposedly chastised the Pharisees for doing just that.

If Mr. Bowman is a sinner, as he states, it might be because he breaks the laws of his own belief system by judging others and being self righteous about the superiority of those beliefs.

Cliff Woffenden
Nakusp

Preserving our quality of life

Change. It's a fact of life, much as most of us hate it. I moved away from Nelson when I saw the creeping urbanization settling in there. But moving further into the "outback" is a simplistic solution that doesn't really work. Like it or not, we're faced with the growing problem of how to preserve our quality of life in the face of increasing pressures from outside. Whether we do something or do nothing, change is coming. We have the choice to either be pro-active and set the agenda according to our citizens' wishes, or be re-active and let others set the agenda for us in ways we may not like.

In Ontario's "cottage country," people who grew up there but lack six-figure incomes are being forced out because they can't afford to buy a home anymore. We face a very similar prospect here in the Kootenays. And with the influx of seasonal, part-time residents buying up half the town's real estate and contributing little in the way of economic support beyond the peak season, these issues will only deepen in intensity if nothing is done to address them.

The good news: there are tools out there to help us design the flow of change the way we want. That became apparent to me at last week's presentation in Silverton by Tom Lancaster of SmartGrowth BC. SmartGrowth is already working with communities such as Squamish, Maple Ridge and Oliver to collect input from residents and walk them step-by-step through a process that will preserve the community values they cherish. As Mr. Lancaster explained and most of us know well already, the main issues we face in the Slocan Valley are: 1) affordable housing; 2) supporting local agriculture; 3) maintaining a year-round economy; 4) water provision and quality; and 5) sustainable economic development.

I have written New Denver village council to urge them to adopt the principles of SmartGrowth in all future revisions to the Official Community Plan. The eight basic principles are: 1) Protect wildlife habitat, green space and farmlands; 2) allow for mixed-use neighbourhoods in core area development; 3) water sensitive land use plans that work within our ecosystem's natural restraints; 4) support diverse transportation options within the community; 5) support the creation of diverse affordable housing options; 6) allow for flexible zoning to connect jobs to home; 7) support community identity by protecting (and maintaining) heritage and other distinctive community aspects in any future development; and 8) nurture engaged citizenship. (see: www.smartgrowth.bc.ca)

Obviously, to fully implement these principles will take much work and potential rewriting of our OCP and existing bylaw structure. For example, to meet the principle of "supporting diverse affordable housing options," we may need to revise the bylaw prohibiting secondary or "'mother-in-law' suites. Here too, care will be required to ensure it is planned in a thoughtful way so as to avoid creating a loophole for high-density development.

Another useful idea presented by Mr. Lancaster was for the Village to institute a small levy on development permits to create an affordable housing fund. Perhaps a higher rate of taxation for part-time residents might also be useful, both in discouraging a continued influx of people buying summer homes, and in providing much-needed infrastructure revenue. A complementary policy encouraging the type of influx we DO want would then be critical so as not simply to be driving people away. For example, limited-term tax breaks for those wishing to set up home-based businesses or other commercial ventures compatible with our OCP. We need to place a premium on businesses that benefit most by keeping our environment pristine, not in more short-sighted resource extraction.

I'm confident in the councillors we have representing us and in the engaged citizenry that exists to be called upon for support of these values. And I'm confident we can do so in a way that both meets 21st century realities head-on AND maintains the unique lifestyle we love in New Denver. I urge you to take the time to have a say in the shape of our community's future by writing your mayor and councillors today.

Art Joyce
New Denver

Silverton council, February 14: New public works foreman hired

by Jan McMurray

•Leonard Casley was hired as the new public works foreman. Chris Fox's last day on the job was February 24. Casley started working at the Village on February 13, working with Fox for his last two weeks.

•Administrator Junko Ida reported that sending four council members to the newly elected officials seminar in Nelson cost the Village $1500, coming in less than the $2,000 that had been budgeted.

Ida also reported that the Small Water Systems course is being offered in Nelson in March. The course and test costs $495. Certification in this course is required for the operation of the Village water system, and former public works foreman Chris Fox was the certified operator. Fox recommended that Tom Hughes, relief maintenance worker, take the course. Council agreed, not wanting to overwhelm new public works foreman Casley as he settles in to his new position.

•The Silverton Historical Society has raised the necessary funds to build a second tram tower. The society's plans are to erect the second tower at the south end of the outdoor mining museum at the Silverton Gallery, and to connect it by tramline to the tram tower that already sits in the outdoor display area. Council granted the society permission to go ahead with its plans.

•Battalion Chief Ron Provan reported that the fire department's 1968 truck, which has been decommissioned, is taking up valuable space in the hall. He asked if the truck could be sold or if council had any plans for it. Council asked the fire department to discuss the issue and come back with a recommendation.

•Mayor Everett reported that all council members had learned a lot at the newly elected officials seminar in Nelson. He also reported that he had received an email from Larry Lavan of the Red Mountain Road Internet Society. There will be an update on the society's project to build and deliver a wireless internet service in the Silverton area at the next council meeting.

•Councillor Laktin reported that the book exchange at Silverton Building Supplies was ready to be opened.

•Council granted the July 1st committee's request for $500 towards the fireworks as well as a reasonable amount of time and labour from Village administration and maintenance staff. The fire department's request to use the Memorial Hall at no charge for the July 1st pancake breakfast was also granted.

•Destination Silverton sent a letter encouraging council to support two projects: the Canadian office for the International Selkirk Loop through the Regional District of Central Kootenay, and the paddlewheeler on Slocan Lake initiated by the Village of Slocan. Mayor Everett and Councillor Provan reported that the paddlewheeler project is on hold and no application for 2010 funding will be made for the project.

•Administrator Ida reported on a change to the way the Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiatives funding applications are being handled. Council will still make the decisions on which Silverton applications will be successful, but the RDCK will handle the administrative end of it.

•Quotes for dog waste disposal bag dispensers from two companies were referred to the finance committee.

•Ida was asked by someone planning a wedding about a policy regarding weddings in the day park. Council decided to refer this to the facilities committee.

Recently, the Vallican Whole School was transformed as the children enjoyed their annual 'intersession'— a school week filled with a smorgasbord of exciting workshops. At any given moment the sounds of African drumming, nails being hammered, and vegetables being chopped resonated throughout the building. The children could choose from a variety of activities including cooking, beading, felting, mosaic tile mirrors, paper making, woodworking, clay work, dance, drama, paper lanterns, knot tying, yoga and cartooning. Each child picked eight activities that interested them and then spent the whole week being very creative and having lots of fun.

Raffle draw at March 19 Irish Breakfast

"Not only will we be cooking up the spuds and eggs, but close to noon we'll draw for the great Alf Crossley painting and other wonderful raffle items," says Irish Breakfast head cook and bottle washer Rita Moir.

The fourth annual Irish Breakfast is set for Sunday, March 19, from 9 till noon at Passmore Lodge. Every year, the gang from the Vallican Whole Community Centre (RARTS), with support from Lodge residents, decks the dining hall in green, and provides Irish tunes along with a sumptuous breakfast.

It's a great social gathering for all ages, with treats for meat-eaters and vegetarians, and a delectable selection of homemade soda bread, scones, homemade jams, and the main course of quiche and potatoes.

You can also buy your last minute raffle tickets for the draw to be held near noon: the Alf Crossley painting (currently on display at the Slocan Valley Co-op), hiking gear from Mountain Trek, a cord of wood from the Wood Guy, and an overnight stay for two at Little Slocan Lodge. All proceeds go to ongoing improvements at the Whole.

Bring your friends, family and spring break visitors out to Passmore Lodge on March 19 and help bring in spring!

The Vallican Whole Community Centre

Thanks everyone who supported our Jan 28 "R.A.R.T.S. CANTINA" Fundraiser

By donating auction items; cooking, cleaning & decorating; by eating, drinking, being merry & by 'going to the mat' with your friends in our silent auction...together we raised over $3K for ongoing improvements to THE WHOLE.

Special Thanks for Silent Auction Donations:
Lemon Creek Lodge, Rustic Creations, Jeremy Addington, Elderbee Greens, Ann Swanson, Mountain Trek, Shemmaho, Winlaw Brew-Op, Joan Snyder, Dan Armstrong, Don & Shirley Munro, Sharon Block, Kathy Hart, Airy Mountain Appliance Repair, Evelyn Kirkaldy, FLIKS, Lydia Kania, Dale Norman, Highwater, Jennie's Book Garden, Herb Hammond, Four Seasons Greenhouse, Jules Delaney, Rita Moir, Sharon Pawliw, Passmore Water Lab, Caroline Eaton, Laura Tiberti, Prestige Inn Nelson, Bill Christian, Sleep is for Sissies, Judy Laret, Kenyon McGee Law Corp., SonoNis Press, Susan Milton, Lance Hall, Cindy Collins, Pamela Stevenson, Max the Jeweller, & Moe Lyons.

And Cheers for Our Decoration, Food & Drink Supporters:
Fomis Bakery, Dianne Novlan, Caroline Eaton, Rabi'a, Don Munro, Dan Armstrong, Marg Tessman, Wendy Pope, Judith Ceroli, Paul & Barb Wilkinson, Kyla & Joanne Ellis, Cindy Moser, Richard Kosior, BCAA, Slocan Valley Rec, Moe Lyons, Rita Moir, Laura Tiberti, Micha Forestell, Penny Tees, Sam Simpson, Slocan Valley Co-op, & Sally Mackenzie.

Funding available for Slocan River projects

by Jan McMurray

People who own property on Slocan River and want funding for riverbank restoration projects should not miss out on a March 11 information session at Passmore Hall.

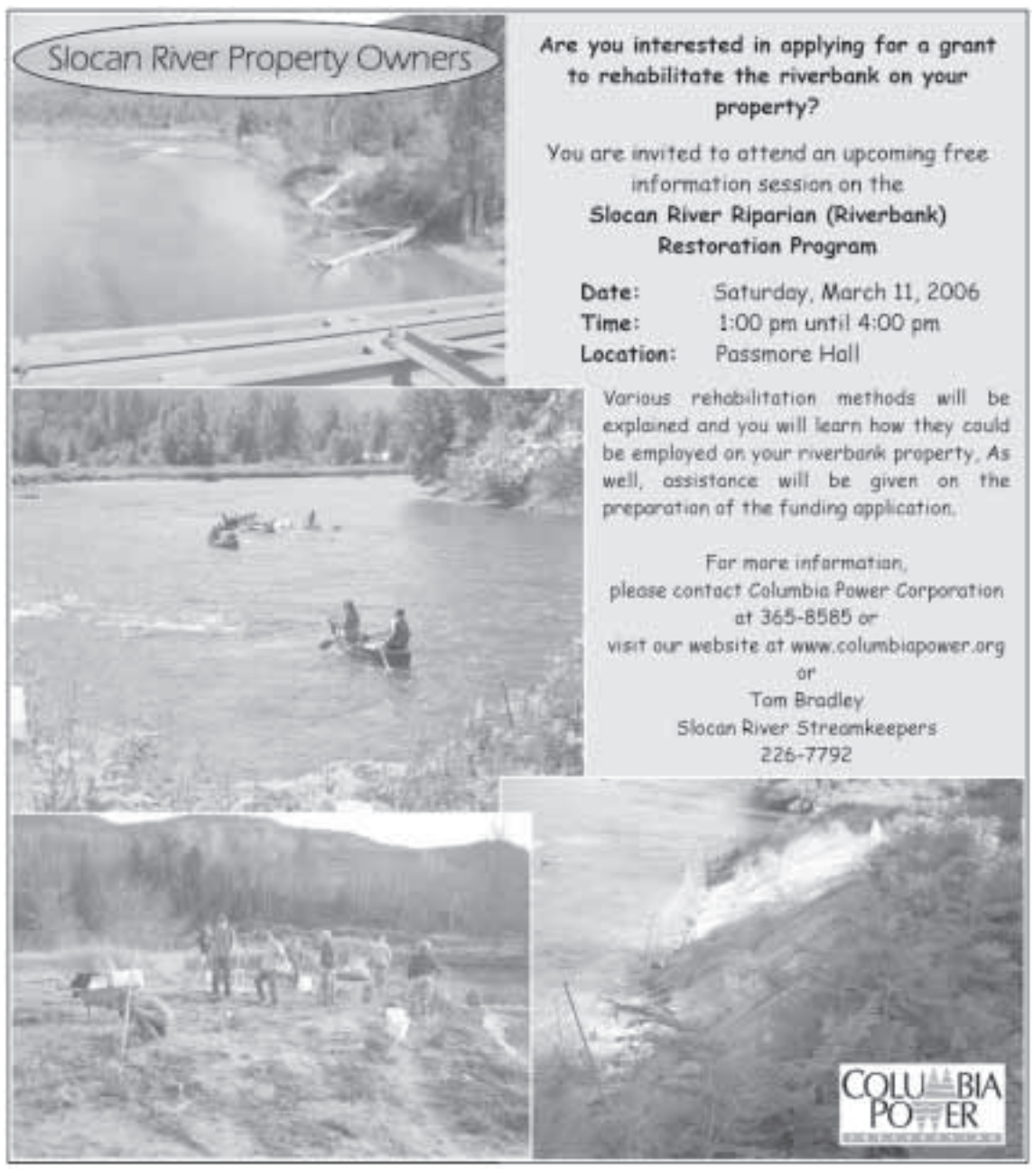
Representatives from Columbia Power Corporation, Slocan River Streamkeepers, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Ministry of Environment will be in attendance to tell property owners all they need to know about the Slocan River Riparian Restoration Program.

People can drop in anytime between 1:00 and 4:00 pm, and are encouraged to arrive by 3:00 at the latest. The session provides an opportunity not only to get informed about the program, but also to fill out an application for funding on the spot with some help from the experts.

Last year, the first year of the program, there were eight projects funded out of 13 proposals received. Most of the projects involved planting trees and shrubs to stabilize banks and to provide shade for fish. Funding amounts varied from $650 to $6000.

The committee that reviews the applications is made up of people from the four organizations that will be represented at the information session. The committee goes to the proposed project sites during its review of applications, and then periodically monitors approved projects.

Columbia Power Corporation and Columbia Basin Trust, through the Brilliant Expansion Power Corporation, have committed to providing $20,000 per year to the Slocan River Riparian Restoration Program. For more information, visit www.columbiapower.org or call 250-365-8585.



Corporation of the Village of Silverton

Contractor: Campsite Attendant

The Council of the Village of Silverton invites applications from interested persons for the position of "Contractor: Campsite Attendant."

The contract is for May 1 to October 15, 2006. Duties of the Contractor(s) will be to: Assist with Spring (prior to seasonal opening) and Fall (post-season closing) Campground clean-ups; Ensure that campers use designated campsites; Collect camping fees; Keep Campground clean and tidy; Prepare garbage for pick-up; Clean Campsite washrooms; Clean Overflow Area washrooms when Overflow Area is being used; Maintain supplies in washrooms; Bundle and distribute firewood; Provide basic tourist information; Report any problems to Village Office staff; Remit all funds collected to Village Office; Keep accurate Campground log; Represent the Village of Silverton appropriately; And other appropriate duties that shall be assigned from time to time.

The Village will supply; Garbage bags; Receipt and Log Books; Cleaning and Washroom supplies; Firewood; Picnic Tables; Repair services; and appropriate tourist information as available.

Renumeration is a 50/50 split between the Contractor(s) and the Village of Silverton.

Full details are available at the Village Office

Interested persons should submit resumes by 4:00 pm, Wednesday, March 15, 2006 to:

Administrator
Village of Silverton
P.O. Box 14 - 421 Lake Avenue
Silverton, BC V0G 2B0 358-2472

Double gold for Garmulewicz at Provincial Winter Games

submitted by Joy Huebert, BC Winter Games News Service

Hills' Nicholas Garmulewicz is the only cross country racer to have won two gold medals at the Hannah Creek Nordic Centre in Rossland.

He won Juvenile Boys Cross Country Sprint with a time of 1:12.5, a full four seconds ahead of second place winner Anthony Cihlar.

Earlier, he won the Juvenile Boys 5 km classic race with a time of 18:40.2. Conditions were just about perfect on the course with dry snow, sunshine and temperatures just below zero. Garmulewicz, who found the second lap tough but liked the back side of the course with its long downhill, attributes his win to being very focused and training hard. He is getting ready for the BC Cup and hopefully, the Nationals.

Second and third place winners were Harry Weaver and Kristofer Liset.

• A strong effort allowed the Zone 1(Kootenays) team to capture silver in the cross country ski relays, only 3.7 seconds behind the Zone 2 gold medal winning team.

Teammates included triple medal winner Garmulewicz , triple medal winner Rebecca Reid of Rossland, Heather Mehain and double medal winner Josh Hall, both of Nelson.

The relay was exciting from start to finish, as Zone 1 charged off for an early lead, losing in the last lap only seconds behind strong finisher Cole Hetherington from Vernon.

The second Zone 1 team won fifth place and included Marshall Soltice of Rossland, skiing fast in skate technique.

Unlike other cross country races that are timed interval events, the relay is run with a mass start, so the crowd can watch skiers working hard to overtake others and get to the finish line first.

The snow conditions were perfect again. After a light snowfall, conditions were fast, allowing easy waxing for the coaches. The rolling course was popular with athletes, who didn't have to contend with excessive steepness.

Mark Richards, technical delegate and protocol officer, commented that the level of competition was promising for these up-and-coming skiers.

For full results, please visit www.bcgames.net/results/results_sw.aspx.

Debbie Hicks, left, won the contest to design New Denver Post Office's new cancellation stamp. Nine-year-old Jessica Mason Wallace was runner-up.

March films at the Hidden Garden

Tired of the usual trash on TV? Interested in seeing movies of ideas, fabulous images, and sheer beauty instead of cheating spouses and death and smashing cars? Then come out to the Hidden Garden Gallery (803 Kildare St., New Denver) Friday nights at 7:30 to an informal group of people who love watching films. There is no charge but a donation to help keep the gallery doors open is much appreciated. Here's our schedule for March:

March 3: *I Am Cuba. (1964, Russian/Cuban)* One of those rare examples of what begins as propaganda and ends as art. Made during the Cold War transition of Cuba from American to Communist domination, it shows a country celebrating its own culture with gusto. The black and white cinematography is poetry for the eyes.

March 10: *Autumn Spring. (2001, Czech)* To grow old 'gracefully'? Or go out kicking and screaming and making jokes all the way? That seems to be the question at the heart of this bittersweet, playful comedy of two old friends who decide that getting old while having fun is well, a helluva lot more fun.

March 17: *Dreamkeeper. (2004, US)* A master storyteller and his grandson travel from their reservation to the annual pow-wow. Except this is one teenager who doesn't much care about his Native American heritage—he's got other problems. A masterful, cinematic retelling of classic First Nations legends from New Mexico all the way to the Pacific Northwest. Stunning special effects.

March 24: *The Best of Victor Borge*. Okay, he's not for everybody. But those who love Borge's quirky brand of humour, deft piano stylings and lighthearted approach to popularizing classical music, REALLY love it.

March 3:. *The Man Who Cried. (2000, US)* Who said we have anything against American movies? A Jewish dancer's personal odyssey through Russia, England and France just as the Nazis are coming to power. Along the way she meets some interesting characters: a smug Italian opera singer (John Turturro), and a mysterious gypsy played by Johnny Depp.

Of course we're always open to suggestion. So if you have a movie you'd like to see, drop by Friday night or phone us. Contact Linda Mennie 358-2220 or Aiko at 7249.

New Denver Mayor's Message

Busses

Residents who need public transit to the regional hospital and medical services in Trail now have it. The program makes it possible for those of us who are motorless and/or environmentally conscious to use a new linked service to get to Trail and back the same day, on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Doctors in Trail have said they will schedule your appointments around the bus schedule if you tell them or their appointments secretaries that you need to do so. Don't be shy! They can't schedule your visit appropriately if they don't know you're coming by bus.

This new service is the result of a lot of co-operation and effort by the Interior Health Authority, BC Transit, Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services, and Central Kootenay and Kootenay Boundary regional districts. Among a host of others, you can thank Nick Marshall, Jo Brown, Barb Dante, Barry McLean and Al Dawson for doing so much of the work on this project.

A friend has already complained to me that twice-weekly service is not enough—that we deserve more. I told him, and want everyone to know, that in order to get even more service we first have to show through our ridership that we need it. I'm also very interested in whether or not you have trouble booking medical appointments that fit into the bus schedule. Please let me know at 358-7200.

Furnaces and Tough Women

A new electric furnace is being purchased and installed at Knox Hall, which is also home to the province's largest Reading Centre. The furnace will replace our 40-year-old oil heater that gave up the ghost just before the latest cold snap.

I want to thank the hardy, stubborn (!) and dedicated volunteer staff who have managed to keep the Centre open on reduced hours while the village fixes and upgrades the heating. You're greatly appreciated.

If You Meet Them On the Street…

you should know that the following people (and more) have been doing an incredibly effective job of getting the health centre gym ready for spring opening:

• Val Piercey and the Health Centre Auxiliary, who applied for and received $5,000 in funding from the IHA's Community Action for Health Initiative to use for floor repairs and exercise room enhancement;

• Ann Weir, Health Centre supervisor, who has worked overtime to find money for new state-of-the-art exercise equipment (including a rowing machine, elliptical machine and treadmill) for the gym;

• Bill Roberts, Ron Husberg, Hugh Wilson, Vern Hartman, Barry Lamare, Tracy Oldham and everyone who has done such a fine job of prepping the building for installation of new lights, wiring and necessary other utilities;

• Lorna Obermayr and Carol Gordon.

If you meet anyone else on the street, say hi to them too!

Welcome to New Denver.

G. L. Wright, Mayor, New Denver

NOTICE

Please be informed that the Village of Silverton will be meeting in the near future to prepare the 2006 Five Year Financial Plan.

Mayor and Council invite public input from members of the community with regards to items of interest and concern that may be addressed in preparation of the budget.

Please submit your comments to:

Mayor and Council
The Village of Silverton
421 Lake Avenue
Silverton, BC V0G 1S0

Deadline for submissions:
March 17, 2006

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

VILLAGE OF NEW DENVER

The Corporation of the Village of New Denver is now accepting applications for the permanent part-time position of

UTILITY MAINTENANCE WORKER 1

The Utility Maintenance Worker 1 position performs a variety of general and specific tasks related to the daily operations and maintenance of the municipality, including equipment, streets, cemetery, parks, water system, snow removal and garbage collection. Possession of a Small Water System or BCWWA Level 1 Water Operator Certification is an asset. The successful candidate must be willing to acquire all related certificates required to operate in a municipal environment, including water operator certification.

This is a unionized position with opportunity for advancement. Remuneration is $17.53/hr (2006), with an attractive benefit program. The hours of work are 32 per week up to 1344 per year (exclusive of overtime). Hours of work are 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Start date is April 1, 2006.

The ideal candidate will have:

- Strong written and oral communication skills.
- The ability to work independently or as a team and to act professionally at all times.
- Mechanical, welding and carpentry skills.
- Experience in operating and maintaining equipment.
- Valid BC Drivers Licence with air endorsement, complete with drivers abstract.
- Experience in winter road maintenance operations/equipment.
- Valid BC Water and Wastewater Operators Certification Program (EOCP)
  - Small Water Systems
  - Level 1 Water Distribution

Closing date for this position is Thursday, March 9, 2006 at 4:00 p.m.

Please submit a detailed resume with cover letter to:

Carol Gordon, Administrator
Village of New Denver
PO Box 40
New Denver, B.C., V0G 1S0
Ph: 250-358-2316, Fax: 250-358-7251
email: newdenver@netidea.com

The Corporation of the Village of New Denver thanks in advance all applicants for their interest. However, only those applicants offered an interview will be contacted.

Mountain Caribou is one of the most endangered large mammals in North America

The word 'caribou' conjures up images of thousands of animals migrating across our northern landscape, surviving in a hostile and unforgiving environment, an incredible feature of Canadian wildness. This image and our connection with it reflect our values as Canadians. The Barren-ground caribou number about 1.3 million and range across Canada's Arctic and into Alaska. But all is not well for these caribou.

On February 11, Lawrence Redfern of the Mountain Caribou Project brought the film *Being Caribou* to the Bosun Hall in New Denver for a free public screening. Attendees were treated to a cinematographic spectacle, an incredible human adventure, and some unsettling truths about the grave threats to this seemingly abundant species.

In this part of BC we have an equally spectacular and totally unique caribou: the Mountain Caribou.

"Most people in this area have never seen a Mountain Caribou as their numbers were reduced sharply by overhunting in the first half of the last century," reports Redfern, "and they have lived in the wildest places that historically we have not frequented. Currently the Mountain Caribou is considered to be one of the most endangered large mammal species in North America, and it's right here in our backyard."

The Mountain Caribou is also one of the most studied animals in BC. The primary reason for decline is habitat loss and fragmentation and the secondary effects habitat change has on predation and disturbance levels. A recent, increasingly important additive effect is the rapid expansion of tenured motorized commercial backcountry operations. These are widely believed by researchers to increase animal stress during the most vulnerable winter period. "Individual operators will do their utmost to be excellent stewards of the environment they have commercial tenure over," says Redfern. "The issue is one of carrying capacity. What we have is a classic tragedy of the commons that government has not yet recognized."

In the central Selkirks area there are currently about 130 Mountain Caribou ranging from north of Nakusp and highway 6, east of Arrow Lakes over to the Duncan and north to Glacier Park. According to Redfern, "the core range of this herd has multiple pressures from forestry, commercial recreation, and local resident uses. Unless the Mountain Caribou's presence on the landscape is valued by the public, and stakeholders work together to develop a resource use plan that allows for the existence of caribou, they will be extinct within seven to 60 years according to the experts."

Caribou from the threatened central Selkirk herd.

In October the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands provided a list of options for government, ranging from applying management techniques to recover mountain caribou, to deliberately managing them to extinction.

"The Forest Practices Board recommended that the government defer any thoughts of triage until after concerted efforts to recover all herds are made and social and economic impacts analyzed. Incredibly the government seems ready to quit before trying."

The recovery tools for Mountain Caribou include habitat conservation and rehabilitation, access management, herd augmentation, various predator and prey management strategies, captive breeding, maternity pens and more.

"I think the current approach of seeking input on the future of Mountain Caribou in BC only from select special interest groups is wrong. I believe the health and future of BC's wildlife matters to all of us. Mountain caribou recovery will be a wholly positive outcome for the range of wildlife across the region because it will be a sign that wildlife and wildlife habitat has recognized intrinsic value."

Columbia Basin Trust Youth Community Service Award

The Columbia Basin Trust is offering $2,000 each for up to 20 grade 12 graduates as a reward for their involvement in community service.

This award is based on community volunteer service, not on academic achievement. The award is designed to help those who are going on to post-secondary education or training.

For questions about selection and eligibility, and to find detailed information about the award, visit the CBT website at www.cbt.org or call 1-800-505-8998. Applications are also available at all secondary schools.

Applications must be postmarked no later than March 31, 2006 to be accepted

Mail complete application packages to:

Columbia Basin Trust
Youth Community
Service Award
828D Baker Street
Cranbrook, B.C.
V1C 1A2

COLUMBIA BASIN TRUST

Parents want the facts on class size.

Everyone agrees that class size is important to helping students learn. And that's why the Province is making information on class size available for parents and students.

The Facts on Declining Class Size

- There is an average of about 16 students for every one educator in B.C. public schools, a near-record low.
- Nine out of 10 classes in B.C. have 30 or fewer students.
- And more than one out of every five have 20 or fewer.

Class Size in School District 8

In the Kootenay Lake school district:

- The average kindergarten class has 16.2 students.
- The average grade 1-3 class has 19.7 students.
- The average grade 4-7 class has 23.4 students, while there are 22.2 students in the average grade 8-12 class.

To find out more about class size and choice programs in your school district, visit www.achievebc.ca online.

BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

The Arrow Lakes Arts Council presents an evening of Celtic music with *Blackthorn*!

On March 4, the fourth concert of the series features the Vancouver-based folk band at the Bonnington Arts Centre.

Blackthorn's repertoire celebrates the traditional music of the British Isles, Ireland, the Canadian and American Maritimes and Quebec. This group formed in 1988 performing in local coffee houses and bars, expanding their horizons since then to include concerts, festivals and private functions throughout Western Canada and parts of the US.

Blackthorn's music, energy and versatility make them equally well suited for small, intimate venues, cabaret or pub settings as well as large festival and concert stages. From lovely ballads to boisterous sing-along pub songs, and from beautiful Celtic instrumental airs to the driving rhythms of Irish and Scottish jigs and reels—*Blackthorn's* repertoire encompasses them all.

The group's musicians are: Rosie Carver, violin and vocals; Michelle Carlisle, vocals, flute, piccolo, pennywhistle and fife; Dianne Foster, accordions, pennywhistle, recorder, and vocals; Michael Viens, vocals, 6-and 12-string guitars, bodhran, sundry noise makers, and keeper of the web; Tim Renaud, bass, vocals, bodhran, and mandolin.

It will be three years since *Blackthorn* appeared in Nakusp, and because of their popularity, you will need to get your tickets early, as this a sell-out show.

Come and join us March 4 at 8 pm in the Bonnington for an evening among friends. Doors open at 7:30 pm. Tickets are available at the Broadway Deli or at the door the evening of the concert, if there are any left.

The Arrow Lakes Arts Council would like to thank the Frog's Leap for hosting this concert.

Local arts community and economy strengthened by Selkirk College

by Ron Anderson, Chair of the Selkirk College Board of Governors

Skill testing question: what do 'KSA' and 'RIC' stand for, and why are they so important to you as a community? The first one is easy. KSA, or Kootenay School of the Arts, is well known in our region as an exceptional arts, craft and design institute. The second is not so well known, but you'll be hearing a lot more about it in the future: the Regional Innovation Chair for rural economic development research (RIC). The big news is that both are about to become new members of the Selkirk College family, and this is significant for all of us in the West Kootenay Boundary Region.

KSA joins Selkirk

Your regional college is growing. Along with the opening of a new aviation centre and several additional programs in 2006, Selkirk College is very excited that Kootenay School of the Arts will merge with Selkirk College, effective July 1. Although a memorandum of understanding was signed almost two years ago, this month marked the official announcement of full funding for KSA as part of Selkirk.

This is great news. For KSA, it means a solid foundation for the future and the ongoing support of a larger institution. For the college, it means the addition of four very strong arts programs in clay, fibre, jewelry and metal. This will complement our other excellent creative programs, like music and multimedia, as well as trades, such as fine woodworking.

Regional Innovation Chair campaign goes public

One year ago, I shared with you a new venture for Selkirk College, the Regional Innovation Chair for rural economic development research. At that time, we were just embarking on a $1.25 million fundraising campaign in order to match provincial funding. I am pleased to report that many people have captured this vision and have lent their generous support to make it a reality. To date, we have raised $900,000 toward that target.

So, why is the RIC so essential? It's about using knowledge to help revitalize our rural region. There has been very little research done about rural regions like ours that are in economic transition. We have rich amenities, culturally and geographically; we have been traditionally resource based; and we are seeking to thrive in an evolving world economy.

A key next step is to better understand the forces at work. This new position will undertake applied research that will allow public and private sector decision makers to make better choices on economic investment and innovations. The chair will promote skill development and bring together others engaged in similar endeavours both regionally and nationally.

We will take a leadership role in Canada by addressing a unique need for knowledge. Regional support has been nothing short of phenomenal. Clearly, there is a strongly felt need for this kind of applied research.

CBT rewards student volunteers

The Columbia Basin Trust is offering $2,000 each for up to 20 grade 12 graduates as a reward for their involvement in community service. The money will help those who are going on to post-secondary education or training. The award is based on the level of community volunteer service and involvement of the applicant, not on academic achievement. "Since the award was set up in 2001, the Columbia Basin Trust has helped 101 students with their careers," says Neil Muth, Chief Executive Officer of CBT.

Aside from the pride and confidence gained by doing community service, one of the benefits from volunteering is the feeling of connectedness to community and the good feeling that comes from helping others, says Jean Terlesky, CBT's Community Liaison for Education and Training.

For questions about selection and eligibility, and to find detailed information about the award, visit the CBT website at www.cbt.org or call 1-800-505-8998. Applications are also available at all secondary schools through the counsellor's office.

South Slocan Hospital Auxiliary meets

submitted by F. Dowes

The South Slocan chapter of the Kootenay Lake Hospital Auxiliary held their first meeting of 2006 on January 12 at the home of Helen Zarkoff. The 12 members present reported 39 volunteer hours, bringing the total for 2005 to 1,256.

• The treasurer's year-end report showed a successful year of fund-raising including three bake sales and the annual fall raffle. The draw was held December 17 with Nancy Larsen winning the quilt, Anne Wood the picnic backpack, Delia Reed the knitted runner, Charlotte Hlookoff the lap robe, Elana Demoskoff the casserole tote, and Rob Given the wooden planter. Thanks to Fortis for printing the tickets and everyone who helped make the raffle a success.

The chapter's donations to the hospital foundation included $1,500 to the Breath of Spring campaign and $1,000 to Light Up the Hospital.

A flannelette bunting bag was presented to the 2006 New Year baby, Ashley Jean Rich of Blewett.

The $250 bursary will be presented to a Selkirk College student.

• New executive for 2006: president, Elaine Woods; vice-president Helen Zarikoff; treasurer Bea Mills; secretary Freda Dowes.

• New fund-raisers include the sale of flannelette bunting bags (made by members) at the hospital gift shop; a bake sale and cake raffle in the hospital lobby March 9 starting at 11:30 am; and the sale of coffee and goodies at the Slocan Park Hall Association Garage sale April 22.

The chapter's next meeting is 10 am March 9 at the home of Sharon Speirs. New members are always welcome.

New Transit Service

Central Kootenay Transit

Health Connections offers you transportation options and increases your access to medical appointments. Customers with medical appointments have priority over customers who will be traveling for shopping only.

Please phone to book your seat.

TUESDAY & THURSDAY Nakusp to Nelson
The bus leaves Nakusp at 8:35am, Slocan at 9:45, arriving in Nelson at 11:05am. The return trip leaves Nelson at 3:30pm, arriving in Nakusp at 6:10.

WEDNESDAY Kaslo Area - Balfour - Nelson
The bus leaves Kaslo at 7:20am, Balfour at 7:53, arriving in Nelson at 8:35. The return trip leaves Nelson at 3:15pm, arriving in Kaslo at 4:40.

THURSDAY Argenta - Nelson - Trail
The bus leaves Argenta at 7:15am, Nelson at 10:15, arriving in Trail at 11:45. The return trip leaves Trail at 3:10pm, arriving in Argenta at 7:30.

Visit **www.busonline.ca** and check your transit system information needs under Nelson, Slocan Valley or Kootenay Boundary

Health Connections . . . linking communities and healthcare.

8064

BC Transit Regional District of Central Kootenay

www.busonline.ca
TransitINFO: toll-free at 1-877-843-2877

The Slocan Community Health Centre Auxiliary Society invites

TENDERS FOR BUILDING MATERIALS

FOR SALE *AS A SINGLE LOT*

"Clear out the fitness centre gym"

- 2"X8" by 19' long -- 34 pieces
- 2"X8" by 12' long -- 21 pcs
- 2"x4" by 9' long -- 25 pcs
- 2"x4" by 8' long -- approx 40 pcs
- 2"x4" assorted lengths – good for blocking, etc.
- ¾" plywood full sheets – 29 pcs plus part sheets
- ¼" plywood full sheets -- 4 pcs
- staircase 16 risers, 125" height, 48" wide, 4 stringers
- heavy duty workbench, 15' x 29", laminated deck, 3 vise cutouts
- built up beam 2"x8" x 4 plies 35' long
- interior doors, prehung 32" wide -- 3 pcs
- interior doors, no frame 35" wide -- 2 pcs
- assorted items, e.g. chalkboard, chain link mesh, etc.

Please submit *sealed bids* for *entire lot*
stating when material will be removed
to the Health Centre reception desk at 401 Galena Avenue, New Denver
no later than 12 noon Friday March 10th.

Viewing on Friday March 3rd or Saturday March 4th 10:00 – 11:00 hrs

All proceeds to the Slocan Community Health Centre Auxiliary Society

COST-SHARE FUNDING FOR FARMERS

Central Kootenay
Environmental Farm Plan Program
Provides service to ALL agriculture commodities within the RDCK

What can this program do for **YOU**?

The EFP program helps farmers -
- recognize environmental strengths
- identify potential risks
- develop action plans
- access eligible funding to improve practices

For more information contact:
Val Miller, PAg
Environmental Farm Planning Advisor
Tel: (250) 229-5313
Email: kootwild@shaw.ca

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Green Door Youth Centre and the Mounted Police Foundation

It is an exciting time for the youth of Nakusp: the Green Door Youth Centre has received $5,000 from the Mounted Police Foundation (MPF). The goals of the MPF mirror the goals of the Green Door, in that youth centre staff and volunteers work diligently to make Nakusp a safer and more positive place for all local residents and visitors. Clearly the MPF saw something special in the Green Door Youth Project, because it was selected for funding among hundreds of other applications from all over Canada.

The centre is a safe place for young people to go during after school and weekend hours. "I don't know where I'd be Friday nights if the Green Door wasn't open," said one young man.

Last fall, Brett Fee, the local youth co-ordinator, identified the need for some new and updated equipment. He approached Kurt Banse, the local RCMP Community Policing Representative, and together, they mapped out an action plan that would result in the centre receiving a generous grant of $5,000 from the MP Foundation. "Finally the community of Nakusp is being recognized and rewarded for its diligent work in youth social services," said Fee.

It is an understatement to suggest local youth are excited about and thankful to the MPF for receiving this grant. Prior to receiving the funds, some of them created a wish list of items; now a committee is being assembled to decide exactly where and how the money will be spent. All local community members are encouraged to drop by the Youth Centre during Friday and Saturday nights to witness firsthand the great things that are happening in their community.

For more information about the Green Door Youth Centre or youth social services in Nakusp, or if you're interested in getting involved, please contact Brett Fee at 265-3674.

By investing in community and youth development the MPF helps support RCMP community policing. The MPF generates revenues through licensing and effective use of the RCMP's intellectual property. The foundation is dedicated to funding youth-based community groups in an effort to support community policing and to instill national pride, which ultimately results in creating safer communities.

The Arrow Lakes Arts Council presents:

In performance at the
BONNINGTON ARTS CENTRE

A Toe-tapping Evening of Celtic Music With Blackthorn

SATURDAY, MAR. 4th at 8:00 pm

Tickets are $20 Adults and
$15 Seniors/Children
(60 and over) (12 and under)

Available at Broadway Deli or at the door, if not sold out!

Doors open at 7:30 pm.

Hospitality Host:
Frog's Leap

Fauquier Fire

by Jean Bissell

The Fauquier Volunteer Fire Department was called to a garage fire on February 15. The blaze started on a shake roof at 351 Spruce Street—home of fire chief Dobby Bissell. The roof was completely burned and the garage's contents received extensive water damage.

Thanks to the quick response by the volunteers, the fire did not spread.

Burton weightlifter aims for the Worlds

by Jan McMurray

Ebony Rutko, raised in Burton, won a gold medal and broke some provincial and national records on February 11 at the 2006 BC Winter Powerlifting Open in Vancouver.

For the second year in a row, Rutko broke provincial and national records for the squat and bench lifts.

Rutko is now training for the Canadian National Powerlifting Championships to be held in Chiliwack in April. "I expect to put up some impressive numbers at this meet. This national competition is my gateway to the World Powerlifting Competition held in Bulgaria in September," she said. In order to go to the Worlds in Bulgaria, Rutko will have to do extensive fundraising.

She explained that the competition is divided by gender, weight and age. She said that to stick to her category of a 60-kilo (132-lb) female junior, this requires "that I diet down before competitions — this might include starvation, dehydration, and intense saunaing days before the meet to make weight — definitely a mental challenge!

Rutko got into weightlifting after her father bought her a gym pass to help rebuild her knee after she had had surgery. A man at the gym named Greg St. George watched her lift and asked if she'd like to train with him. St. George is still Rutko's coach.

"He says he's never seen genetics on a woman like on me," she said. "It's like my body is made to do this."

Rutko attends Okanagan College and will have her BA of Social Work next year. Then she plans to go for her Masters of Social Work.

For Christmas, Rutko came home to Burton and trained at Alley Health and Fitness in Nakusp. She thanks the Nakusp gym and Sheila Seaton for the support and training facilities.

Anyone interested in supporting Ebony's dream to go to the Worlds in Bulgaria can contact Linda and Paul Peterson in Burton at 265-4451.

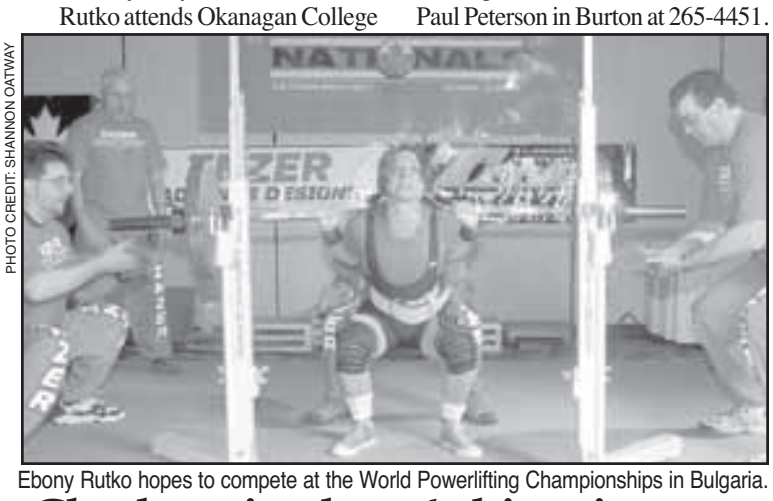

PHOTO CREDIT: SHANNON OATWAY

Ebony Rutko hopes to compete at the World Powerlifting Championships in Bulgaria.

Spectrum Evolution
Specialty Store
Birkenstocks - Men's & Ladies
Linens - table, towels, sheets
Bath & Beauty Products Clearance SALE
New Store Hours - Mon-Sat 10-5:30
86 4th Ave. Nakusp 265-3717

Quade Nicholson-Chodat wins boys' ski racing

Club races at Summit Lake brought out 96 racers to test their mettle on the ski, snowboard or telemark course last Saturday, but in an incredibly unfortunate turn of events, only 13 young athletes were able to race on the beginner course.

Electrical problems with the T-bar stymied the ambitions of all other racers, whose enthusiasm kept them waiting patiently for most of the day while volunteer board members and employees toiled on the wayward machinery to no avail. As of press time, they are still attempting to resolve the T-bar's issues.

Making the most of the beautiful, sunny day, organizers hosted the beginner's race on the Spooky Trails handle tow.

Skye Cunningham took first place in girls' skiing, with Katira Niquidet and Jewelle Alaric coming in second and third; four-year-old Kiley Waterfield received an honourable mention. In boys' ski racing, Quade Nicholson-Chodat took first place, with Frank Moroz and Jesse Katchen coming in second and third; Garrett Waterfield and Jerobi Tupper, also four years old, both received honourable mention.

In beginners' snowboard action, Kory-Lynn Crosby placed first in the girls' race and Cameron MacPherson took first in the boys', with Ryan Alaric and Quade Nicholson-Chodat placing second and third respectively.

Club races will remain a priority for organizers, so watch for notices here about when the event will take place!

13 young athletes raced at Summit Lake's beginner course on Saturday.

Prima Materia
Global Gift Discoveries
Inspiring Arts & Crafts
textiles . objects . artworks
318 Broadway St. Nakusp, BC 265-3288

Supporting the Early Years Research Project

We are looking for parents who would be interested in providing feedback on our programs. In exchange for a spring interview we will provide a monthly newsletter, free workshops, child and travel subsidies to programs and workshops, and notification of current programming. If you are interested in giving us your feedback, please call either Nancy or Julia at 265-3674. The following are programs that are offered:

Mondays
- Edgewood Elementary, 11:45 am - 2:00 pm, *Ready, Set, Learn* (FOR 3-5 YEAR OLDS AND PARENTS)
- New Denver Lucerne School, 11:00 am - Noon, *Mother Goose* (CALL 358-7768 TO REGISTER - 10 WEEKS)

Tuesdays
- Edgewood Elementary School, Noon - 1:00 pm, *Mother Goose* (CALL 269-7260 TO REGISTER - 10 WEEKS)

Wednesdays
- Nakusp Public Library, 10:30 am, *Story Time*
- New Denver Lucerne School, 6:30 - 7:30 pm, *Learning Adventures for Families (LAFF)* (CALL 358-7222 TO REGISTER)

Thursdays
- Fauquier Communication Ctr., 10 am - Noon, *Parents and Tots*
- Arrow/Slocan Lks. Comm. Services, Nakusp, 1:00 - 2:00 pm *Mother Goose,* (CALL 265-3674 TO REGISTER - 10 WEEKS)

Friday
- Nakusp Halcyon Home, 10:00 - 11:30 am, *Gym Playgroup*
- Fauquier Community Hall, 6:30 pm, *Family Movie Night* (LAST FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH)

Saturday
- Nakusp Stepping Stones Children's Ctr., *Learning Adventures for Families (LAFF)* (ALTERNATING DATES CALL 265-3674)

Nakusp fire chief reports increase in arsons, calls for more firefighters

by Jan McMurray

Nakusp fire chief Terry Warren commended volunteer firefighters for a job well done in his annual report for 2005, submitted at the February 23 council meeting.

Warren reported that arsons were a major concern, up from three in 2004 to nine in 2005. All four dumpster fires in 2005 were attributed to arson, as well as two of four structure fires and three of nine minor outdoor fires.

There were also 16 medical assists, 13 motor vehicle accidents, 8 smoke/fire alarms, four Hazmat incidents, three chimney fires, three electrical service fires and one wildfire.

The Nakusp Volunteer Fire Department membership is down from 25 to 16. Warren reports that this is because people have had to leave town for employment. He is holding an open house membership drive on March 4 from 10 am to 2 pm at the fire hall. Lunch and refreshments will be served, and there will be demonstrations in engine pumper use, hydrant connec-tions, wildland/interface capabilities, auto extraction and more. Applications will be available for men and women, 19 years of age or older, who are interested in becoming involved in the community to help save life and property. Canadian Mountain Holidays has donated a helicopter ride for two as a door prize at the event.

Warren also describes the changing role of the Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) and cutbacks to its regional offices as a major concern. "Our Cranbrook office is down from a very supportive group of five personnel to an overworked one employee," he states in the report. He said that the service was working hard to return the OFC to its 1980 level of service, and that a media campaign will soon be underway.

Wanted to Hire

The Fauquier & District Golf Club is looking to hire an Assistant Greens Keeper. This is a seasonal position, full time, April to October. Wages are negotiable and based on the experience of the applicant. Job entails working under the direction of our Greens Keeper, duties include golf course landscaping and operating grass cutting equipment. Applicants, who have a good understanding of the game, are physically fit and with a good mechanical aptitude are the most desirable. Work is outdoors and may include weekends.

Send resumés to PO Box 117, Burton, BC
Attention: President Bill Hilton. Deadline for applications is March 4, 2006

Computer Slow?
Call Ron at the Old Grey Barn
250-265-2163

Nakusp council, February 23: Bigger budgets for library and Search & Rescue

by Jan McMurray

•Council agreed to the RDCK increasing taxation for the Nakusp Public Library and for Nakusp and Area K Search and Rescue.

The library received $60,000 last year, with 60% coming from the Village and 40% from Defined Area K. This year, the library board will receive $68,000. In the future, the library will have the ability to tax up to $75,000. Nakusp residents paid about $29.78 on a $100,000 home for the library last year. This year, the rate per $100,000 is estimated to be about $31.27.

Search and Rescue's annual budget will increase from $3,000 to $10,000. This will mean a tax increase for Nakusp residents from about $1.08 per $100,000 last year to about $3.46 per $100,000 this year. Nakusp pays 40% of this budget, with Area K contributing 60%.

Mayor Hamling said she was very happy to see the increase for Search and Rescue. "I don't think they should have to sell hot dogs to come out and rescue us when we get lost," she said. Search and Rescue attended a September council meeting to request stable funding.

•Council authorized the borrowing of funds to do the work necessary to re-open the hot springs. (See story, p.)

•Council received a letter from the Comptroller of Water Rights with a copy of the Order he gave BC Hydro to provide and maintain boat ramps on the Arrow Lake Reservoir. Nakusp's ramp is finally included in the list of ramps that BC Hydro has been ordered to maintain. Mayor Hamling said that a lot of people had worked very hard towards this and gave special recognition to former Area K director Helmut Klughammer. She also thanked Councillor Dahlen and current Area K director Paul Peterson. Letters of thanks will go to Klughammer, Peterson and the RDCK board.

•Council received a letter from Minister of Transportation Kevin Falcon regarding Needles Bridge and the reinstatement of the ferry schedule at Galena Bay. Falcon says the government remains committed to the project and has deferred it until later in the ten-year plan because it would not be fiscally responsible to move ahead with the project now. He says the ministry is looking at ways to expand the Galena Bay ferry schedule without increasing costs. This, he says, would require a mid-day closure or an earlier start and earlier end to the ferry service each day.

Council decided to write back to the minister and make it clear that it would not agree to these possible changes. The letter will point out that, at the time the service was reduced, the ministry said it would eventually reinstate the schedule. Ferry waits as a result of increased summertime traffic will also be mentioned, as will the fact that some loggers have to line up for the ferry at ridiculous times of the morning.

•In her report, Mayor Hamling mentioned that Roger Brooks, who did an assessment of Nakusp from a tourist's point of view, said that both the Village and Nakusp Hot Springs websites needed a lot of work. She said the Village should look at hiring a webmaster for the project. This will be discussed during budget deliberations.

•In response to a resident's concern about speeding vehicles on 1st Ave. NW, council agreed to ask the RCMP to better enforce the 50-km speed limit.

•The Village will buy a new garbage truck for $110,289 and a new John Deere Gator for Parks staff for $10,251. Both purchases were scheduled for this year and the funds will come from equipment reserves.

•The Queen's Committee was granted the use of the auditorium at no charge for 30 days of practise for the annual pageant. As always, there is a stipulation that paying renters get priority over the committee on those days.

•Clerk/treasurer Richard Mahoney reported that the audited financial statement for the year 2004 was finally remitted to Victoria. It was due June 30, 2005. Mahoney's workload was the reason it was late.

•The first meeting of the Kootenay-Columbia Regional Advisory Committee, which will recommend projects for funding to the Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust board, will take place March 2. Mayor Hamling will attend.

•Council received a letter from the West Kootenay chairperson of the BC Nurses Union alerting local governments that overcapacity at the Trail hospital could mean having to house inpatients in the hallways. The letter also says that overcapacity in Trail has led to inappropriate transfers of patients to Grand Forks. Council will write to Carol Markowsky of Interior Health to express concern about this situation.

•The Village will submit a resolution supporting mail-in ballots for both non-resident and resident voters who cannot be present for an election or other voting opportunity.

The Arrow Lakes Arts Council presents:
In performance at the BONNINGTON ARTS CENTRE
A Dynamic Evening of Piano Music With Robert Silverman
SATURDAY, FEB. 18th at 8:00 pm
Tickets are $15 Adults and $12 Seniors/Children Special $10 rate for piano students with coupon
Available at Broadway Deli or at the door.
Doors open at 7:30 pm.
Hospitality Host: Selkirk Inn

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Halcyon Hot Springs is growing. We are looking for dynamic staff to join our team and share the Halcyon vision and enthusiasm.

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We are looking for a motivated front desk trainee to join our guest service team. If you are thinking about a career in the hospitality industry you will get a great training in this position. Staff housing can be provided.

Prep cook trainee/dishwasher:
A great start to learn the way around a commercial kitchen is offered in this 20-35 hrs/week position. Halcyon is known for its quality food and great service.

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This is a 20-30 hrs/week position. Our busy kitchen is looking for a waitress/breakfast waitress to join the team.

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Parents want the facts on class size.

Everyone agrees that class size is important to helping students learn. And that's why the Province is making information on class size available for parents and students.

The Facts on Declining Class Size
- There is an average of about 16 students for every one educator in B.C. public schools, a near-record low.
- Nine out of 10 classes in B.C. have 30 or fewer students.
- And more than one out of every five have 20 or fewer.

Class Size in School District 10
In the Arrow Lakes school district:
- The average kindergarten class has 14.9 students.
- The average grade 1-3 class has 19.2 students.
- The average grade 4-7 class has 23.5 students, while there are 17.4 students in the average grade 8-12 class.

To find out more about class size and choice programs in your school district, visit www.achievebc.ca online.

BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

Kaslo council, February 14: BCBC asks for decision on provincial building

by Jan McMurray

•Representatives from the skate-park committee attended as a delegation and submitted documents including engineered plans, construction schedule and budget, financial statements and a draft agreement to be signed by the committee and the Village. Council put this forward to a meeting on February 21. (See story, p.)

•Council received correspondence from BCBC Real Estate Manager Greg Yaholnitsky asking for a "target date" for a decision to buy the provincial building. He says he looks forward to council's response after the meeting that has been scheduled, March 1 to discuss the issue. Yaholnitsky says his request is based on two factors. The first is that BCBC is mandated by the Province to accelerate the sale of surplus properties. The second is that BCBC has secured a lease for five years with the government agent, which will make the property attractive to anyone looking for a real estate investment of more than $250,000.

The Village made an Offer to Purchase the property for $120,000 in August last year. That offer has expired. Council adopted a resolution in December that it continues to be interested in purchasing the building.

Pat Mackle also wrote to council on the purchase. He said he had contacted Yaholnitsky to ask if the April 30 closing date for the purchase of the building was still valid, but has yet to receive a response. He said when he asked CAO Rae Sawyer the same question in early February, Sawyer replied she thought the deadline was no longer applicable because the referendum on the issue did not take place. She added that with the recent restructuring of BCBC, there were no guarantees that any sale could take place and that council had not been informed of this development. Mackle urged council to make a decision or hold a referendum on this issue before it is too late.

In another letter to council, Mackle encloses his proposed business plan for the provincial building and asks Mayor Holland to put forth a credible business plan on the city hall building. His request was referred to the City Hall Conservation Committee for action.

•Council received correspondence from Ward Engineering about two subdivison applications that the Village has received from the firm on behalf of Kaslo Bay Resort. The letter addresses some of the Village's concerns around the applications regarding zoning, encroachments and public access to the waterfront. The correspondence was referred to Planning & Development for recommendation to Council.

•Gillian Sanders appeared as a delegation and spoke of the success of the 2005 Kaslo Bear Smart Program, the need to continue the program and requested funding in the amount of $2,500 (the same as last year). Sanders said over 18,000 lbs of fruit was harvested by 54 volunteers through the Kaslo Fruit Tree Project last year, and was distributed to the food bank, local farms and the public. She said that bear awareness education was vital to continue to reduce conflict in Kaslo and area. Sanders' funding request was referred to 2006 budget deliberations.

•Council received a letter from Margaret Watson, who wondered whether due process had been followed in the municipality's recent appointment of Robert Mitchell to the Kaslo and District Community Forest Society board. She recalled that Barry Rempel was appointed to that board for a two-year term beginning in December 2005 and ending December 2007. Watson will be advised the appointment is intended to be for two-year terms only, beginning in January 2006.

•Pat Mackle wrote to council asking for clarification on a motion approving 40 hours of Village equipment time, with Village crew operating the equipment, for work at the golf club. Council will clarify with Public Works that any volunteer equipment time at the golf club is only to be conducted outside regular working hours.

•The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) has agreed to the Village's request for a mixed plastic recycling program on a trial basis. Prior to starting the program, the RDCK will launch an advertising campaign in the area to advise residents of what products will be accepted.

•The petition received from RDCK residents regarding extended fire protection service will be discussed with Area D director Andy Shadrack.

•The mayor and CAO were authorized to sign a lease with the Kaslo and District Arena Association for a 5-year term beginning September 1, 2005 at $1,000 per year.

•A letter of support will go to the North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society encouraging it to take the lead in accessing grant funding for a program to address crystal meth abuse.

•Mary-Alanna Holmes of Kaslo Area Health Advisory (KAHA) wrote to council suggesting that the "New Deal" (gas tax) funding would be well targeted for extending public transport in the region. The Village will advise KAHA that the funding has been received but not yet allocated.

•Jill Braley wrote to council, asking for its consideration in adopting a bylaw like New Denver's regarding outdoor burning. Council voted to refer the correspondence to the Administration & Finance committee for recommendation to council.

•Council agreed to provide the Kaslo Trailblazers Society with doggy bags for the Practica dispensers located on the Kaslo River Trail, with the understanding the society will keep the dispensers stocked in the future.

•Council will thank Jeff Davie of the Kaslo & District Arena Association for offering a free public skate during Spirit of BC Week.

•A single "15 minute parking only" sign will be installed on the streetlight in front of the city hall building, and the curb will be painted yellow from the corner of 4th Street and B Avenue for a distance of 20 feet to improve traffic visibility.

•The Earthworkers were granted a licence to occupy a portion of 5th Street for the purposes of operating a community composting facility.

•The municipality will approve the attendance of one Kaslo firefighter at the Wildland Urban Interface Symposium to be held in Penticton March 20-23 with expenses paid pursuant to municipal policy.

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Ainsworth Hot Springs Resort is a Four Season Destination Resort located 20 km south of Kaslo. We believe our Employees are the most important asset of our Organization. Attitude is #1 and we strive to have a fun and supportive work environment.

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NOTICE TO AREA D RESIDENTS

Before I ride off into the sunset, I have a few things to say about serving as the director of Area D.

As I am not a public speaker, a liar, or an actor, it makes being a politician very challenging.

My base support came from the forest industry employees and employers. My opponent's base of support is the other industry.

I did a good job on your behalf. Getting fired when there were no RDCK issues was disappointing to say the least.

Because of the election results we now have a non-resident Green Party director with a Green Party alternate. A non-resident elected official can increase your taxes without financial consequences to themselves, such as a 20% increase in the library funding.

The following are some of the highlights under my watch that I take pride in. Upgrades to the Kaslo Hospital, a very large grant to the Allen subdivision water system, a new fire truck, a new search and rescue truck, the Lardeau Valley mosquito control program, the new waste management system and the Area D Glacier Creek Park.

I made appointments for representation by the RDCK based on the willingness and ability of the volunteers to serve. The appointment of Ken Wapple to the Kaslo & District Community Forest Society has proven to be invaluable. He was chosen for his forest management skills and his vast forestry experience. KDCFS is now the example used on how to operate successfully.

Important message for the Lardeau Valley Residents

The BC Hydro grant in lieu of taxes is the direct result of us having the Duncan Dam in Meadow Creek. You should monitor future allocations of the sixty-five thousand dollar per year fund. It belongs to you, the local taxpayers. We also have a thirty thousand dollar per year Impacted Area Columbia Basin Trust Fund that goes for our mosquito control program. This funding eases the local tax burden and must be spent within 10 km of the Duncan Dam.

The Glacier Creek Park is funded through a joint taxation function with Kaslo. Kaslo has chosen to spend their five thousand per year on their park attendant and maintenance. The Lardeau Valley has chosen to bank a lot of their share with the RDCK. Make sure it remains with our park funding.

Thank you to my supporters for letting me serve Area D as the director. I will continue to work for our community and hope the future brings prosperity to you and the area.

Yours truly,
Larry Greenlaw

Kaslo CCG meetings to be held at the Seniors' Hall

by Jill Braley

At the February 16 Kaslo & Area Community Consultative Group meeting the following was discussed:

• CCG will hold its monthly meetings every second Wednesday at 7 pm at the Seniors' Hall beginning March 8/06, changing the location at the request of several seniors. Meetings were previously held in the village office, which was not people friendly, due to the steep set of stairs outside. As the office is open most days, the CCG box will remain in the foyer of the village hall.

• Ken Hart has placed Crime Stopper donation cans at Napa, Esso, Kaslo Building Supplies, Barren Fly & Tackle and Home Hardware.. The group recently talked about the need for reflective house numbers in Kaslo & Area D in an effort to assist emergency personnel to more quickly respond to 911 calls. Local businesses can supply the following items:- Home Hardware (can order in signs/tape); Ramsbottoms (reflective tape) and Kaslo Building Supplies (posts/wood/reflective signs/tape). Hart has offered his assistance to place the signage for free, with a request for donations to Crime Stoppers, CCG or the Kaslo Volunteer Fire Department. For more information please call Hart at 353-2800.

• The group will liaise with Truus Meijer Drees, president of the Seniors' Group, for RCMP Cst. Andrew Luukko to speak at the Seniors Hall regarding any issues seniors' may have regarding the community. A notice will be placed on Channel 10 and bulletin boards once scheduled.

A Crime Stoppers video will be aired on Channel 10. Luukko was most open to a 10 minute interview with Kul Nijjar of Kaslo Cable. He also gave the group his monthly RCMP report. Luukko mentioned during one accident scene he attended, the smell of alcohol was evident from the blood on the pavement. He will attend a community services meeting at the village hall sometime in the future.

• All CCG meetings are open to the public. A confidential mail-box for citizens to use is also available in the village hall foyer. Everyone is encouraged to come out and learn more about your community, receive updates from your local RCMP and give your ideas and suggestions for a safer, better Kaslo.

Langham Gallery opening

submitted

The Langham Gallery welcomes the work of two visiting artists, Courtney Andersen and Shantael Sleight.

Andersen, from Salmo, works in cerra colla, an ancient Italian technique involving cold wax, glue and pigments. Her exhibition is titled *When I'm Bored I Cook*. Sleight's *The Crow Series* features mixed media work from the Calgary artist.

Join us for the opening reception Saturday March 4, 2 to 4 pm. The artists will be in attendance and refreshments will be served. This exhibition runs until April 9 and regular gallery hours are Thursday to Sunday, 1 to 4 pm.

For more information, visit www.thelangham.ca

Shantael Sleight's The Crow Series features mixed media work from the Calgary artist.

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Argenta Library news

Submitted by Lisa Ross

• The Argenta Library is changing its hours to better serve community needs. New hours will be Wednesdays and Fridays, 2-5 and Thursdays 3-8.

• We're busy putting the finishing touches on the manuscript for our *Bound Together* anthology about Argenta, which is a nine-month long project made possible by grants from several donors. The finished work will be printed at Argenta Friends Press and be available for sale in May—stay tuned for the time and date of the book launch.

• The last workshop the library is putting together as part of this project, is a bookbinding workshop with PB&J Press of Balfour. On Sunday, March 5 from 10-4, they will be at the Argenta Hall to teach us techniques for making our own handbound books. Register now by calling 366-0022 or 366-6808, space is limited.

• The night before the workshop there will be an evening of entertainment at the hall, including a presentation by PB&J, a variety of local performers, and a concession of homemade goodies. Time is 7 to 9:30 pm, and admittance is by donation to the library.

Get Outta Town!

with Peter Roulston

In the right place at the right time

Over the past few weeks my outings and daily excursions have been rather modest and not necessarily significant enough to write about, but satisfying enough for me, and often including chance brief sightings or momentary impressions. Whether you're all geared up on some backcountry tour or simply strolling down to the post office, neat stuff can occur.

Last winter I was looking out my kitchen window with binoculars and morning coffee at the steep valley of Wee Sandy Creek, across the lake from New Denver. Between the snowy peaks, above the frozen treetops, I saw a moving dot which I soon realized was a lone raven, soaring down towards the lake. Some minutes later I scoped again and saw the same raven, I guess, flapping resolutely straight my way, still well out over Slocan Lake. Then a couple minutes later, from my front porch I happened to see a big black raven land on the fir tree in front of Law's place, right across the street, and I just couldn't help but think it might be that same bird I'd seen several minutes earlier and several kilometres away.

Maybe not, since ravens are not all that rare. More recently, I was again looking out the kitchen window at the New Denver glacier, a little before sunrise. It was during that cold snap around Valentine's, and the full moon was setting squarely behind the snowfield of the glacier. The brilliant white moon was slipping below the ridge over there as the first sunlight hit the peaks with the cold morning alpenglow. For a few amazing seconds the partially remaining full moon looked like an immense igloo sitting way up there on the pink/orange tinted glacier, then the moon was set and gone and the peaks brightened further in the full glare of that early morning winter sunrise.

Timing is everything, but lucky chances of fate are maybe a little more. I was in Silverton a few weeks back close to sunset doing some shopping at Bigway and decided to zip down to the boat launch for a photo or two. Right as I walked over to the walkway encircling the launch, an otter swam out from the dock and cruised along the shore north past Nelsons' house to some small floating docks. It climbed up onto the snowy wooden deck and proceeded to sprawl and roll about for several minutes, enjoying those last rays of sun and acting like it was revelling on some tropical beach. Too far off to make a good photo, it was just one of those things that briefly comes then goes…

On a calm, sunny afternoon in December I was paddling along the lakeshore south of the New Denver hospital and close enough to shore to do a little beach-combing as I floated along. There was a series of tiny waves lapping the shore from some wind earlier in the day. I heard a slow tick-tock sound coming from shore and pulled closer to see why this clock kinda sound was occurring. A flat, plate-sized piece of shale was poised straight up and down between the boulders and each little wave would nudge it up to tick against one rock, then draw it back again to tock against a lower boulder. The water level was just right, the waves big enough and the shale exactly located to generate this flukey sound.

During that recent cold snap I spent several afternoons ski touring up in the Lyle and Whitewater Creek areas at Retallack, on the north side of highway. After I climbed out of the shade down at the highway, the sun was glorious and there was less wind than back down in the main valley. About 3 pm I was having a break and gazing at the huge wall that forms the east side of Whitewater Creek drainage leading up to Mt. Brennan. The sun was fully on that face and for maybe 15 minutes there were continuous slides and snowy rock avalanches coming down the chutes. Nothing real immense, but a steady low roaring that ended quite completely as the sun lowered and the various trigger zones resolved.

After seeing a remarkable swimming deer/waiting coyote/circling eagle episode along the lake last winter at Bannock Point, I've been convinced that even if you don't expect anything too great to happen on a walk or ride or ski outing, stuff does go on all the time, like the proverbial tree falling unwitnessed in the forest. It's not at all important that anyone be there when events occur and such natural happenings have always taken place and likely always will, but it can be enriching to be out there when they do. Nice thing is that it's free to enjoy and mostly good for you as well.

Peter Roulston has owned the Bicycle Hospital for 15 years and now lives in New Denver. 358-2133.

Financial forum

with Debbie Pereversoff

The markets: past, present & future

The stock markets continued their upward trend at the start of 2006. One TV celebrity financial advisor stated that "if the high performance numbers of the first few weeks continued throughout the year, we'd have a 160% rate of return for 2006!" And then in the next breath, he brought things back to reality by saying "it ain't likely!"

So where exactly are we in the markets these days? Our investment advisory team has been talking to various portfolio managers and researching economic reports trying to get a sense of what lies ahead.

We have tried to educate our clients by explaining how the stock market cycles work. There are typically six stages to any stock market cycle: the 'trough' or bottom of the market; the 'recovery phase'—a time when the markets surge ahead coming out of a downturn; the 'growth phase'—a time when the markets are healthy and positive; the 'late cycle boom' which then leads into a 'peak' in the markets and then, ultimately, a 'recessionary period.'

Historically, the growth periods have lasted about four to five years while the downturns have been about 12 to 18 months long. The timing of these stock market cycles can obviously vary but the pattern is very much the same. What goes up must come down. The investment decisions that are made throughout these various cycles will either help you or hurt you. It all depends on how you position yourself and whether you use emotion or logic in your decision making.

Looking back at the last few years of the 1990s, we were experiencing a longer than normal growth phase/late cycle boom. Many financial advisors were cautioning investors that the peak was near but it was hard to argue with those performance numbers. Many investors were experiencing double-digit returns, the science and technology type funds or the 'dot com' companies were all the rage. I'll admit that it was hard even for me to not feel tempted to get caught up in the craze.

Many investors had 'value style' funds in their portfolios. Value style portfolio managers tend to seek out inexpensive stock that they will hold for a period of time until they feel it is too expensive. As the growth phase continued, the value style managers could no longer find good deals and many of them sat on the sidelines while the growth style funds continued to soar.

Investors would then compare the performance numbers of their growth funds against the value style funds. What they found is the growth style funds continued to show double digit returns while the value style funds were in the high single digits. As usual, the emotional response was to ditch the value funds and chase the performance numbers of the growth funds. Ironically, it was those value style funds that had the strong performance numbers throughout the subsequent downturn.

What should have been a four to five year growth cycle ended up lasting more than 7 years! Between the year 2000 and early 2003, a lot of investors were ultimately caught in one of the worst bear markets in history. The markets declined so far as to be compared to the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression that followed.

The recovery phase finally took hold in the spring of 2003 and we've since experienced steady growth in all world markets. I'm sure some investors have been thrilled to see double digit returns in their portfolios and are once again experiencing the euphoria of riding the wave.

We believe that we are in the late cycle boom once again. What can be difficult to predict is exactly how long this boom will last, when the peak will hit and how long the downturn will be. All we know is that it will happen. What steps are *you* taking to prepare for the inevitable?

A well diversified portfolio is the key. Don't be too tempted to chase the performance numbers of the past. Some parties started a while ago and you might be a little late coming through the door. If you've had strong performance numbers over the last few years, consider seizing the profits by selling high—buying low. As much as investors feel that they are logical in their investment decisions, emotion tends to cloud their judgement. Working with an experienced financial planner can help you make appropriate decisions throughout every phase of the stock market cycle. Seek advice!

Debbie Pereversoff CFP CSA is co-owner of The Affolter Financial Group Inc. specializing in retirement planning, portfolio management and design.

Cool Eateries of the West Kootenays

with Andrew Rhodes

Fabulous Chicken and a Squished Head?

Hello all you fantastic fabulous food fans, and hello to all of you who feel I write only positive reviews of restaurants. This week's column will be a little different, so brace yourselves. You know that picture of me at the top of this column? That's actually an old resume photo from my twenty year acting career in Vancouver. No kidding. What does this have to do with food? Well, as it happens I used that very photo when I got a job in a feature film called THE FLY II. You can rent it and watch my head getting. squished at the bottom of an elevator shaft. When they hired me they said "You have the right amount of brains for this part." But the best part of the movie for me was the food. Movie sets are catered by teams of incredible cooks. Even the actors get to eat! One afternoon at lunch time the caterers served a chicken dish that knocked everyone's socks off. This created a laundry problem, but the dish was simply heavenly. I HAD to have the recipe, but movie sets have rules, and one of them is never to bother the caterers. I waited around after the meal, because I wasn't due to have my head squished for several hours, and when things looked safe enough I snuck around to the back of the catering trailer and knocked on the door. The head caterer opened the door. I told her I'd do anything for the chicken recipe. She blushed, let me in the trailer, got out pen and paper and proceeded to write the recipe down. She had cooked it for fifty five people, so she had to down size the ingredients, but she got it down and handed it to me. I gave her many thanks and headed of to where I was soon to get my head squished. That piece of paper with the recipe on it stayed in one of my folders for SIXTEEN YEARS. A couple of years ago I looked for it and found it, but there were problems. The ink had faded and the paper was falling apart. It was nearly illegible, but with a magnifying glass and lots of patience I managed to reconstruct the recipe. I've been making it now and then for the last two years, and many local people have enjoyed it and asked for the recipe, and guess what? I'm going to give it to all of you fabulous food fans. I've found it in various cook books under the name of "Poulet Provencal." Other sources call it "Chicken Marbella."

Their recipes vary a little, but here's mine:

Chicken to knock your socks off

Chicken pieces - 2 cut-up chickens or 12 thighs or whatever you like.

Marinate the chicken over night in:

1/2 cup olive oil

1/2 cup red wine vinegar or balsamic (better)

1/4 cup capers and some caper juice

1/2 cup favorite pitted olives (green is good)

1 cup pitted prunes

2 tbsp. dried oregano

1 tbsp. fresh ground black pepper

6 bay leaves

The next day place chicken in a roasting pan and pour everything else (the marinade) over it. Dribble MAPLE SYRUP over chicken (or use 2 tbsp. brown sugar)

Pour 1/2 cup WHITE WINE over it all.

Bake at 400 degrees 'til done—an hour or so.

HINT: Basting half way through is fun, and can only make everything better.

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SUMMIT LAKE SKI HILL AGM March 16, 7 pm, Nakusp Secondary School Library.

LUCERNE PARENTS are encouraged to come out to Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings, held the third Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm in the Lucerne School library. Next one: March 16. Parents have a voice in their children's education through PAC.

PASSMORE HALL ASSOCIATION is holding its annual PIE/ GIFT BINGO on March 18 at 7:00 pm. Pie and Gift donations welcome. Contact Margie at 226-7506

SLOCAN VALLEY CYCLING CLUB AGM, 7 pm, April 4, 2006, at Lucerne Elementary Secondary School. Anyone who cares about the future of this club is welcome and encouraged to attend. Memberships will be due at this time as well.

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NOTICES

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Kootenay characters: Dr. William Edward Gomm

BY R.N. RILEY

One early pioneer who had a considerable impact on his community is Dr. William Edward Gomm, of Sandon. Born in Savannah, Ga. one year after the end of the US Civil War to a well-to-do Southern family, around age 10 Gomm moved with his widowed mother to New York, where he attended college. After post-graduate studies in Vienna, he returned to Savannah, where he was the city physician. He also later worked in New York and then San Francisco, where he contracted tuberculosis.

It was perhaps due to this bout of TB that Gomm turned his sights north in 1895, and headed for the clear mountain air, arriving in Sandon the following year. By 1897, Gomm had established an office in Black's Hotel. He was also an active member of the city's social scene, as an officer and founding member of the Knights of Pythias.

The first Sandon hospital, with room for six patients, opened March 1, 1899, with Gomm as the attending physician. Later that same year, the area mine owners locked out all members of the Sandon Miners' Union over a pay dispute. As the lock-out dragged on for months, Gomm and the hospital matron, Miss Chisholm, not only ended up working for no pay, but placed their meagre savings at the disposal of the hospital's board of directors. The following February a settlement was finally reached, but three months later the hospital, along with most of the downtown core of the city, burned down. Six days later, Gomm re-opened a makeshift hospital in the "Upper Gulch" area. It lay in the path of snowslides, but it would do...

In June of 1900, Gomm married Maude Beadleson of Cody, with whom he would later have four sons and three daughters. That same year, he became a Canadian citizen.

1901 marked the start of Gomm's political career. He eventually served on Sandon City Council for 11 years, including four terms as mayor. In addition, he was a school trustee and police commissioner, as well as the district coroner for 12 years.

Snow slides forced the closure of the second hospital, but in 1904 the Western Federation of Miners opened a spacious two-storey hospital on Sunnyside Hill in Sandon. It was the most modern hospital in the entire area, and was open to all, regardless of financial standing. However, an ongoing recession meant continued hard times for Sandon; by 1913 the city was placed in receivership, and in 1917 Gomm moved to New Denver, where he worked at the Slocan Community Hospital.

In 1922, this hospital closed due to lack of funds, but Gomm continued to provide medical service, including helping deliver future local author John Norris in 1922, in the Silverton Hospital, the house where Carl Lindstein now lives. By 1926 the New Denver hospital had re-opened, and Gomm continued to work there up until his death from a stroke in 1929 at age 63.

Respected, admired, in a 1950s era piece, Gomm was described by Ed Vipond as a "bluff, loud-speaking, hard-working general practitioner. A very good doctor."

Kaslo Primary Gallery gets new art exhibit

submitted

Fern Van Horn is an artist who has spent all her life developing her abilities and draws on influences such as her father, her good friend John Cooper, and past Kaslo resident and well known artist Mary Weiler.

Her paintings, a mixture of acrylics and watercolour, are a vibrant, exhilarating assortment of "a few of her favourite things." Her penchant for old trucks comes through as she lovingly has rendered them and given them, as she says, "their moment in the sun."

Come by the Primary Health Centre (even in the pink of health we are happy to see you!) during office hours, and view this wonderful collection of new artwork which will be on exhibit from March 2 until mid-September.

Primary Health Centre hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm, (closed 12:30-13:30) and Wednesday 8:30 am to 12:30 pm. Located at 673 A Ave (downstairs).

For information, please call 353-2291/366-4325.

SLOCAN VALLEY RECREATION

SPRING INTO FUN - Spring Break Day Camp. Crescent Valley Youth Centre. 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Mon./Fri. March 13th to 24th.

VOLLEYBALL FOR HEART TOURNEY- Sunday, March 5th. 11a.m.-2p.m. Mt. Sentinel School. Trophies & draws. Proceeds to BC/Yukon Heart&Stroke.

SEED EXCHANGE DAY - Sunday, March 12th Winlaw Hall. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Buy,trade & sell seeds/cuttings/plants. Reserve your table. Admission by donation.

MICRO SOCCER -New program. Ages 4 & 5 years. Call for details.

YOUTH SOCCER - Registration is underway for students up to Grade 6

KIDS ZONE BUY & SELL - Sat. April 1st. Slocan Park Hall. 10 a.m. to 12 noon. reserve your table today!

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RDCK, February 25: Auditor general discusses CBT board make-up

by Jan McMurray

•Auditor General Wayne Strelioff attended on invitation from the board to discuss the way the Columbia Basin Trust board of directors is composed. RDCK Chair Gary Wright reported that Strelioff conveyed that now that the CBT had decided not to exercise the option agreement to purchase the shares of Columbia Power Corporation, the CBT board could go back to the way it used to be without violating any accounting principles.

In November 2003, the Columbia Basin Trust Amendment Act changed the way board members are appointed to the board. The Act reduced the number of board members from 18 to 12. Instead of 2/3 of board members appointed by local governments and 1/3 by the provincial government, all 12 are now appointed by the government, with the local governments submitting two to four nominees.

At the time, people were not happy with the change, and demanded to know the reasoning behind it. The response they got was that Strelioff had recommended the Province use the generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Under GAAP, governments that have investments in an arms-length corporation can only keep the corporation's assets on the books if they have complete control of the organization. They say that BC could not afford the over $200 million write down if CBT investments were taken off the books.

Wright said it was "very gracious" of Strelioff to come to the board meeting, attributing it to MLA Corky Evans, who began meeting with the auditor general to discuss the situation last year.

•The board voted to fund the Selkirk College Innovation Chair in Regional Economic Development and the bylaw was forwarded for ministerial signing. Before the bylaw is given final reading in March, the chair and CAO were directed to draft an agreement with Selkirk College that gives the board a permanent advisory role to the Innovation Chair and that stipulates the contribution be returned if the Chair ever ceases to exist.

RDCK Chair and New Denver Mayor Gary Wright has spoken to Selkirk College President Marilyn Luscombe and says she is "more than willing to agree to something like that."

Funding the Chair won't affect taxation for the residents of Area H, New Denver, Silverton and Slocan. The Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission has agreed to New Denver Mayor Wright's proposal that its funding for 2006 be cut by the amount residents will be taxed for the Selkirk College Chair.

•Area D Director Andy Shadrack was nominated appointee to the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee.

•The board authorized the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission to sign a $24,000 contract with CMON to help bring broadband service to the more rural parts of valley.

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OPEN HOUSE MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

March 4, 2006 • 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

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VILLAGES OF NEW DENVER, SILVERTON, SLOCAN AND ELECTORAL AREAS H AND K - ARROW PARK

CALL FOR PROJECT SUBMISSIONS & NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
Columbia Basin Trust
Community Initiatives Funding Program

The Villages of New Denver, Silverton, Slocan and Electoral Areas H and K - Arrow Park (*North Side of Ashhead Road, up to but not including Idler Road*) are all accepting proposals for funding consideration from the Community Initiatives Program sponsored by the Columbia Basin Trust. Funding for **2006** is to be used for new initiatives or the enhancement of existing programs and must conform to the goals and objectives of the Columbia Basin Management Plan.

Application packages are available at the Village Offices of New Denver, Silverton and Slocan, **or** the Regional Recreation Commission Office in Slocan Park, **or** at the RDCK, 202 Lakeside Dr., Nelson BC **or** online at www.rdck.bc.ca. For Arrow Park residents, you can also contact Bill Mitchell at 1-250-265-0040.

Completed Applications must be submitted *no later than* **4:30 pm, April 18, 2006** to the RDCK, attn: Trish Gerald, PO Box 590, 202 Lakeside Dr., Nelson BC V1L 5R4.

For further information, please contact Trish Gerald, RDCK, Phone: 1-800-268-7325 / 1-250-352-8190 Fax: 250-352-9300 e-mail: tgerald@rdck.bc.ca **or** contact your local Village Office

Public Meetings to review proposals will be held as follows:

New Denver: Tuesday, May 9, 2006, 7 pm
New Denver Council Chambers
115 Slocan Ave., New Denver, BC

Silverton: Tuesday April 25, 2006, 7 pm
Village of Silverton Council Chambers
421 Lake Ave, Silverton, BC

Slocan: Tuesday, April 25, 2006, 7 pm
Silvery Slocan Social Centre / Legion #276
502 Harold St., Slocan, BC

Area H: Thursday, May 4, 2006, 7 pm
Winlaw Community Hall
5897 Hwy 6, Winlaw, BC

Area K - Arrow Park: TBA – please contact Bill Mitchell

Elderly patient dies after being moved from Trail

by Jan McMurray

Health Minister George Abbott has ordered a ministry review of a decision made at Kootenay Boundary Hospital in Trail that saw a very frail elderly patient moved to a residential care facility in Grand Forks. Ninety-one-year-old Fanny Albo died days after she was transferred from the hospital.

Interior Health Authority CEO Murray Ramsden is also conducting a review of the situation, to determine whether Fanny Albo should have been transferred out of the hospital. His review is independent of Abbott's and scheduled to be completed by March 10.

The Castlegar and District Health Watch says in a press release, "This tragic case demonstrates the appalling failure of the Interior Health Authority's policies as they relate to seniors, particularly its 'first available bed' policy and its policy of refusing to listen to public input."

The organization says Mrs. Albo and her family are not the only victims of this policy, which ships seniors to distant places for long term care because there are insufficient beds in their home communities.

Tina Coletti, West Kootenay Regional Chairperson of the BC Nurses Union, also believes that inappropriate transfer of patients occurs in our region. She sent out to local governments a copy of an internal email to the Trail hospital's nursing staff that alerts nurses that they may have to house patients in the hallways because the hospital is running at overcapacity.

She says in her letter, "In the fall months the Kootenay Boundary facilities were in such overflow capacity that the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital transferred four patients from the Trail site to Grand Forks. Some of these patients were frail, with no family, had language barriers and a large mountain pass between them and their loved ones."

A ministry news release on the incident states that the ministry's policy under Access to Residential Care is that clients are only approved for residential care if the client is prepared to accept the first available and appropriate bed. "In general, a hospital is not the best environment for a residential care client, and hospital authorities endeavour to move seniors into appropriate facilities as quickly as possible," it says.

West Kootenay Wildcats go wild and win it all in Invermere February 10-12. Congratulations and good luck at the provincials in March!

Top row, L to R: Madison Campbell (Grand Forks), Casey Jones (Kaslo), Sam Tyers (Kaslo), Taryn Moffatt (Trail), Erin Dermody (Castlegar), Jessica Trusz (BeaverValley), Justine Thielker (Slocan Valley). Bottom row, L to R: Rosanne Wallace (Beaver Valley), Marnie Audia (Trail), Lauren Taylor (Nelson), Christy Mason (Nelson), Lisa Austin (Castlegar), Kayla Martin (Rossland), Kaitlyn Burke (Castlegar), Charlotte Chanasyk (Nelson), Carmen Petrick (Slocan Valley), Kenzie Waterstreet (Salmo).

Housing referral service in Winlaw

If you have housing to offer or if you need a home and have some special requirements, you might want to connect up with the free housing referral service now being set up in the Spicer Center in Winlaw.

Thanks to Interior Health and a couple of 'mini-grants', the Habondia Lending Society is setting up a new service for residents and newcomers in the Slocan Valley. Open on Saturdays starting March 25 from 10 am to 4 pm, the housing office is a friendly space for people with housing issues. Call 226-7011, and "you can leave a message 24/7", says housing co-ordinator Laverne Booth.

"Affordable and adequate housing is important for all our families", says Michelle Cole of the Habondia Lending Society. "We are pleased to offer information sessions for home-owners, renters and would-be residents to improve the living conditions in the Slocan Valley. We want to hear from valley residents—what do you need to offer more housing spaces in the valley?

Starting March 25 through to mid-April you can participate in a 'community housing conversation' with topics such as *Conversing with Mental Illness, Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions, Programs for Secondary Suites* and *Energy Efficiency for Home-owners*.

Slocan Valley seed exchange day

On Sunday, March 12 Slocan Valley Recreation will host a seed exchange day at the Winlaw Hall from 10 am to 2 pm.

Gardeners from around the region are expected to be at the exchange to buy, sell, trade or barter. All types of local seeds are welcome, be they heritage seeds or something nurtured in your own garden. Fruit tree and bush cuttings can also be brought along. It doesn't matter if you're a hobby gardener or pursue this as a life path—we can all learn from our common passion.

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