The Valley VOICE

Free!

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

Nakusp volunteer firfighters respond to a blaze at the Green Door Pizza & Bowl on March 12. PHOTO CREDIT: DANI TSCHUDIN, WWW.VISUALEXPOSURES.CA

Fire at the Green Door does extensive damage to structure

by Jan McMurray

A building that represented hopes and dreams, and lots and lots of blood, sweat and tears, was badly damaged in a fire on Sunday, March 12.

The Green Door building in Nakusp was apparently set ablaze by 25-year-old Adam George, tenant of the upstairs apartment. George is being charged with two counts of arson and one count of possession of incendiary material. His first court appearance is in Nakusp on March 13.

No one was injured in the blaze.

Fire Chief Terry Warren said firefighters started working at the site at about 2 pm, and monitored the situation all night long and into the next day.

"The guys did a bang-up job," said Warren. "The fire damage was kept mainly to the apartment, but there's lots of water damage."

In a press release, the RCMP commends the Nakusp Volunteer Fire Department for its performance battling the fire. "The building is close to other homes and the fire department was able to contain the fire to the one building and limit the amount of damage to the restaurant and youth centre," it says.

The Green Door was transformed from a storefront into a unique and exemplary youth facility in 2004-05. Three non-profit organizations came together to work on the project — Straight Arrow Youth Op Society (SAYOPS), Arrow Lakes Young Entrepreneurs' Society (ALYES) and Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services (ASLCS).

The building housed a pizza and bowling business, a youth centre, office space with equipment for youth to develop their business ideas, and a space that was being used as a classroom for the ASLCS Skills Link program.

Marty Lewis, ASLCS administrator, said the Skills Link employment program was being moved immediately into the community services building. "We're very lucky we have some spare space here and can continue the program without missing a beat," he said. Twelve youth have been participating in Skills Link since January 30.

"The fire is a very sad thing, but it's a great community and I have no doubt that people will pull together and get behind the project with renewed vigour," he said. "There is a genuine need for youth services in Nakusp."

Lewis said they were able to enter the building briefly to recover confidential records. As for the computer equipment, office furniture, materials and supplies ASLCS had in the building, Lewis said, "We've got insurance and we will be making claims for whatever is not recoverable."

Cheryl Jackins of SAYOPS said the group was looking for a temporary space to re-locate the youth centre. "There are quite a few youth who are upset about losing their youth centre," she reported.

The youth centre had a DVD player, stereo equipment and a karaoke machine they had purchased with grant money a few years ago. The pool table they have just purchased with a Mounted Police Foundation grant had thankfully not been delivered yet. However, the pool table on loan to the centre from Ken and Debbie Booth for the last four years was still in the building.

Lack of ambulance workers causes concern in remote communities

by Jan McMurray

A shortage of paramedics in our area is becoming a concern.

At Nakusp's March 9 council meeting, council voted to send a letter to BC Ambulance Services (BCAS) supervisor Bob Gallagher, demanding a solution to the problem.

"One citizen was lost last summer because it took so long for an ambulance to come," said Mayor Karen Hamling.

She reported that Nakusp's schedule for March had only 10% of the shifts covered at first, and although more were slowly being filled, "it is at an unacceptable level."

Norm Bickel, BCAS superintendent of Okanagan North, which encompasses our area, said Nakusp's staff of 9 or 10 has the ability to staff two ambulances 24/7. In New Denver, with its staff of four, "we'd like to staff one ambulance 24/7." He said that in Nakusp in February, the first car was out of service 8% of the time and the second was out of service 20% of the time.

Bickel said that it was "nothing new" for the schedule to be sparse at first, but assured that it does fill up. "As people find out what their schedules are for their other work and family commitments, they fill in the shifts," he said. "This is normal in smaller communities. Bigger centres have full-time staff."

The difference in staffing between larger and smaller communities seems to be key to the shortage of ambulance workers in our area.

MLA Corky Evans said, "The problem is that we attract wonderful people, and they get their training at their own cost, and then there is not enough call-out time to justify the cost of the training. So they take a different job in another town or in the bush. The ones who are really dedicated to the ambulance service wind up moving to the city where they can get wages working as a paramedic," he said.

Bickel explained that when paramedics are on shift in our small communities, they are on call and receive a stipend of $2 per hour for carrying the pager. If they get a call, they are paid for at least four hours at a wage based on their level of training and years of service.

However, the $2 per hour on-call stipend applies only to ambulance stations classified as "remote," including Nakusp, New Denver, Kaslo, Winlaw, Edgewood, Salmo and Riondel. In stations classified "rural" and "urban," paramedics remain in the ambulance station while waiting for a call and are paid an hourly standby rate of $10.

Bickel says Nakusp gets less than one call per day and New Denver gets less than one call every three days, "so we've never pretended that it's anything other than a part-time job there. It's similar to being a volunteer firefighter.

"I can say that it's not an issue isolated to New Denver and Nakusp," he went on. "Attracting people to health care work is an issue throughout the province and across the country. Would we like to attract more people? Absolutely. We'd like to generate some interest from people rooted in the community that want to provide a service to their fellow community people."

Bickel says the minimum requirements for an ambulance worker in this area are Occupational First Aid, Level C CPR, a Class 4 or better Driver's Licence and EMR (Emergency Medical Responder). He says the EMR course costs somewhere between $1100 and $1400 and it's good for five years. People must pay for all this training themselves, but, Bickel says, "once you're hired, we provide ongoing training so you can maintain your licence."

Evans has been making suggestions to the powers that be on how we could improve the service in our area. He says he has suggested that our stations be upgraded so workers could get a wage for the duration of their shifts rather than a $2 per hour on-call stipend. Another of his suggestions was that workers could help out in the community hospital or health care centre while waiting for a call.

Evans says he thinks the ambulance service could be better co-ordinated with other area health care services. "The anomaly is that other health care services like seniors' facilities, home care, doctors and hospitals are administrated by the West Kootenay/Boundary district of IH, and the ambulance service is administrated out of Kamloops. I want to see if we can't co-ordinate the ambulance service with the other services, and get paramedics better hours."

Evans says the real problem is the funding formula. "The formula benefits big cities," he said. "It's an unfair formula, just like the school districts, where they are funded per capita. Instead of funding higher dollars per capita so they can continue to exist, they have to close schools."

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Open house shows public support for Nakusp Hot Springs

by Jan McMurray

The Village of Nakusp hopes to have the hot springs opened up again by July 1.

"As long as everything goes smoothly, that date is do-able," said Village Treasurer Richard Mahoney, adding that the job would be out to tender March 24.

Village officials and project manager Chris Fairbank of Fairbank Architects Ltd. were available to answer questions at an open house held March 7 at the seniors' hall.

Although people expressed concern about the cost of the work, its potential impact on taxation, and how the facility got into its current state, council came away with the message that people wanted the Village to go ahead with the project.

"Make sure we do it right this time and hurry up," was the message Councillor Gord Roberts reported he got from the open house.

In order to re-open the facility, the Village is planning to borrow about $375,000 from the Municipal Finance Authority (MFA) and service the debt from future hot springs revenue. No tax money will be used for this first phase of work.

"The hot springs has always paid for itself," said Mayor Hamling at the open house. "It has never taken tax money. The money we borrow [to re-open the facility] will be paid back through hot springs revenue."

A financial statement for the hot springs shows a profit of about $60,000 in 2004 and about $56,000 in 2005.

Mahoney also reminded that the MFA offers excellent rates on loans, and that a lot of the work would achieve efficiencies and save money for the facility.

Councillor and Chair of the Hot Springs committee Ulli Mueller reported that since the open house, the committee had sent in a funding request to the CBT because members of the public had suggested researching other sources of funding before borrowing.

She also said that to save money on consulting and management fees, project manager Fairbank Architects Ltd. would plan now for both phases of the work, even though not all the work would be done right away.

For the additional work that was recommended in the Fairbank report, to the tune of $238,000+, "we're looking into grants and other avenues," said Hamling at the open house.

Although the project will be costly, and the loan will max out the Village's ability to borrow without going to referendum or counter-petition, Village officials agree that the project is well worth it.

"I think the business community wasn't aware of how much the hot springs supports their business in the winter," said Mayor Hamling. "Everyone is feeling it — not just the restaurants and hotels. Even I didn't realize the support the hot springs brings. It has been a wake-up call for the community. The spin-offs from the hot springs are just being realized."

When asked how the hot springs got into its current state, Hamling replied, "I don't want to point fingers, but to prevent it from happening again, we will put into place a long-term maintenance plan. It is prudent management to reserve for future expenditures. This is the lesson we've learned."

In 2002, fairly extensive renovations were done at the facility. A major portion of the pool floors were replaced, so the pools are in good structural condition. The Fairbank report recommends that minor structural repairs costing about $5,000 be done in the first phase.

The pool liners will also be replaced in phase one. In 2002, the ceramic tiles lining the pools were replaced with fiberglass liners. Just three years later, the fiberglass liners started leaking and have been removed. The Fairbank report points to the practise of draining the pools for cleaning every night and refilling them every morning as the most likely cause of this problem. The practise exposes the pool liners to extremes in temperatures — hot during the day and cold during winter nights.

Mueller reported that the Hot Springs committee was leaning towards ceramic tile rather than fiberglass or PVC liners because of lifespan and ease of repair. When the facility was built in 1973/74, ceramic tile lined the pools and lasted 15 years, until 2002. Also, repairs are simple if just one or two tiles get damaged. Both Halcyon and Ainsworth use fiberglass liners and count on a lifespan of 5-10 years.

Proper deck drainage and gutters must be provided before the facility can re-open because the pool deck is too wet and ices in the wintertime, making it slippery. During the work in 2002, which included new concrete decking, the drainage gutters surrounding the two pools were filled in with concrete. This concrete must be removed and the drainage system reinstated. Also, the report recommends that the "in-floor" heating system installed at the entrance to the pool area in 2002 be extended to keep the wet, icy areas from forming.

A new filtration and circulation system will also be installed before July. Currently, both pools are operated with a single filter and circulation system, which is inadequate.

Councillor Mueller reported that the Ministry of Health inspector had visited the site and met with staff, and "it doesn't look like there will be any additional requirements [over and above the ones listed in the Fairbank report] except maybe a second drain for circulation." She said the water had to be circulated at least once every hour to meet health standards.

Although the report raised a concern about the level of chlorine in the waste water being discharged into the Kuskanax, the Ministry of Environment has determined that the level is within provincial regulations.

The basement under the pools houses the boiler room and other mechanical equipment. The Village will fire separate the boiler room from the rest of the basement, and the basement from the rest of the building in this first phase of upgrades.

At the March 9 council meeting, Councillor Heppner said he felt the sprinkling system for fire protection should be installed during the first phase of the work. "What's the point of spending all that money and doing the work if it burns up a week later?" he asked.

Phase two work includes improvements to heating and ventilation, electrical work, sewage disposal improvements, roof insulation, improved intake and fencing, distribution piping and metering and water supply maintenance.

The facility has been completely closed since January 20, when health officials ordered it be shut down because of a lack of 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.

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A short history of the Nakusp Hot Springs 1894-2003

by Rosemarie & Milton Parent of the Arrow Lakes Historical Society, compiled from their publications and archival material.

In this current crisis with the need to upgrade the Nakusp Hot Springs and meet new standards and government regulations, the public is asked to participate in finding ways and means to preserve this valuable asset to the town. So many people worked so hard to make sure the community kept control of the hot springs. Let us make sure that this continues.

A brief history of the springs:

• 1894: staked by Messrs. Darragh and Lester. Widely regarded as a God-given gift that should be open to the public, free and unobstructed, so the government cancelled the application after public objections .

• 1897: D. Alan and Ellen McDougald had been lured from California by prospecting opportunities in the Kootenay and bought the Leland Hotel in 1892. Alan died of tuberculosis in 1895. Ellen obtained the hot springs site in 1897 by staking the lot as a prospector's claim under the name of the Virginia Mineral Claim. No development was undertaken for some time.

• 1912: A proper trail from town was built providing easier access.

• 1914: The government put the site into a reserve. Mrs. Gayford (Ellen had remarried) fought the issue and gained surface rights to her mineral claim. She started a camp and attempted to charge for the water's use but this required some administration, an expense that rendered the operation unprofitable.

• 1925: the Nakusp Board of Trade took action against Gayford; the springs became a 200 acre Class C park and two of the three springs were reserved for the public.

• 1928: the McDougald claim was relinquished. Bert Herridge became chairman and Frank Rushton secretary-treasurer to the Nakusp Hot Springs Board. Construction of a concrete pool and enclosure was started by Karl and Emil Newbrand. All materials and equipment had to be packed in by horse or on one's back.

A caretaker was hired for $300 for the summer. There was a $5 season levy for packers who used the corral and 25 cents for casual users. The trail was in good shape and mile boards were erected.

• 1929: caretaker Amos La Rue enforced rules that were set out by the Provincial Parks Act. Permits for campfires were required and safety and cleanliness regulations were followed.

• 1935: Louis (Pop) Gensick took over as caretaker. There was no money for development but he worked to keep the little spa clean and hospitable. He packed in a mill, piece by piece, cut lumber for small cabins and an open building., staying over a few winters to complete this project. Price was $1 per season per family, cabin rental was 25¢

• 1939: through tax sale the claim was purchased by the Sid Leary family.

• 1940: Pop severely cut his hand and wrist on the saw of his portable mill. John Houston managed to get a tourniquet in place to stop the bleeding and walked to town for help, despite being crippled with arthritis. He set out with a flashlight and crawled and slithered until he arrived at Pop's son Paul's cabin; volunteers hiked to the springs to bring Pop out. John Houston had saved his friend's life and received a certificate from the Royal Humane Society.

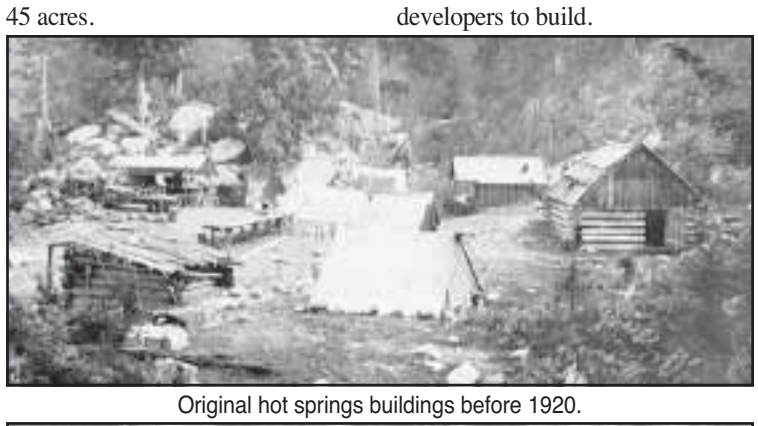
• 1942: Emil Juras managed the springs, and Albert Beck spent hundreds of volunteer hours to maintain the trail.

• 1957: the Leary family donated 10 acres of land to the town with a stipulation that the Nakusp Hot Springs Provincial Park Board complete a survey at a cost of $375. The government insisted the title would have to be registered under the Crown. Florence Leary wanted it registered to the town itself as a Class A Park, but was told it would require 45 acres.

• 1967: Nakusp became a village and was offered ownership of the springs. There was only a poorly maintained logging road but hundreds of visitors still came to the springs. There were no caretakers; the cabins and pools had been damaged by vandals. A committee was formed to investigate the possibility of piping the hot water to a better camping site and to produce a plan for a proper pool complex.

• 1974: the complex was completed. Nakusp had a first class spa to offer to the world.

• 2003: Nakusp purchased the 77.2-acre parcel of land upon which the hot springs is situated instead of leasing it from the province for about $11,000 per year or $950 per month. The village can now encourage developers to build.



Original hot springs buildings before 1920.

Nakusp Girls on weekend visit to Nakusp Hot Springs. Picture taken at start of trail, 1938 or 1939. Back row, L-R Mary Rushton, Cathy (nee Mauchline) Horrey, Edie Horrey, Eileen Leary, Vera Johnson. Front row: Sheila Leary, ? Nellie Horrey.

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Another stumbling block for Kaslo skatepark

by Jan McMurray

KASLO—The legal opinion is in, and is favourable to the Vimy Park location for the skatepark. However, one more concern has come forward — the need for an Archaeological Impact Assessment.

"It's a go except for one last hurdle," said Don Page of the skatepark committee in a telephone interview on March 11. "An archaeological review has been thrown at us, and we would like to pursue it now rather than later."

Page said he had contacted the K'tunaxa Kinbasket Tribal Council on the issue and was waiting to hear back from them.

"If there were to be an archaeological review and if it's significant, it could delay us up to a year, so it's a big deal," explained Page.

The letter raising the concern was submitted to the Village office on March 3 and will be on council's March 14 agenda.

Councillor Leathwood, in a telephone interview March 12, commended the skatepark committee for looking into all of the community's concerns. "They're really making an effort to try to answer all questions, cover all the bases and keep everybody happy — and at their expense. I have to give them credit for that," she said.

The legal issue was dealt with at a special meeting of council on March 7. Acting Mayor Suzan Hewat read the letter from Village lawyers Staples McDannold Stewart stating their opinion that the Vimy Park location for the skatepark fits in with the Official Community Plan (OCP).

With that, in keeping with motions made at the February 21 meeting, council confirmed that construction can begin at the Vimy Park site, as long as all other permits and approvals are received and copies are submitted to the Village office. Village staff was instructed to inform the committee and council of any further permits or approvals that might be necessary.

In the interview with Page on March 11, he gave an update on the permits and approvals the committee has yet to obtain. He said that he had contacted the Ministry of Environment and is now waiting for a surveyor to come to the site.

"The Ministry of Environment and Land Use have said they don't see a problem with the site, but they need the surveyor's report before they do the paperwork," he said. He added that he had yet to hear from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Page explained that the main issue for the surveyor was the elevation that the skatepark should be built at.

The February 28 council meeting, attended by approximately 70 people, was the venue for a quiet demonstration by about 35 youth in support of the Vimy Park location. Some people had the impression that the skatepark committee did not have engineered plans.

"That's totally erroneous," said Page. "We spent $15,000 for engineered plans and $1,500 to have an addendum for plumbing to mitigate against flooding. So we're prepared for that scenario. By lifting it, we'll do away with the flooding concern. It's thousands of dollars more expensive."

He added that the elevation issue "does not affect the plans whatsoever."

He said that Spectrum Skatepark Creations designed the skatepark and Fulton Engineering, an affiliate of Spectrum, did the engineered drawings. Council received the plans and the addendum and approved them about a year ago, he said.

Another issue cleared up at the February 28 council meeting was the possible alternate arena location for the skatepark. Councillor Leathwood asked Mayor Holland to read an email dated February 20 from Phil Best of the Ministry of Transportation in Nelson, who says there would be "a magnitude of costs" to place a skatepark up by the arena. It would be necessary to install a sidewalk and a roadside barrier. The shoulder of the road would have to be widened; the ditch would have to be relocated; and slope would have to be reshaped to accommodate the barrier and sidewalk. The cost of the barrier and widening work would come to about $172,000. Best said the Ministry had no budget for this; the total cost would have to be borne by the Village.

The Ministry was not supportive of the arena location because it would place children adjacent to a highway, would result in reduced safety on the highway, and would result in increased "riding" on the highway and increased maintenance costs (snow plowing and clearing).

In February 2004, council accepted the Vimy Park location. At that time, there were petitions for (about 500 signatures) and against (about 100 signatures) the location. Other locations for the skatepark were also considered, and rejected for safety reasons.

Shown here is the controversial location for the Kaslo skatepark, off road at D Avenue in Vimy Park. Despite the controversy, council has approved the site.

The future of Jumbo Valley is still being debated

The future of Jumbo Valley is still being debated, and now the regional district directors have decided to give East Kootenay residents a say. In a near-unanimous vote March 3, directors chose not to give the final decision on the proposed resort back to the province.

Jumbo Glacier Resort, the company which wants to build a massive resort in the valley, had petitioned the board to "eliminate another costly, redundant and time-consuming regulatory process" by allowing the province to make the decision, However, directors rejected the motion.

Opponents of the resort say local residents can now have their opinions and concerns heard and participate in the decision-making process.

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Voices from the Valleys

Giving children choices in rural schools...

Like most parents, I grumble about the school system quite a bit. I know that my parents did as well. My complaints, like theirs, tend to revolve around the lack of choices in education. My father would complain that I never had the opportunity to study Latin or Civics. My mother was aghast at the notion of Language Arts, whatever happened to English, and why didn't they teach me grammar? What's this Social Studies? And what happened to History and Geography?

That said, I had many more things in my elementary school than they did in their childhood schools. There was a large, fully stocked library with a full-time librarian and two assistants. We had art teachers and music teachers. There was a large gymnasium, and phys. ed. teachers. We had larger classes, it's true, but we learned to help each other through.

For me, the biggest failure in our rural public schools has been our lack of commitment to fund choices in education. Class size has never been an issue in rural British Columbia. I have always been more concerned that my children have the opportunity to explore a variety of ways of expressing themselves: through writing, music, art and math. That they have a basic knowledge of history, geography and literature, so that they can participate in society. That they learn to think critically.

Obviously, there are financial constraints placed on small rural schools by the funding formulas of the provincial government. We can't offer the range of educational choices through our schools, as they can in more densely populated areas of the province. We don't have enough students.

We can't hire art teachers. We can't hire music teachers. We can't hire full-time librarians. Don't even think about a drama program.

If the government of the province has decided to withhold this kind of education from our children, they ought to make it easier for local musicians, artists and actors to step into the breach. But they don't. The arts, and arts education in particular, has always been a low priority for government. It's a shame, because in a post-industrial economy the work of artists will become more valuable than it has ever been. It is our cultural industries that will dominate the economy in the 21st century.

Of course class sizes play a role in educational outcomes for children. But so do opportunities. Without the chance to explore a variety of forms of expression, they may never find their passion.

Dan Nicholson, publisher

A Slocan Valley food moment...

I had a lot more nice things to say about the Treehouse than appeared in the restaurant review on page 13. I resolved however, to grin and bear it when I sent my copy to the editor. I knew that the piece was too long and that it would have to be edited. I think that it was mean-spirited to cut out my Slocan Valley food moment, though. Doug Burton, my favourite West Kootenay furnace guy, brought us a dozen doughnuts from Tim Horton's in Castlegar last week. Those trans-fatty sugar-laden clusters of goodness all disappeared before the editor had a chance to cut my column. I think that she was in a vindictive mood because she didn't get any.

Dan Nicholson, publisher

Kaslo Jazz Etc. provides clarification

I would like to correct Mr. Braley's inaccuracies about the Kaslo Jazz Etc. Society (KJES) in his letter, "Meeting was a circus," published in the March 1 edition of *The Valley Voice*. First, although Jim Holland did establish the Kaslo Jazz Etc. Festival and was president of the board for 11 years, he stepped off the board three years ago to become an employee of the KJES board. As an employee, he carries out the policies which are decided upon by the board, not the other way around. Second, KJES has no intentions of using any part of Vimy Park or its surrounding beaches for the festival venues. We are totally satisfied with the present size of the festival and are quite happy with what we feel is a world class venue at Kaslo Bay Park.

Kaslo Jazz Etc. Society Board and Gusti Callis (Artistic Director KJES, Past President of the Board KJES)

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*.

Open letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper:

How many have to die before the "resolve" is broken? 20? 100? At the rate Canadian soldiers are being killed in Afghanistan, all 2200 will be dead by Christmas! Will that be enough or will you send more?

Get them out now! My "resolve" is broken! This is not peacekeeping. This is suicide.

Leon Pendleton
Edgewood

Skatepark location should be carefully considered

As present taxpayers and future residents, I find this topic most interesting, and certainly understand the potential divisive nature of it.

Two questions must be asked:

1. Must the skateboard park be built? The answer is most definitely! All the hard work, sacrifice donated to this point merits the best skateboard park available. Certainly the kids who will be using it, both present and future, also deserve a real fun place as well.

2. Must the skateboard park be built on the beach? The answer is a resounding yes! Provided of course, that no other land is available, or suitable for this type of structure.

We have seen the beach and its environments several times over the past two years, and are awestruck by its beauty. Have some of you become so immune to the serenity this unique parcel of land affords to all the thousands who come, and will come, that you now want to sacrifice it to please a few? I'm sorry, but the logic of that thinking escapes me. You can always build on the beach, but remember this: once built, you can never restore the classic beauty that it now possesses.

And for the youth this will impact - do you not want to help to preserve this heritage for your future generations as well?

I would seriously ask all of you to consider carefully the location of the skatepark; build it for the benefit and pleasure of all people - not just a select group.

Arnold and Helga Dyck
Kaslo/Calgary

Government should deliver what students deserve

It was disturbing to see the very large ad the BC Government placed in local papers on March 1, 2006. The ad, which ran in community newspapers all around the province, was titled "Parents want the facts on class size: the facts on declining class size."

So what are the facts on declining class size? When I look at the figures, I see that the numbers given are essentially the same as those given out by the SD#10 Superintendent of Schools at the October 25, 2005 board meeting.

The only real change since then came as a result of the stand that teachers took. The settlement at the end of the strike resulted in an additional $20 million province wide, devoted to class size and composition. School District #10's share of this funding was a mere $23,078.

Teachers are gratified by the high level of public support for firm class size limits and support for students with special needs. But we're growing increasingly worried that the government appears more willing to talk around the issues than solve them. An expensive advertising campaign and yet another round of "facts and figures" won't provide our students with the support and attention they need in order to succeed.

It's time for the government to deliver the firm and lasting learning conditions guarantees that students deserve.

Henning von Krogh
Arrow Lakes Teachers' Association

Skatepark proponents flout the law

To concur with Jane Lynch's letter published March 1 in The Valley Voice regarding the Kaslo "skatepark debacle," she is perfectly correct about the misinformation, lack of information and undemocratic procedures taking place with respect to the location of the proposed skatepark.

It is appalling how breaking the law is encouraged and indifference to environmental concerns displayed.

The skatepark committee seems determined to make this an issue between what the committee desires and competing with the Jazz Festival, which is already in place and contributing to the economy of the Village.

Where does the interest of the taxpaying citizen of Kaslo have a voice? Many do not see the maintenance and upkeep of the 10,000 sq. ft. concrete skateboard park on a floodplain as a wonderful gift to the Village. The size of this plan grew from 2000 sq. ft. two years ago, as a park for the youth of Kaslo, to its current 10,000 sq. ft. to attract world class boarders. Does the Village tax base have the means to support this? As Jane Lynch stated in her letter, council has other "big ticket tax increase proposals on its plate."

Who is going to explain to the local and rural youth that the actions (inaction) of the previous mayor were as inappropriate as the children's placard waving behaviour in the Village council meeting of February 28? To hold the current council responsible for the flagrant abuse of the previous mayor's office is a very regressive step for the skatepark committee.

Are the youth of today being taught that not following through on necessary research and requirements, that disregard for the environment and lack of respect for conduct in business meetings will achieve whatever they want? Shame on the adults who are feeding this concept. Shame on the adults who publicly bash the elected official operating within the law.

C. Boulianne
Kaslo

Essence of the underworld

There are concerns about the quality of life as we dive deeply into the meaning of death. When 80% of the money is spent on health care during the last 90 days of life, one must question why our elders are being treated like road kill. If we acknowledge that our bodies are vehicles for our consciousness, it is important to accept that when entering old age, it becomes a time to choose to move consciously to the next realm. Quality of life is important, as is our state of mind that creates our physical reality.

In 1991, the FDA made plans to try to destroy the alternative health industry, making constant public threats to the alternative healing movement. Yet studies are proving that the mind and emotions are a major factor in physical disease thus the alternative healing movement is able to successfully fight the medical establishment. And now we are experiencing the order of control structures becoming barbaric only because we are finally discovering how to create the realities we want. It is therefore hopeful that someday we will be living with a beautiful blend of alternative healing; however, in the meantime, the erratic weather and earth changes are the result of the violent and controlling patriarchal mind; hopefully they will examine their own thought patterns for complexes that destroy the Earth.

We must move beyond the physical trap of fear to access other dimensions in order to feel the focal point of consciousness organized in an energetic system. At the same time moving beyond the myth that we are all sinners in need of redemption so that we only need to forgive ourselves for playing the game of duality, forgetting that we are spiritual beings having a human experience. And now, how to live on Earth in harmony with the wisdom and the higher self.

Jana Harmon
Kaslo

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Voices from the Valleys

IH needs to engage communities in health system

In their not unusual manner, the IHA revealed their media release on the Albo case on a Friday afternoon signed by Alison Paine, chief IHA spinner, when everyone is sipping their afterworkweek cocktails or has gone home and shut the door on the week of hell for the unfortunate Albo family.

You will find the McMahon recommendations of the internal review is published at www.interiorhealth.ca/default.htm - but not the full report.

Without the context of a report it is difficult to check the criterion for the recommendations. However, as expected, the recommendations are rife with principles and policies. No blame is mentioned or any onus of responsibility delivered.

Neither family nor anything resembling person language is mentioned. The closest term is to harness the "user of services" or "case needs," ie "1.2. Supporting a Culture of Compassion - High Priority Recommendation #2: It is recommended that leadership escalate and formalize the structures and processes used to obtain staff input and participation on what constitutes a healthy culture of care. This dialogue should, in principle, endeavour to engage and hear the opinion of each employee, volunteer and physician. It is recommended that a structured method is developed to harness the experience and views of users of services."

Consultation with and involvement of families' and communities' needs are not on the map. Our highly paid health services administration just don't get it.

The so-called culture of compassion is downright incongruous with the applied system of health care in the IHA, or it seems, BC.

Instead we have total obfuscation of the truth from ivory towered health administrators with business blinkers and the palpable disdain for revealing what really is going on - from family hardships to a hospital to hospital bus service.

Instead we have in place an insensitive culture within the present system spinfilling its deleterious authority to its gagged employees and attempting to anesthetize the citizens of BC by using all its intellectual might.

Yet there is some hope.

The final (and probably meant to be the least important) recommendation of the Ballem report is: "Proceed with initiatives to effectively engage the communities in Kootenay Boundary in their health system."

The IHA must recognize this as a top priority. It needs a complete revamp of the system with different management personnel to absolutely involve its citizens at the grassroots level otherwise or we are going to have a cataclysmic crash of confidence.

Glyn Humphries
Nelson

Kaslo City Hall restoration

I have been asked for suggestions to restore the Kaslo City Hall by members of the restoration committee.

As there is general agreement that the building should be insulated, removal of the lath and plaster is necessary which will facilitate the installation of wiring, plumbing and sprinkler system.

The fire department has outgrown its hall attached to the city hall so a new hall will need to be built and the RDCK will assist in funding. The old hall can be used to restore the interior woodwork and windows and removed for the exterior restoration of the city hall.

The city hall offices can be relocated to the Provincial building which can be purchased for $120,000. Council has two purchase options: borrowing or cash. A 10-year loan on a $100,000 home would cost approximately $15 a year. The other option is to pay cash with money available money from a 25-year loan just retired. If these funds (approximately $100,000 a year) are earmarked for other purposes during budget deliberations then spending cuts will be needed to pay for the city hall and provincial building.

Purchase of the provincial building would assure the Kootenay Lake Historical Society they can continue as tenants while the library will remain in the city hall. To prevent the lath and plaster from collapsing the insulation in the library during restoration and create a fire-break, blocking will be needed to be inserted between the studs at main floor level.

The end use of the city hall and definition of heritage restoration needs to be determined now to avoid costly changes later. At a workshop in Kaslo, Bob Inwood defined heritage restoration as keeping the exterior as close to original as possible and the interior heritage in appearance.

The workshop was advertised as "Kaslo City Hall Restoration" but spent considerable time looking at a review of the Official Community Plan. It was not a public meeting as the public had to pay $10 to attend although that did include a nice lunch. A public meeting for the restoration of the city hall should present comprehensive plans and costs for comment.

So if we're supposedly working towards a common goal, why does it seem like the mayor and clerk are dragging their feet?

Patrick Mackle
Kaslo

God, not the Bible, is the authority

With ease, a battleship (or even several) could fit between the points of view expressed between Ron Bowman and Cliff Woffenden regarding the authority of the Bible. I know from experience it is like entering a "black hole" to put forward a different point of view, which lies somewhere between theirs, but I risk it.

Christian faith is part of my life and has been for over six decades. Thus, the Bible has been an important part of my life both as a follower of Christ and as a clergyperson. Mr. Woffenden is right in affirming that the Bible is complex. He is not well informed about some opinions that he put forward, but it is Mr. Bowman's simplistic, literalistic interpretations that can be very dangerous.

The Bible does contain a rich variety of literary expressions including short stories, myth, legend, proverbs, parables and history, to name a few. It both contains sublime wisdom teachings and horrific, barbaric accounts. In spite of what is dark and disturbing, I believe the Bible is a sacred book, and is a witness to the Word of God. I do not believe it is "word-for-word" the Word of God, but within its pages, the Word of God shines forth — that Word which I have come to know in Jesus of Nazareth. Informed Christians affirm the Word of God but also know that this Word is larger than Christianity, extending to other faith traditions, particularly Judaism and Islam who share much of a common story with Christianity.

Mr. Bowman is right — the Bible is not friendly towards homosexual behaviour. When the Bible was written (over many centuries by numerous authors), it was assumed that all people were heterosexual, and thus to behave in a homosexual way was to be false to oneself and to the Creator, thus sinful. Today we are learning that a large number of men and women are homosexual in their being (orientation) — not a reality they choose, but one that was given. For many, to live a homosexual life is to be true to their essence and to the Creator — and I believe that the Creator smiles on them as they enter committed relationships. The Bible doesn't, but God does, and that is far more important. God, alone, is the ultimate authority. To say the Bible is ultimate authority is idolatry.

Archdeacon Dirk Pidcock, (retired)
Kaslo

Let's get out of the sandbox

What is being modeled for Kaslo youth? For me, it's no longer about where the skatepark should go, but how citizens are choosing to treat each other in deciding it. I feel it is very sad to see grown men and women, parents, intelligent citizens, descend to mud slinging, personal slander and petty jabs at each other and their hardworking elected officials, over just one of many issues that will come and go in Kaslo.

In successfully pursuing the skatepark goal for our youth, they are witnessing some adults incapable of tolerantly following a set public process in a civil way. Since when has descending to angry personal attacks, finger pointing and emotional reactivity ever helped move an issue to resolution?? Never.

As a secondary teacher in this town for 16 years, I consider it my duty to insist on a classroom environment where tolerance and reason prevail over emotion in dealing with each other - whatever the issue. Parents expect this to keep their children safe. I wish I could count on the adults in this town to reinforce this mandate in the "real" world.

Imagine a classroom where students were allowed to freely blame and attack the teacher personally, or anyone who challenged their view, dared to bring in new data or suggested change. Mob and destroy the bringer of new information. There's a familiar response that has got us nowhere for millennia. With my students, I call it "visiting your reptile" and we avoid it. So, what message are we giving to kids when we resort to this in solving the skatepark location issue? It does nothing to promote resolution and we still have to live together. This is not civil or civilization; it's just pathetic modeling.

I chose my profession, as Jim Holland chose to run for elected office. The abuse is the price of these choices, but it shouldn't be. Apparently, the Mayor must endure this. After all, he's done nothing to enrich this town, has never volunteered his time for Scouting and many other programs, is prone to emotional tirades and, of course, doesn't want Kaslo youth to have a skatepark, right? Oh, please!! Time to get our balance, minus out the emotion and personal "need to be right," and stop "shooting the messenger."

Individuals and their emotional outbursts aren't going to decide where the skatepark goes and neither is the Mayor. The Council is, after listening to the facts presented and, hopefully, all the people's wishes. Model a decent, civil process for our young people. Having a skate park is important. What is more important is that young adults don't carry into life the teaching that this is how they should work together to get future "skateparks" in their lives.

Jill Holland
Kaslo

The Slocan has a "lure"

The "undercover tourist" called the area "stunningly beautiful" and I might add it is alluring.

Many people pass through this watershed, maybe taking a picture, but have little to do here on their way to another destination. The area needs more opportunities for destination tourism — more year-round venues and events for getting folks here. Local entrepreneurs need to feel like local investment is worthy. Following are some quick ideas and a story of a successful transition from a resource-based economy to a mixed tourist economy in a similar place.

The Slocan's winter tourism currently consists of three adult-oriented ski lodges for alpine touring and one local ski hill. How about several affordable, but nice family ski lodges accessed by horse-pulled sleighs, dog sleds, skis or autos? How about XC ski trails that connect these lodgings and the villages? How about things to do like attend a XC ski school, experience running a sled dog team, race in a XC ski race or take a winter survival course.

Some readers may be wondering about ski-doo activities, but so many other areas already have well groomed trails. I quote Roger Brooks, the undercover tourist, from the article in the Feb. 15 issue: "You have to be different or the best to make the trip worth it." We cannot provide the long distance ski-doo trips that are offered in other areas.

XC Skiers don't expect to put on 200 km in a day. They're happy with 20 km in the morning, an afternoon visiting a hot spring, and in the evening eating out at an affordable restaurant.

Winter ski trails become summer bicycle trails, and then there is this beautiful Slocan Lake and River downstream that, in summer, offer so many quiet and clean recreation opportunities. A healthy outdoor sports vacation in a peaceful spot.

Not far away in Washington, there is a river valley with several communities, divided by ranches and forestlands, tucked under the east side of the Cascade Mountains not too far south of the Canadian border. The Methow Valley is connected with winter ski and summer bike trails, and they have their snowmobile designated terrain. Their trail society began with a family sports club. In the mid 1980s the valley had a chance to decide on a proposed downhill ski resort. They rejected it and instead created the Methow Valley Sports Trails Association, www.mvsta.org. The association grooms 200 km of non-motorized trails connecting lodges, B & Bs, vacation homes, rentals and a core community of families that get outside, winter and summer. Look for Windthrop on a map SW of the Okanagan.

Last year the association commissioned an economic impact study. Bear in mind the peaks here put their mountain views to shame and they have no lakes! Their visitors stayed an average of four days spending $1,469 (all US$) that equates to direct tourist spending of $4.5 million by visiting trail users. This breaks down to 45.9% lodging; restaurant, food and groceries 28.2%; sporting goods, rentals and services 11.5%. Indirect economic impacts were more than $4.1 million/year. Jobs directly related to the trails: 49 fulltime, 159 seasonal, and 188 additional jobs in other recreational related businesses. These numbers go on like this. View their website to see the whole study.

Designing a theme for how visitors and residents use this watershed will impact what kind of future growth will occur here. In the Methow Valley they are getting growth of summer and vacation homes, but their orientation is toward the human powered trail system and the village of Windthrop is doing well with many involved year-round residents.

I have been in contact with the Trails Association Executive Director in Windthrop. He might be willing to come here and share their successes with the greater Slocan community some time after the winter season is over. Anyone with energy to help make that happen please contact: ravenridge@centurytel.net.

Kip Drobish
Hills/Kila, Montana

Central Kootenay Regional District

COLUMBIA BASIN TRUST
a legacy for the people

NAKUSP AND DEFINED AREA K

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

Nakusp and Defined Area K (*Idler Road North to Nakusp, Top of Summit Hill and Halcyon Hot Springs*) is accepting proposals for funding consideration from the Community Initiatives and Affected Area Funding 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 of Nakusp Office, 91-1st St. NW, Nakusp, BC or online at: www.rdck.bc.ca

Completed Applications must be submitted *no later than* **4:30 pm, Tuesday April 18, 2006** to the Nakusp Village Office, Box 280, 91-1st St. NW, Nakusp, BC, V0G 1R0 or the RDCK, Box 590, 202 Lakeside Dr., Nelson, BC, V1L 5R4.

For more information, please contact Trish Gerald, RDCK Phone: 1-800-268-7325 or 250-352-8190 Fax: 250-352-9300 e-mail: tgerald@rdck.bc.ca

A Public Meeting to review proposals will be held as follows:

Date: Sunday May 7, 2006
Time: 12 - 4 pm
Place: Nakusp Arena Auditorium
(Presentations at 12:00pm, Voting between 1 – 4pm)

***Funding will be capped at $20,000/project (maximum). If there is a need for a smaller project category, $5000 and under, one will be established.*

New Denver council, February 28: Two delegations attend

by Michael Dorsey and Leah Main

•Shelley Welch spoke on behalf of the May Days Committee about this year's festivities, and requested Village financial support. Since council has no Grant-In-Aid monies this year, it suggested that the committee apply for CBT grants. Mayor Wright also pointed out that the Village makes in-kind contributions. Welch asked that the Village consider budgeting some extra money for 2007, which will be the 100th year anniversary of May Days in New Denver.

•Art Joyce submitted a letter and presentation regarding growth issues, and brought forward the perspective that we as a community need to manage change. He urged council to adopt "principles for sustainable community growth as outlined by SmartGrowth BC" in the development of the Official Community Plan (OCP), and suggested imposing a higher taxation level for non-residents. Council replied that non-residents already pay a tax premium because they are not eligible for the Homeowner's Grant, and that it is illegal for council to levy prejudicial taxation. The OCP will be reviewed next year, and perhaps at that time the SmartGrowth principles can be applied.

•Council approved expenditure of $200 to send Councillors Bunka and Campbell to the upcoming PEP workshop.

•A new electric furnace has been ordered for Knox Hall. The old oil furnace and chimney are now completely unusable. Council expects the new furnace to be installed on or about March 16.

•The required electrical upgrades for the health care centre gym have been approved. The work will be done around March 16, depending on availability of the electrician.

•Catherine Cornoyer from the National Heritage Sites Committee is meeting with Nikkei Centre representatives and Councillor Bunka (Heritage Committee) on March 6, further to the potential declaration of the Nikkei Centre as a Federal Heritage Site.

•Mayor Wright and Councillor Greensword attended the West Kootenay-Boundary Regional District Hospital Board meeting. A 22% increase in taxation was approved, following the defeat of Mayor Wright's motion of a 5% cap on annual increases. The board approved the 22% increase because members felt that improvements would not be made to their health centres if they voted it down.

•The RDCK board will hold its regular meeting in Silverton on June 24, as part of a program to make Regional District more accessible to communities.

•When asked to comment on the transit initiative, Mayor Wright said, "We'll pay any amount to get people out of town — just kidding. I'm happy the provincial government, IHA, local government and Arrow/Slocan Lake Community Services all worked together to make this possible. I'm hopeful one day we will have a convenient, central-site hospital. In the meantime, I'm very happy for this initiative."

•Councillor Greensword's draft letter to CRTC asking them to "revisit the regulations and consider an addendum requiring access [to personal high-speed telecommunications] as part of the definitions of service," was endorsed and signed by Mayor and Council.

•Interior Health's Chief Operating Officer Carol Markowsky had previously submitted a letter to council on the use of hallway beds at Trail Regional Hospital. Councillor Greensword will draft a letter in reply, expressing concerns and seeking further clarification of the situation.

•Council rescinded a previous motion regarding the Selkirk College Regional Innovation Chair, and replaced it with a motion to approve RDCK Bylaw 1790 and signed a letter of consent to fund the Chair. When asked if the monies taken from the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission (EDC) to finance the Innovation Chair would affect EDC's ability to fund and complete projects, Mayor Wright said, "No — the Slocan Valley EDC Budget was reduced by the amount equivalent to the local government contribution."

•Building Bylaw 595/2006 and Temporary Loan Bylaw 596/2006 both received final adoption.

•Staff has been directed to investigate the south side of Carpenter Creek west of the highway to the lake, not including the marina, as a possible dog leash free zone.

•A letter was received from Julia Greenlaw on behalf of the Healthy Housing Committee, requesting council support for an application to CBT Environmental Initiatives Program for a watershed monitoring project. Mayor Wright and Councillor Bunka will meet with the group to get further information.

To wind up basketball season at Lucerne, the Jr. Girls team played the 6/7 Boys, and the Jr. Boys played the Sr. Boys on the evening of March 7. Lots of fans came out to cheer the players on.

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Public meetings in Slocan: focus on water

by Don Currie

Community meetings hosted by the Village of Slocan took place on February 23 and March 9, and another is planned for March 23. Topics of discussion include water rates, bylaw enforcement, skateboard park, boat ramp, Wellness Centre, and a proposal to form a Merchants' Association.

This is the first in a series of articles that will focus on one topic at a time. This first one is all about Slocan's water system.

The new water plant is designed to supply treated water to a potential 4500 residents. Slocan's population is currently about 350.

Before the plant was constructed, the Village was on a provincial government boil water order. New water hookups were prohibited until the boil order was lifted. Taking advantage of federal and provincial funding, former councils authorized the construction of a new state-of-the-art facility. The capital costs of the project are now fully paid.

Agreements were reached with the Province to construct the plant on Crown land taken from Valhalla Park. The Village has legal and permanent use of the land, but the Village is in discussion with the Province to eventually become the sole owner.

The plant is equipped with a pumping system to supply water from Gwillim Creek to a 210,000-gallon holding tank, located up on a tower. The plant has a standby generator in the event of power failure. The plant is computer operated and low maintenance. The purification method used is a combination of chlorination and filtration. The filtration system has 28 membrane filters. The filters are estimated to last ten years and are installed with a seven-year warranty. Replacement costs at current prices would be $3000 per membrane. Training and certification of staff is required to operate the facility.

While the water plant is state-of-the-art, the Village delivery system is aging. There is some line leakage and looping upgrades are needed.

During its first two years of operation, the system had difficulty keeping up with user demand during summer months. Residents were asked to restrict the watering of lawns and gardens, which caused some annoyance. Last year, with more community awareness and experience operating the system, usage leveled off and the system is operating efficiently. Also, to reduce the usage of treated water, council authorized construction of a supply line from Springer Creek to the playground and cemetery.

The pros and cons of installing water meters and going to a user pay system are being discussed. While meters tend to discipline high volume users, whether or not it will generate more or less revenue than the current flat rate system is unknown.

Provincial law prohibits the Village from operating utilities at a deficit, so water rates are adjusted to cover the costs of delivery. Water rates have doubled from $0.33 per day to $0.66 per day or $240 a year per user. There are 178 water hookups in the Village. The rate is among the lowest for comparable jurisdictions. Garbage pickup fees are $52 a year and residents receive a combined water and garbage bill covering the period January 1 to December 31 of the billing year. A $24 discount is available if the $292 water and garbage bill is paid on or prior to February 15 of the billing year. This reduces the annual bill to $268. Some residents who budget to pay water and garbage fees on a monthly or bi-yearly basis do not qualify for the discount and have complained that the system is unfair.

Provincial guidelines require the Village to pay for the costs of operating and maintaining the delivery system from user fees. The Village is now facing major line replacement costs, which can only be paid for by increasing fees, a frontage tax or debentures. Any major outlays for improvements to the water system will go to a public process.

ALL ARE INVITED
Habondia Housing Office Opening
(drop in for tea and cake) • Spicer Centre, Winlaw.
10-4 pm. Saturday, March 25
To follow: Abundance circle for women and families
Finger Food Potluck, 4 to 7 pm.
Childminding Available

ALL VALLEY RESIDENTS INVITED!
Conversation with New Denver Mayor and RDCK chair, Gary Wright:
What is the official community plan (OCP)?
What are the current housing by-laws in New Denver?
KNOX HALL • NEW DENVER
With tea and treats
APRIL 4TH, 7 TO 9:00 PM
This community meeting thanks to: Interior Health Healthy Living grant, Circle of Habondia and the Healthy Housing Committee.

Silverton council, February 28: Hoping for high speed for the summer

by Jan McMurray

•Larry Lavan of the Red Mountain Internet Society attended as a delegation. The society is aiming to have a wireless high speed internet service up and running in the Silverton area for the summer. He estimated that the service would cost individual subscribers $40 per month and businesses $60-65 per month, plus an initial cost of anywhere between about $200 and $500 for a radio and antenna that must be installed on the customer's property.

Under the agreement between Telus and the Province to bring broadband to unserved communities, Telus is to provide an access point or point of presence (POP) to Silverton by the end of June. Telus will charge the greatly reduced rate of $3600 per year for the POP. Lavan said once the POP was available, it would be about three months until the local service would be up and running. The Village office and Gaze n Chat, the internet cafe in Silverton, will be able to get the service before it is available to the public.

Lavan said there is a possibility that customers will not need a line of sight to the main tower on his property on Red Mountain Road if sophisticated radios being tested now are ready for market on time.

•Chairman of the July 1st Committee, Vern Hartman, wrote to council asking the Village to budget for a few new picnic tables per year. He said the committee had estimated a need for about 50 tables for the campground, day park, overflow camping area, Fingland Cabin area and Silverton Gallery area, and had counted 32 existing picnic tables, some which would need to be replaced. Council asked Administration and Public Works to look into this and come back with a recommendation.

•Council directed administration to draft a bylaw to close that portion of First Street that runs in between the Silverton Heritage Country Inn and a block of four lots that also belong to the inn's owners. Larry Murrell, inn owner, attended Silverton's January 24 meeting to ask to purchase the property, which is not being used as a street. The hotel's patio sits on the property; the hotel's overhang encroaches onto the property; and the hotel's septic lines are under the property. Mayor Everett explained that a street cannot be sold — the street must be closed first — and added that there was no commitment at this point to sell the property to the inn.

•New Public Works Foreman Leonard Casley said he was settling in to his new job and was very comfortable with the training time. Outgoing foreman Chris Fox submitted a written public works report, which said, "Thank you, for the great time, it was my pleasure to work with you!!"

•Fire department battalion chief Ron Provan strongly recommended that council accept a proposal from Fox Emergency Equipment to acquire the department's decommissioned 1968 truck in exchange for $2000 worth of fire truck servicing. Later in the meeting, council accepted the proposal.

Provan also announced that the department's annual car wash and barbecue banquet would be held from 11 am - 3 pm at the Village office parking area.

•Mayor Everett reported he had spoken with New Denver Mayor Gary Wright about the amalgamation of the two fire departments. Wright had indicated that problems around the 911 system still had to be worked out.

•Councillor Griffiths reported she had looked at all the material on emergency preparedness in the Village office and that a neighbourhood emergency preparedness program was missing. She said regional emergency co-ordinator Terry Warren had offered to help set up the program by holding a public meeting in April.

•Councillor Provan reported that the 2010 committee had met and recommended that a Silverton Memorial Hall committee be struck, composed of two council members and three community members, with the task of determining how to best proceed with the final phase of restoration. This issue was referred to a council brainstorming session on March 4.

•Council consented to the RDCK adopting a bylaw that would provide tax money for five years towards a Regional Innovation Chair in Rural Economic Development Research at Selkirk College. Although residents of Silverton, New Denver and Area H will be taxed for this, they will not see an increase in their overall taxes because the amount collected for the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission will be reduced to offset the new tax. The tax dollars will go into an endowment fund that will pay for the position at the college in perpetuity. The Province is contributing $1.25 million to the endowment fund.

Slocan Council meets: March 8

• Works Foreman Jerry Simmons reported that work is progressing on the new boat ramp. Nine loads of rip-rap have been delivered to the site preliminary to grading and fill, concrete slabs will be in place, and a floating breakwater is being constructed. Administrator Eunice Ludlow reported that four village-owned lots planned for development as a parking area at the boat ramp are in a residentially zoned area. Plans for the project are available at the village office for scrutiny. Simmons said the medical centre is a couple of weeks from completion; delays resulted from cabinets arriving damaged and having to be returned.

Council endorsed his proposal to purchase a new or used six inch wood chipper in the range of $13,000 to $14,000. Funds will come from either reallocation from the current budget or creating a budget item in next year's budget. Under new business Ludlow gave notice that first reading of the financial plan bylaw and budget bylaw would take place at the next meeting.

• Several fire protection issues were aired. Fire Chief Tim Hill reported one structural fire call out on Kennedy Road at Lemon Creek causing $5,000 damage. The building was saved and the owners were back and repairing damage. Three new members had been recruited and there was one retirement.

Councillor John Gates, village representative at RDCK, reported Slocan Valley fire protection taxation is $295,943 and Slocan's share is approximately $22,000. Gates reported the RDCK has sent a letter to the Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) to continue its current level of support to the RDCK volunteer fire departments while it considers changes and to invite the Central Kootenay Fire Chiefs' Association to attend OFC meetings on the proposed changes. Riondel has leased the old village fire truck and council will continue to fund insurance during the lease. The arrangement would not be at Slocan's expense.

Council endorsed a fire inspection program involving 17 public and business premises. The last inspection was eight years ago. Mayor John Van Bynen asked about the status of the Cedar Creek Mill, which has its own in-house fire fighting resources and insurance and whether it would contribute to the costs of the village inspection. Ludlow said she would raise the matter at a meeting scheduled with mill management.

• Council supported a proposal by councillor Mark Septav to apply for grants from UBCM for the development of community wild fire protection plans and fuel management projects identified within the protection plan.

• Councillor Madeleine Perriere reported: the Rec Commission is sponsoring a two day Level One first aid program; the poker float was planned for August; a successful tot's play program had run out of funds and the Legion has been asked for help. Van Bynen reported he had requested the curling rink ice be made available to children and youth for skating between the last bonspiel and the arrival of seedlings for tree planting.

• A letter from Peggy Ingram, requesting an answer from council to her February 6 application for a second water connection for a proposed subdivision at 8832 Slocan West Road promoted a wider discussion on water usage. Works foreman Simmons was concerned that installation of lines outside the village could result in unauthorized and unpaid use of water. "One line becomes several," Simmons said. Gates suggested that first a subdivision should take place and then an application for water be made. Septav asked if it was a wise thing to lift the moratorium on extending water service outside the village at this time, citing the need to consider the use of water meters. Perriere said no new installations should take place until the Official Community Plan (OCP) was completed. Council estimated the cost of a new installation to be $2,000.

• A letter from W.E. Graham Parent Advisory Council and principal C. Leidtoff called for action to control traffic on Harold Street through the school zone. The letter listed loaded logging trucks, delivery trucks and small vehicles "speeding through our school zone." The letter said past efforts using wooden silhouettes had been vandalized and run over and the new signs posted had failed to slow down traffic. "This has left us with one option, speed bumps."

Council considered several options to deal with the problem. Van Bynen opposed speed bumps as unworkable; Ludlow suggested narrow lanes enclosed with concrete barriers; Septav favoured a three-way stop with an overhead flashing red light; Gates said the RCMP should be asked for input. Council decided to ask staff to explore all options and report back.

Local snowmobiler honoured for first cross-Canada trip

by Jan McMurray

Twenty-two years ago, in 1984, Crescent Valley resident Jack Fisher was one of a group of four to do the pioneer snowmobile trip across Canada. This year, another team of four did the same trip, and invited Jack along for the final leg from Arnprior to Morrisburg, Ontario.

"I was tickled pink," said Fisher. "That's the crowning glory to 40 years of snowmobiling."

At the celebration at the end of the line in Morrisburg on February 25, Fisher presented the vest he wore in 1984 to Bombardier representatives. The vest is heavily laden with pins Jack collected from the many snowmobilers he met along the way in 1984. The vest will live on at the Bombardier Museum in Valcourt, Quebec.

Bombardier sponsored the 1984 trip to commemorate the company's 25th anniversary. The company provided the machines and suitable clothing. At the time, Fisher was secretary/manager of the BC Snowmobile Federation, which also came on board as a sponsor.

"Nobody had ridden across Canada before, so we decided we'd be the first. We contacted Bombardier and they thought it was a great idea," reminisced Fisher.

Fisher's "teammates" for the 1984 crossing were Bill Udy (Vernon), Bill Shields (Vernon) and Bob Sturgeon (Salmon Arm). Jean and Doug Frizel of Vernon were the support drivers.

During that trip, Fisher and his friends inspired one of the snowmobilers they met. Jean-Guy Charette, who guided Fisher's group in Quebec in 1984, recently gave Jack a call to let him know he and three others were planning to do the same trip.

"He told me he'd been wanting to make this trip since he met me in 1984," said Fisher. Charette's group had their sleds shipped to Kamloops to start the trip, and Fisher went to Kamloops to see them off. Then he flew to Ottawa on February 24 to finish up with them.

Of the original four riders in 1984, two have passed on. "I'm 75 and am blessed with good health. I'm in decent enough shape to take this ride," Fisher said before he left for Ottawa last month.

As it turned out, Fisher had to ride through a terrible storm, with a temperature of -15 and with a 50 mph gale, but he made it just fine.

Fisher has snow travel in his genes. His father, D. W. Fisher, and friend John Sears invented and developed the first snow machine, called a "snowplane" in an article published in *The Regina Daily Post* in 1927.

Jack Fisher (right) presents the vest he wore in the first-ever cross-Canada snowmobiling trip in 1984 to Etienne Blanchard, owner of Loiselle Sports and Alain Leroux, sales rep, in Morrisburg, Ontario on February 25. The vest will be displayed in the Bombardier Museum in Valcourt, Quebec.

Playmor Power Products wins award

submitted

Playmor Power Products of Crescent Valley was honoured on March 6 as the recipient of the prestigious 2006 Ski-Doo National Dealer of the Year Award - Canada by Bombardier Recreational Products Inc. (BRP). The annual award was presented in front of hundreds of applauding ski-doo dealers and BRP employees at the gala dinner of the Club BRP annual dealer meeting. This winter's meeting, where BRP introduced its 2007 ski-doo line up, took place in Texas at the luxurious Fairmont Dallas Hotel.

"Throughout our extensive North American dealer network, we are fortunate to be represented by many top notch people and organizations, so these annual awards stand as a tribute to their collective success and accomplishments with the Ski-Doo brand," said Robert Lumley, Vice-President of North American Sales. "I especially want to congratulate Playmor Power Products for being the best of the best in 2006."

The National Ski-Doo Dealer of the Year is bestowed by BRP on one dealer in each of the Canadian and US North American sales regions. The award recognizes outstanding business excellence, exceptional professional standards, superior customer service and community involvement.

Playmor Power Products is owned and operated by Jim Bradbury, Bob Gretchen, Arnie Arishenkoff, Bill Arishenkoff and Brent Curley. The business has seven employees and is located at 1045 Playmore Rd. in Crescent Valley. It has been active in the sales and service of ski-doo snowmobiles since 1993.

BRP, a privately held company, is a world leader in the design, development, manufacturing, distribution and marketing of motorized recreational vehicles.

BRP presents the Ski-Doo National Dealer of the Year for Canada to Jim Bradbury, Bob Gretchen, Arnie Arishenkoff, Bill Arishenkoff and Brent Curley of Playmor Power Products, located in Crescent Valley, B.C.

Playmor POWER PRODUCTS LTD.

PROUD RECIPENTS OF THE 2006 SKI-DOO NATIONAL DEALER OF THE YEAR AWARD

SmartGrowth precipitates community initiatives

by Jan McMurray

Tom Lancaster of SmartGrowth BC has visited both Kaslo and Silverton to speak about planning for sustainability and livability in our communities.

It seems that two of his messages have been taken to heart. Kaslo residents have acted on his suggestion to set up a community organization for people interested in planning. The Circle of Habondia out of Winlaw, in partnership with the Healthy Housing Committee out of New Denver, has scheduled an April 4 meeting in New Denver where New Denver Mayor Gary Wright will speak about the Village's Official Community Plan (OCP) and bylaws.

Lancaster stressed the importance of a "supportive local policy environment" to implement SmartGrowth principles into community growth and development. He explained that local policy starts with a community's OCP, which directs the community's bylaws. He said that removing regulatory barriers to SmartGrowth principles was key.

SmartGrowth principles "enhance the quality of life, protect the environment, conserve finite developable land and use tax revenues wisely for the benefit of all," he said.

To get people together to start talking about planning, Lancaster recommended a community organization that would act as a clearing house for planning issues before taking them to local government.

This is exactly what Kaslo has done. In the works is the registration of a non-profit society called Kaslo and Area Residents' Association (KARA). Its purpose will be "to preserve and enhance the livability and quality of life in Kaslo and Area D."

Truus Meijer-Drees is one of the local citizens organizing the group. "We will embrace the idea of SmartGrowth in that good planning leads to a better environment," she said. "We can't squelch growth, so we may as well do it wisely. I have realized how planning raises people's fears, so we need to be aware of that, but planning is the essence."

She says the society will liaise with Kaslo council, Area D Director Andy Shadrack and any other governmental or non-governmental body or individuals that would like to act on behalf of Kaslo and Area D residents in a non-partisan fashion.

SmartGrowth BC is a non-profit organization that helps communities plan for sustainable growth.

New Denver credit union manager Shelley Welch (right) hands Lane Haywood a $1,000 cheque which KSCU's Community Foundation donated to the Lucerne School and Community Writers' Festival and the Parent Advisory Council towards a new lighting system for the festival and other school events. This year the fourth annual festival will kick off with a workshop for adults with acclaimed Toronto poet Stuart Ross on the evening of April 18. School and community events including the famous elementary student writing coffeehouse and a teen and visiting writer coffeehouse on April 21 are festival highlights and with the new lighting equipment, these great literary events will be even further enhanced!

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FLIKS brings *Why We Fight* to the Kootenays

Why We Fight, Grand Jury Prize winner at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival, is an unflinching look at the anatomy of the American war machine, weaving unforgettable personal stories with commentary by a who's who of military and beltway insiders. Featuring John McCain, Gore Vidal, William Kristol, Chalmers Johnson, Richard Perle and others, *Why We Fight* launches a bipartisan inquiry into the workings of the military industrial complex and the rise of the American Empire.

Inspired by Dwight Eisenhower's legendary farewell speech (in which he coined the phrase "military industrial complex"), the film surveys the scorched landscape of a half-century's military adventures, and concludes that nation has become a system whose survival depends on a state of constant war.

The film moves beyond the headlines of various American military operations to the deeper questions of why—why does America fight? What are the forces—political, economic, ideological—that drive them to fight against an ever-changing enemy?

"Today, with our troops engaged in Iraq and elsewhere for reasons far less clear, I think it's crucial to ask the questions: 'Why are we doing what we are doing? What is it doing to others? And what is it doing to us?'"—director Eugene Jarecki.

For more info, and to view the trailer go to www.FLIKS.ca, or call 1-866 FLIKSca.

Why We Fight will be shown March 15 at Nelson's Capitol Theatre, March 17 at Vallican Whole Community Centre, and March 19 at Rossland Miner's Hall. All shows start at 7:30 pm.

Why does America fight? This question is explored in the next FLIKS showing, Why We Fight, March 17 at the Vallican Whole.

Local sculptor shares China experience

by Jan McMurray

Toru Fujibayashi, internationally known sculptor from Nakusp, was in China last fall to attend two sculpture symposiums.

He stayed in China for two months and was based in Beijing, where he worked with two Chinese sculptor friends he had met at the Okanagan/Thompson International Sculpture Symposium. He travelled to the city of Penglai to participate in a steel sculpture symposium and to the city of Taizhou, where he sculpted a steel / granite / marble piece at the symposium there.

"I would go back in a New York minute," said Fujibayashi. "The reception was tremendous, and the respect for sculptors and their work was incredibly inspirational for me."

In Penglai, Fujibayashi's three-metre-tall steel sculpture, a symbol of world peace, is on display. At this symposium, there were 15 Chinese sculptors, and one each from Australia, England, Russia and, of course, our own Toru Fujibayashi from Canada. At the Taizhou symposium, Fujibayashi joined sculptors from China, Russia, Spain, England, USA and Japan.

He explained that the host cities keep the pieces, so in preparation for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, China is hosting events such as these so that sculptures will adorn its cities.

"The bigger the better," said Fujibayashi of the sculptures China wants for its cities. "The Chinese are used to having huge sculptures of Mao all over the country, so 'big' is the word over there."

Fujibayashi was forever changed by his trip to China. "China and its profound tapestry of a vast geography, ancient culture and its people has forever altered my consciousness of a global culture," he said. "The country's ancient history of dynasties juxtaposed with her rapid movement into the 21st century is astounding."

Our local sculptor has dreams of a sculpture symposium closer to home. "Wouldn't it be wonderful for New Denver to host such a symposium and have sculptures from all over the world grace the village and countryside?"

I am sure many of us would concur.

Nakusp sculptor Toru Fujibayashi sculpted this symbol of peace in China last fall.

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Healthy eating promoted at Lucerne School in New Denver

by Jan McMurray

The two Foods classes at Lucerne School have been providing students with delicious and nutritious snacks and lunches for extremely affordable prices.

The Lucerne Parent Advisory Council (PAC) decided early in the year that it wanted to promote healthy eating at the school, so PAC provided funding and Patti Sebben's Foods classes have been providing a weekly morning snack for free or hot lunch for $2.

"These programs benefit not only the students by offering them an affordable healthy lunch, but also my Foods classes. It helps them develop valuable skills in time management, co-operation and team effort," said Sebben.

Lucerne principal Trish Hawkins said, "Patti's Foods students are doing an incredible job of organizing, costing, advertising and preparing the food, while developing employability skills. Patti is doing such a great job — she deserves to be recognized."

Sebben says the lunch program has become more and more popular, growing from 40 takers the first time to over 60 meals served the Friday before March break.

When her students return after the break, they will be busy completing their Food Safe certification. The lunch program will resume April 21.

Amber Brown-Dahl and Sarah Bergevin prepare Tacos as part of the affordable healthy lunch program at Lucerne.

Kid Zone Buy & Sell returns

On Saturday, April 1, the Kids' Zone Buy & Sell returns to the Slocan Valley. This popular event, hosted by the Slocan Valley Recreation Commission, starts at 10 am at the Slocan Park Hall and runs until noon. It's the perfect place to find all things kiddish! Just what is the Kids' Zone Buy & Sell? It's a swap meet where nothing but kids' stuff is bought and sold. Clothes, games, toys, books and sporting goods are just some of the items which can be found—and kids are asked to run the tables and make the sales! Parents can assist at the tables if they wish and all ages are invited to come out and look for some great deals.

This year, organizers are asking for a non-perishable food item for the Slocan Food Bank as an admission fee. For more information or to book a table contact Slocan Valley Recreation at 226-0008.

Social co-ops present a viable alternative

by Julia Greenlaw

Cheryl Hewitt of the BC Co-operative Association visited our area in February to share information about social co-ops. She gave her presentation in Slocan and in Kaslo.

A social co-op is a co-op that offers a social service, as opposed to a marketing or commodity based co-op. Social co-ops are either community service co-ops that manage social welfare, health and educational services, or employment or education training co-ops that undertake commercial or social activities with the purpose of integrating disadvantaged persons into the community and economy.

Hewitt showed the film "Civilizing the Economy: Social co-ops and Social Care." The film described social co-ops as an excellent alternative to either state delivered and/or privatized public services.

In Bologna, Italy, 85 % of social services are run by social co-ops under contract of the municipal government. Many of these co-ops are financially independent.

One example was a drug rehabilitation centre owned and controlled by its members. The doctors employed at the centre are ex-drug users and the participants raise money for the program by marketing high-end wallpaper they make on the premises. Another social co-op in Bologna offers mental care and occupational training to the physically and mentally disabled. The secretarial services provided by the occupants pay for most of the co-op expenses.

A group of welfare recipients in New York City now run a home care social co-op. The employee shareholders were all happy to have a say in the design of the work and ongoing decision making. They were able to keep jobs in their own community and maximize wages and benefits while offering a superior service with continuity of care to their clients.

Members of social co-ops seem to feel empowered and satisfied to make their own decisions about how to run a service that best suits everyone involved.

Currently in BC there is limited government support for co-operatives and our health care and education systems are more and more centralized. With increased pressure to privatize many of our public services, social co-ops represent a truly viable and accountable alternative.

For more information on the BCCA Social Co-op Project, contact Cheryl Hewitt at c_hewitt @bcca.coop or 604-662-3906. The video is also available for viewing locally by calling 358-7198.

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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.

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Nakusp council, March 9: BC Hydro wants to delay boat launch maintenance

by Jan McMurray

•Council did a round table on each member's impressions of the March 7 open house meeting on the hot springs. (See story, p. 2)

•After being ordered by the Water Comptroller of BC to come up with a maintenance plan for the Nakusp boat launch within six months, BC Hydro has informed the Village it will ask for one year.

Hydro says the extension would give the company time "to consult with the community, assess the condition of the current facility and identify any ownership issues."

At the March 9 council meeting, it was decided to send a letter to the Water Comptroller insisting that BC Hydro keep within the six-month timeline, as the wharf is in very poor shape. "BC Hydro has it within its powers to act faster than that," said Mayor Hamling. The letter from the Village will also point out that ownership issues should not be a problem as the Village owns the land and is willing to negotiate.

At the RDCK board meeting in February, Area K Director Paul Peterson's motion to send a similar letter to the Water Comptroller passed. The RDCK letter will say that any further delay on maintaining Nakusp's wharf is unacceptable, given the long time local governments have been pushing for it. The letter will also ask that the public's opinions be part of BC Hydro's report to the Water Comptroller.

•Council decided not to allow camping in the park beside the gazebo during the Nakusp Music Fest. There were four reasons for council's decision. The area is covered in pea gravel and cannot withstand heavy usage. There have been traffic and parking problems around the park during the festival. Damage to irrigation lines is a concern, and there is a wish to leave the last green space in the village free for the people not attending the festival.

•Treasurer Richard Mahoney reported that the federal Job Creation Partnership program did not work out for the library. The good news is that the library has found a way to continue with its expansion plans anyway. Area K Director Paul Peterson has promised more funds for the project.

•In her report, Mayor Hamling mentioned that the Community Forest group had met with Ministry of Forest representatives, and is now trying to pinpoint areas. The group cannot choose an area in the TFL or a BCTS area.

•Councillor Mueller reported that she attended a meeting of the Nakusp and Area Co-operative Marketing Group, which has become a committee of the Chamber. The long-range marketing plan will include branding and future hot springs development. The group is planning a Grand Re-opening event for the hot springs.

She also reported that Nakusp will likely get two more assisted living beds at Halcyon Home, bringing the total number to 10.

•Mayor Hamling reported that funding the Selkirk College Innovation Chair was approved at the February 25 RDCK meeting. Ten out of 12 directors eligible to vote on this have signed on. Selkirk College has agreed to formal and permanent advisory status for the RDCK, so it can consult with the Chair. Also, if the Chair folds, the funding will be returned.

•Councillor Dahlen gave her RDCK report. A motion was passed at RDCK regarding policing costs - that these not be imposed unless other sources of revenue except taxation were provided to recover the costs.

She also reported that Justamere Contracting out of Burton was awarded a five-year contract for the operation and maintenance of the Nakusp landfill.

The RDCK sent a letter off to the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General encouraging the Office of the Fire Commissioner to continue with the previous level of support.

•Council voted to support the Nakusp Music Fest by advertising the same amount it did last year.

•Council approved a performance appraisal format proposed by CAO Bob Lafleur and recommended by LGMA.

•The policy regarding expenses while at conferences was amended. The mileage rate was raised to 50 cents per kilometre, and the per diem rate for meals bought on the Lower Mainland was increased.

•At the suggestion of the Village of Fruitvale, council voted to send letters protesting any hydro rate hikes for the region to the BC Utilities Commission, the Premier, Fortis BC and BC Hydro.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TRAIL TIMES PHOTO CREDIT: GUY BERTRAND

Deane Horning of Nakusp won Curl BC's Male Athlete of the Year award. Dave Hogge, President of the Trail Curling Club, presented Horning with the award on February 26 at the BC Winter Games. Horning was also handing out awards at the Games in Trail, to winning curling teams.

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Grant applications due for arts funding

Grant applications from individual artists as well as arts, culture and heritage groups or organizations within the Columbia Basin, are now being accepted by Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance for the 2006/07 funding cycle. A descriptive brochure outlining eight CBT funding programs and eligibility criteria is available upon request. The Arrow Lakes Arts Council (ALAC) says that eligible individuals or groups in Nakusp and district should submit grant applications for programs one and two (project and minor capital project funding) directly to ALAC at Box 895, Nakusp, BC V0G 1R0.

Program one funding is designed to support new initiatives and is not available for capital, regular operating or existing deficits. CKCA may consider funding the same project for a maximum of two years, but does not fund projects retroactively.

Program two funding is available for renovations, equipment (lighting/sound), upgrading or initiating facilities, or acoustical improvements. Funding is not for on-going maintenance.

Generally, successful project applicants are granted an average of $300-$500 as $5,000 is the amount allotted to each of the 18 arts councils for their application recommendations. Deadline date for programs one and two is Friday, March 24. For all other Programs, deadline is Friday, April 7.

To obtain an application form, brochure or information contact CKCA at 1-877-505-7355 or call Arrow Lakes Arts Council representative Anji Jones at 265-3865.

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)

Beat the March blahs at Carol's Garden Café

The month of March is known for coming in like a lion and going out like a lamb. It's also famous for cabin fever, slush and getting a case of the blahs.

The folks in Edgewood have been cooking up a diversion from the inevitable doldrums. A call for entry went out last month to all painters, felters, carpenters, photographers, weavers and sculptors to use the coming of spring as an inspiration to show their stuff at a community art show.

Sparks have been flying and creative juices flowing ever since. *Spring and Beautiful Things* will be held on Saturday March 25 at Carol's Garden Cafe in Edgewood. The show will begin at 2:00. There will be delicious food and much merriment, handsome guitar players, afternoon candles, artsy~fartsy conversations, rare talent and characters/artists in abundance!

Put on your Spring colors and come on down for a visual feast. This event is brought to you by S.P.I.R.I.T.(Society Promoting Interesting Revelry In Town). This year 15 per cent of the commission will go to building a badly needed new dock at Whatshan Lake.

The Long Way Home by Christy Bell, www.rosehip.biz

Computer Slow?
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Knapweed night at the Vallican Whole

by Rita Moir

Summer's coming and you'd like to get the knapweed under control, right? It's taking over the pasture and road allowance, and it's too widespread to pull by hand.

Juliet Craig, co-ordinator for the Central Kootenay Invasive Plant Committee, will talk about mechanical and biological controls for knapweed and other noxious invasive plants on Thursday, March 30 at 7 p.m. at the Vallican Whole Community Centre.

Once established, spotted knapweed is very difficult to get rid of. Prevention is the best control, maintaining areas that are not infested as 'knapweed-free'. Mowing or otherwise controlling plants anywhere they can be easily spread, such as along a driveway or roadsides, is also important to reduce spread.

Biological control is another method of control. It's been used for spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*) in the Kootenays since the 1980s. It involves the release of predators (usually insects) that attack knapweed to weaken the plants. These insects are carefully screened by Agriculture Canada to ensure that they only attack knapweed and no other plant species. Current biocontrol agents for knapweed include seedhead-attacking weevils and flies, and root-attacking weevils and moths.

These controls are already in use throughout the Slocan Valley, and on March 30 we can learn how to assess our own property for possible biocontrol insects that have moved there on their own. In the past, these insects have only been available to government agencies and their partners. However, the Central Kootenay Invasive Plant Committee is hoping to be able to provide these insects to residents, free of charge, for their private property this summer. Pending funding, the CKIPC Coordinator will visit properties to assess potential for releasing insects, and then provide insects.

Spotted knapweed is the most prevalent non-native invasive plant species in the Central Kootenay. It covers thousands of hectares of land in BC, is highly competitive and degrades natural plant communities. The knapweed invasion has a negative effect on wildlife, including ungulate winter range habitat. An individual plant can produce up to 140,000 seeds per square metre, giving little opportunity for native plants to grow. Around the world, invasive species are considered the second largest contributor to the loss of biodiversity (e.g. extinction of species), next to the loss of habitat. At the talk on March 30, sponsored by RARTS (Rural Alternatives Research and Training Society), Juliet Craig will also alert us to other kinds of noxious plants just beginning to invade the area.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MOFR.

A root-attacking weevil that is used to help control knapweed.

New Denver Seed Swap

The GRUBS, a north Slocan Valley family gardening club, hosts a community seed swap on Sunday, March 26 from 2 till 4 pm at the Hidden Garden Gallery in New Denver.

Seed swaps are a great way to get into the gardening season by sharing locally adapted seeds. Heirloom local seeds are a priceless part of our Kootenay heritage that are difficult to find in stores. Exchanging seeds encourages more seed saving and self-sufficiency in our region.

So…please come down to the Hidden Garden on the 26th, whether you have surplus seed or not. We welcome all kinds of seeds (flower, veggie, herb etc.) and will supply some bowls for display and envelopes, but bring your own if you can. We hope to make this an annual event.

Free and confidential help with completing and filing tax forms

Submitted by Marilyn Boxwell,

Need free and confidential help in completing and filing your tax return package?

Recognizing the importance of every adult being able to file a return as conveniently as possible prior to the April 30 deadline, the Community Volunteer Income Tax (CVI) program continues to flourish locally as well as throughout Canada.

In February of this year, four local residents received training and updated information regarding 2005 medical expense/travel deduction as well as other financial benefits which may be claimed. Diane Zeuch, Heather Davidson, Gail Detta and Marilyn Boxwell participated in the mandatory all-day Revenue Canada Community Volunteer Income Tax Program training session held in Revelstoke, in order to provide this service to any qualifying adult from the Arrow Lakes region wishing assistance.

This year, Revenue Canada has raised the low-income ceiling level making it possible for many more people to obtain free and confidential help in completing and filing their non-complex income tax packages. Business returns are not eligible.

Single person income level has now been raised to $25,000 or less; couples, $30,000; families, add $2,000 per child

The trained volunteers have pledged the following:

- to respect the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
- to protect the client's privacy;
- to decline any offers of monetary reward for services;
- to return the completed income tax and benefit return and any other personal documents to the client;
- to make every effort to ask the Revenue Canada contact person for help in dealing with problems or questions which we cannot answer immediately;
- to promptly report any unusual incidents to the Revenue Canada contact persons;
- to obtain proper authorization before using equipment, materials or facilities that the Crown purchases, uses, leases or owns.

While a majority of our clients are senior citizens, this service is offered to adults of any age, who meet the income ceiling criteria or other specific restrictions as determined by Revenue Canada. We will also do our best to accommodate shut-ins and persons experiencing transportation problems.

For more information concerning the CVI program, to arrange an appointment to have your tax package processed, or to obtain details of when a volunteer will be available on a drop-in basis in Nakusp or Burton in particular,. contact Marilyn Boxwell at 265-0075.

Boxwell is area co-ordinator for Revenue Canada's community volunteer tax program.

Kaslo Atoms close…but no cigar.

The Kaslo Atom Winterhawks hosted the top eight West Kootenay teams in playoffs last weekend and came out on the short end of a 3–2 score in the nail biting final against the top ranked Trail team. Trail's Scott Davidson and Kaslo's Jo Davie accounted for all the scoring in the final game. Kaslo outplayed Trail, especially in the third period but couldn't buy a game tying goal despite many chances.

The Winterhawks soared through the round robin section of the tourney with a 4–2 win over Grand Forks, a 9–2 spanking of the Kootenay Wildcats and a tense 4–2 win over the second seed from Trail.

The semi-finals saw two Trail teams going head to head while Nelson would play Kaslo in the other game. With emotions running high before the game even started, Kaslo jumped out to an early 3–0 lead after one period and held on for a 7–4 win to move on to the final.

There was no lack of work ethic from the Kaslo kids who won a number of tournaments this season but they obviously felt this loss to their core, taking several minutes to compose themselves before presenting the 2005/06 banner to Trail.

Kaslo's Scott Mitchell, Cole Arcuri and Katherine Haegedorn each had a hat trick in the tournament. Katherine sang *O Canada* before the final game, leaving the crowd awed by her many talents.

Coaches: Ryan Stockford, Jeff Davie, Pat Haegedorn; back row: Ava Collier, Kathryn Haegedorn, Heidi Haegedorn, Scott Mitchell, Breanna Tate; front row: Ross Jacobs, Sam Weber, Nic Baker, Jordan Davie, Cole Arcuri, Ryan Tate, Gillis Leathwood, Braelyn Patton. Goalie: Shawn Ellard.

Vallican Whole coffee house

The stage is set, the moon is fool and it's time to get ready for an enchanting evening of music, delicious Indian meals and decadent desserts.

The Vallican Whole School's eighth annual coffee house takes place Saturday, April 1 with all the proceeds going to supporting our community school. From 5:30 on you can come and enjoy dinner, lots of local musicians and a fantastic silent auction. The auction ends at 9 pm and music goes to 10 or beyond.

There will be childcare for those who want it, for $2 per child. Admission is $5 for adults.

You won't want to miss this event so come on out and enjoy.

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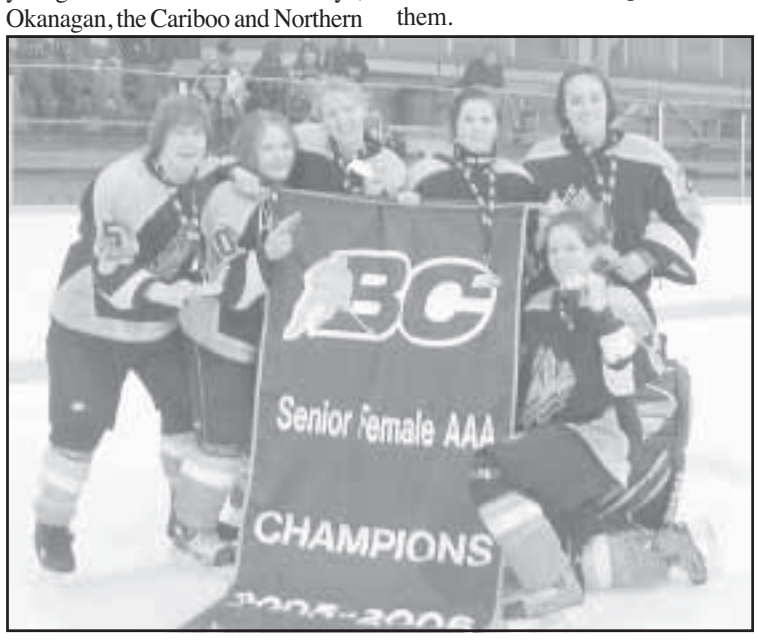
Amanda Turner of Kaslo wins in provincial hockey tournament

Submitted by Wanda Turner

The BC Outback AAA senior women's team won the provincial tournament in Golden March 5, beating the Pacific Steelers 5-2. Now they're off to Brampton, Ontario for one of the world's largest women's hockey tournaments April 12-17.

The team is made up of talented young women from the Kootenays, Okanagan, the Cariboo and Northern BC. Amanda Turner from Kaslo was one of 20 people who tried out for the Outback team in September.

During the season the women travelled to Vancouver, Edmonton and many stops in between for games and tournaments. They also had weekends set aside for practices, showing lots of dedication and determination which paid off for them.



Shannon Knight (Golden), Jenny Gallo (Castlegar), Michelle Cullen (Cranbrook), Amanda Turner (Kaslo) , Kenzie Waterstreet (Salmo), and Kaily Jones (Montrose)

Ministry of Forests

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.

Kaslo council, February 28: Two delegations speak on skatepark location

by Jill Braley

•There was clearly not enough room in the Village council chambers to hold the approximately 70 people that attended this council meeting. About 35 of Kaslo's youth, with posters in tow, held a quiet demonstration in support of a skatepark to be located offroad at D Avenue in Vimy Park.

There were two delegations on the issue. Teresa May spoke about the responsibility of council to act with due diligence on the matter. She said she had contacted the Ministry of the Environment and was advised that no permits or applications had been taken out for the skatepark.

Councillor Hewat responded that the skatepark committee was not in a position to apply for permits until it had received permission from council to proceed.

The other delegation was Don Page of the skatepark committee, along with ex-councillor Jacquie Murdock. They spoke in favour of the skatepark location in Vimy Park.

Council received numerous letters from members of the public regarding the skatepark, most against the Vimy Park location.

Councillor Leathwood asked Mayor Holland to read an email dated February 20 from Phil Best of the Ministry of Transportation in Nelson, who outlines the costs and safety issues of placing a skatepark up by the arena.

•Bob Inwood of Mainstreet Consulting Services in Winlaw wrote to council to follow up on the recent "Let's Get Organized" City Hall restoration session he facilitated on February 18. He recommended that the Village explore three planning programs offered by BC Heritage Branch. He thought it would be wise to have planning and policies in place that clearly reflect the community's vision, especially with "the development pressures that may soon be coming Kaslo's way." His comments were referred to both the Planning & Development and City Hall Conservation Committees for recommendation to council.

•Council received a memo from Public Works Foreman Rob Lang saying that the water treatment plant expansion was near completion. The expansion includes adding onto the building and installing the third cell, which will increase the Village's water supply.

However, the memo also says that certain deficiencies dating back several years need to be addressed, and that Interior Health has requested certain upgrades in order to comply with the operating permit.

Lang said he, Councillor Rich Jones and Randy Runzer of Urban Systems had compiled a list of items that should be installed before Westech Engineers arrives in March to bring the third cell on line. The cost for these improvements is $55,000, with a 10% contingency built in. The money to pay for these improvements is in a reserve account and earmarked for waterworks improvements.

•Council authorized waterfront trail construction to proceed to a maximum cost of $10,000 including amenities, bear proof tins, plaques, interpretation and advertising. A letter will be sent to the Kaslo & District Community Forest Society with the trail plan and budget.

•The Kaslo Golf Club wrote to council requesting approval of a Development Variance Permit to allow construction of a golf course clubhouse. They would like to reduce the setback from the front property line, lying south and east of Highway 31, from 24.61 feet to 5 feet. A notice of council's intention to consider the permit will be sent out to all affected properties.

•FortisBC submitted its proposal for power construction to the future clubhouse at the golf course. The work includes installing a three-pole extension from Oak Street to the new clubhouse. Also, a blanket easement is needed. This was referred to the Public Works Committee for action.

•The Kaslo JazzEtc Society replied to the Village's third request for the $2,000 owing for power installation in Kaslo Bay Park. The letter explains that the society "undertook some fairly major improvements to the park" and has asked the Village to have these expenses applied against the outstanding balance, but has never received a reply. The society asks again for this, justifying it with the huge benefit the Jazz Festival brings to the local economy and the "very small cash requests" it asks of the Village. Council declined the request and asked once again that the account be paid. Mayor Holland declared a pecuniary conflict of interest and excused himself for this item.

•Resident Pat Mackle wrote to council with many ideas on how to restore the City Hall building. His letter was referred to the City Hall Conservation Committee for recommendation to council.

•Council granted permission to the Kaslo & District Public Library to remove asbestos-backed sheet flooring from the first floor bathroom area of the Village Hall.

•The front entrance stairs to the Village Hall will be painted with non-skid stain in 2006.

•A proposal for sidewalk and curb sweeping was referred to the Public Works Committee for recommendation to Council.

•Resident Paul Woolgar wrote to council with suggestions regarding the Village's Noise Abatement Bylaw, which he understands will soon be updated. His correspondence was referred to the Admin & Finance Committee for recommendation to council.

•Letters will be sent to the Premier, FortisBC, BC Hydro and the BC Utilities Commission objecting to an increase in rates for electrical power in the Kootenay Columbia area.

•Council gave three readings to Building Bylaw 1027. A complete copy of this bylaw is available at the Village of Kaslo office.

•Council agreed to CAO Rae Sawyer's request that Berg Naqvi & Co. be asked to complete the Village of Kaslo 2005 year end and audit. Staff does not have time to complete the year end, and it must be done now, as the Village is changing software on April 3.

•During Q&A period, council was asked if it had received a report from Robert Mitchell, new Village rep to the Kaslo and District Community Forest Society. Mayor Holland stated Mitchell attended his first meeting in February, and the KDCFS board required a registered letter before he could assume his seat on the board. Councillor Leathwood stated council has yet to formalize a format for Mitchell for reporting to council.

•Accounts Payable of $20,075.47 were approved for payment.

Kaslo Public Library "gets with the program"

by Rachael Kimola

The ABCs of the Kaslo Public Library (KPL) have been updated. Now, A is for Automation, B is for Budget and C is for Computerized Card System.

The KPL has a brand new budget to play with. At a special meeting of Kaslo council held on February 21, a 20% increase to the KPL's budget for this year was approved, making possible some changes to an old system. The KPL is in the process of becoming fully automated to serve the community better and faster. A hand-held scanner has replaced all the index cards and late fees are tracked by computer.

Librarian Deborah Barrett is pleased with the new system, despite how long it has taken to come together. The fund for automating the library actually started in 1982 as joint project between the library board and the Village of Kaslo.

"It has just been in the last year that all the books, magazines and so on have been entered into the database," says Barrett, "So far it's working smoothly."

Also on the agenda was the increase of the wages paid to Barrett. The hourly wage paid to her was considered insufficient compared to the skills and experience that the job requires, so an increase has been approved, bringing her salary closer to that of the provincial standard for librarians. This, according to Area D Director Andy Shadrack, is a justifiable expense.

"The Kaslo Public Library is, in my opinion, the most under-funded library in the regional district. We are making steps towards changing that," says Shadrack. "If people work for the community, they should be paid some sort of living wage."

The KPL has also received a Provincial Equity Grant, which will help fund new library programs and purchase new materials. A new collection of graphic novels and a story time program are examples of how the grant money is being spent. The grant has allowed for a weekly story time every Saturday until March 18. Children between 3-5 are welcome to attend the session this Saturday from 11-12.

Says Barrett, "We'd like to see more kids come out for story time — the more the merrier!"

The KPL has several new policies to go with the new equipment. The loan period for books is now three weeks instead of two, and renewals will no longer be taken over the phone. While that could be a problem for people with mobility issues, Barrett says they are looking into ways to ensure the library remains accessible to everyone.

"We are looking into starting some special services for people who have hardships getting to the library," says Barrett.

Just how much will all this cost taxpayers? The numbers aren't in just yet, but Shadrack promises to have them ready for the public by early April. Until then, we can all enjoy the benefits of our new ABCs.

Meeting endorses purchase of Kaslo's provincial building

by Jill Braley

KASLO—A small group of citizens, along with all four councillors and Chief Administrative Officer Rae Sawyer, attended the March 1 "Think Tank" session on the possible purchase of the provincial building.

Councillor Suzan Hewat gave the opening remarks and outlined the format for the evening, encouraging everyone to participate in open discussions.

Sawyer informed the group of the three different options the Village had if it were to go ahead with the purchase. It could pay cash, take out a long-term capital loan, or purchase a community bond. If it is decided to take out a loan or buy a community bond, residents would be taxed to make the payments. A referendum would be necessary if an alternative approval process did not succeed. Sawyer gave the group different loan terms and repayment options to consider. Council has made the Province an offer of $120,000 for the building.

During the open discussion, it became apparent that most people were generally in favour of purchasing the building and moving the Village office into it while the historic Village Hall building is being restored.

People pointed out the merits of this scenario. The Kootenay Lake Historical Society archives could continue to occupy the basement of the provincial building. The building has three tenants: the Government Agent, the Kaslo and District Community Forest Society and Back on Tack Productions. A five-year lease has been secured with the Government Agent. It was suggested that the RDCK building inspector could relocate into the building.

It was also suggested that the fire hall could be rebuilt behind the building, or to the public works yard. The fire hall is outgrowing its current space beside the historic Village Hall, and must be moved as it is not part of the original historic building.

People generally felt that once the historic Village Hall building was restored, the Provincial building could either be sold for a profit or retained — whichever was best for the community. The group thought that Village Hall restoration should get underway as soon as possible, starting with asking local contractors for quotes and applying for grants.

At the March 8 Admin & Finance Committee meeting, members sent a recommendation to council that Village staff be directed to act on points raised during the "Think Tank" session, and a date for a public meeting be established early in April.

The Langham presents *Tomás Kubínek: Certified Lunatic*

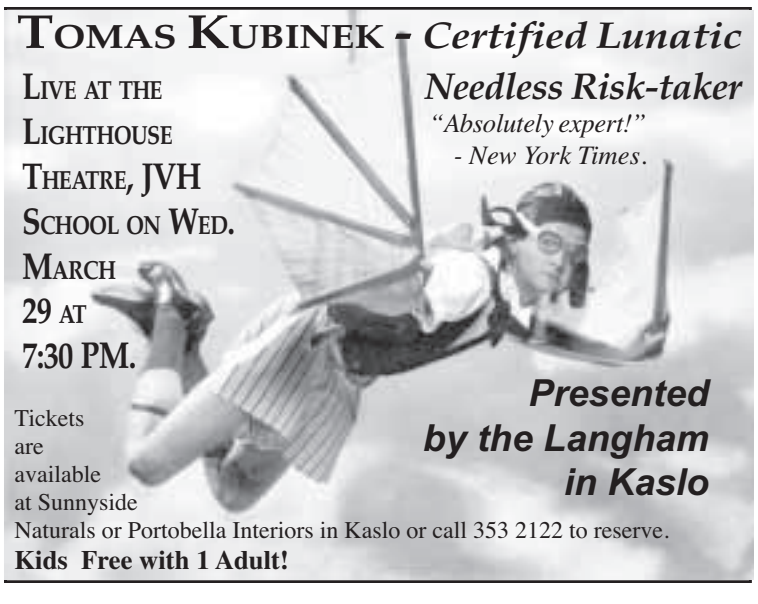
Tomás Kubínek, "Physical Poet and Verbal Acrobat! Needless Risk-Taker…Professor of Fantastically Useless Inventions…Arduous Advocate of The Commonplace Miracle. Certified Lunatic and Master of the Impossible..." These are but a few descriptors of this brilliant comic who will be presented by the Langham Cultural Society in Kaslo at the Lighthouse Theatre, JVH School March 29 at 7:30 pm.

Kubínek's internationally acclaimed solo performances play to packed theaters around the world. After a sold-out run on Broadway, The New York Times lauded his work as "Absolutely expert! Suffice it to say that, between the unbelievably bad magic tricks, the chicken clucking, water-burbling, the hair standing on end, missing finger tricks, and absurd acrobatics, Kubínek deserves the title 'certified lunatic'. He also deserved the reaction from those members of the audience, who, had they not been so busy rolling around on the floor like mirthful marbles, would have applauded even louder and longer."

"I saw him at Pacific Contact in Vancouver last year," says the Langham's manager, Marlaina Blanche. "He is the funniest man I have ever seen! Everyone in the audience had tears rolling down their cheeks as he performed the most amazing physical feats, alongside heartwarming, side splitting skits. I just didn't want the show to end. A truly therapeutic experience! I can't believe he is coming to Kaslo!"

Tickets are available at Sunnyside Naturals or Portobella Interiors in Kaslo or call 353-2122 to reserve. Kids under 16 accompanied by one adult are free!

Tomás Kubínek: Certified Lunatic



Get Outta Town!

with Peter Roulston

Payne Mine concentrator is a roadside attraction

Although I get out to see lots of places in the West Kootenays, much of my time is spent in the New Denver through Sandon area where many trails and old mine sites exist. I hadn't been up to Sandon for a while, though, and headed up one afternoon during a break in the series of rain and snow storms that have been pretty frequent.

The famous Payne Mine was the first big deal in the Slocan mining boom a hundred years ago, and although the mine workings were up at the mountaintop there was a stupendous surface tramway, or steep rail grade, 6,000 feet long and 2,500 feet high, down to the valley bottom, which allowed five-ton carloads of ore to be lowered by cable to the concentrator site.

This site is worth a visit for several reasons. You basically drive right past it on the way to Sandon, though not everyone has seen it. From the road junction at Three Forks I drove towards Sandon for 2.6 km and along a kinda level part of the road is a wide spot on the right that is often plowed out and offers fine, toll-free parking. Right across the road, but sort of above the bank, is the short spur road that leads uphill into the big scree slope and rubble rock and some ruins that were the Payne concentrator. Within minutes you're there and facing the huge steep slope of waste rock and tailings.

I had my touring skis and skins for climbing and simply switchbacked up the right flank of this steep open slope which could easily slide in hazardous conditions. This is not a great uptrack on snow but in summertime a path could be easily laid out to ascend. The surface layer got slush-ish in the sunshine and I was hot by the time I came out onto the K&S rail grade trail at the upper end of the clearing. There's a nice interpretive sign posted here and at this point you are halfway between Sandon and Three Forks along this fine rail trail which was improved and signed in 1980; an excellent map was made as well by the Valhalla Wilderness Society, who sponsored this project.

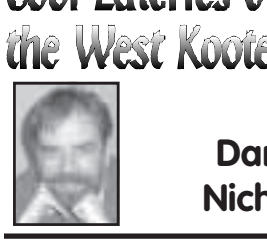
The book *Valley of the Ghosts* is locally available and gives wonderful insights into the mine sites and communities that were here. I spent some time crashing around the slope above the railgrade looking for further evidence, then simply skied along the main railgrade southeast through the creek gullies to the Altoona mine site then doubled back and went about 500 metres along the grade towards Three Forks from the Payne concentrator. At this point the main Sandon road is maybe 150 vertical metres below the K&S rail grade, but by the time you get to Three Forks the difference is around 300 metres.

Interestingly, at this point I noticed a wagon trail merging into the rail grade from below and decided to descend it with hopes of emerging somewhere reasonable, maybe on the main road. The trail is very well laid out and is about four metres wide and quite brushy. Couple switchbacks, steady 10 - 12 per cent grade, and before long I emerged at the spur road below the scree slope and about two minutes from the main road! This helpful connector wagon trail is not noted on either old topo maps or on the very good new bicycle trail map of the area, but is a good route and needs only a couple of days of saw work by several people. What appeals to me is that it divides the seven km K&S trail into two halves that could be done as loop rides/hikes from either end. The Payne concentrator site is large and a convenient junction as well as a worthwhile historic feature. The steep waste rock slope is interesting to scout around on, but much better access to the rail trail above can be had via that wagon trail.

The K&S rail trail is a superb recreational experience and historic artifact that was all done up and well signed, but now needs to be reconsidered and recognized. Many locals know about it and enjoy it occasionally, but self-guided visitors and newcomers will be challenged to find it, especially from Three Forks, or to appreciate it. To have a couple fresh trailhead signs would be great, and a new midpoint trail connector at the understated and little-visited Payne site might work really well.

This could be a beneficial front country type of experience for moderately inclined people to enjoy and once the snow has gone would be interesting to investigate further. This is separate from the actual Sandon experience, but plays a part in making both Sandon and Three Forks fit into the time that we may choose to spend there.

Peter Roulston has owned the Bicycle Hospital for 15 years: 358-2133.



For me, this is the in-between season—it's too cold and icy to get out the Electro Glide and the winter is getting too old for the deep powder of the backcountry to entice me upwards. In-between season is a great time to get projects done though, and betwixt hours on the road commuting to work and seemingly endless time spent in the chalk trough, I have been able to get onto some interesting things.

I wonder what it is about certain people that get them occupied with self-absorbing projects? My partner Penelope is happy to spend the whole day drawing and painting; other friends are engaged in house renovations, tractor repairs, motorcycle restorations or any number of other projects.

These are things that may be considered as work, but that word itself has connotations of obligation and drudgery. The projects I am referring to here are much more self-induced and hobby oriented—somehow attuned to the inner desires of the person rather than forced upon them from the outside. I think there are some universal truths buried here that might be interesting to look at.

We all have a certain amount of time to spend. I like the term 'spending' time, because time, like money, is a very real commodity and like money, we use it up—we spend it. Unlike money though, we don't know how much of this commodity we actually have. None of us really knows when they have spent their last minute until that last minute comes up and we discover the bank is empty.

This makes the spending of time a chancy game. Will we spend too much of it on something we don't really care about, or will we get full value out of every minute? Should we be spending our time renting ourselves out so we can exchange our time for security, food etc., or should we be spending it on things we get enjoyment out of such as backcountry skiing or restoring old cars? These are questions we have all grappled with and I think the voluntary projects we enter into can give us a few insights into some of these decisions.

My premise is that the things people do for enjoyment are good indicators of the factors that are important to their happiness quotient. If we can assume that it is good value to spend time on those things that give us pleasure, I think we can use this information in our judgements of how to juggle the conundrum of trading time for security, (work, drudgery, etc.) and at the same time, having enough left over to be able to spend on the things that give us enjoyment from life.

For example, if there is a big disconnect between what you do for a living and how you spend your free time on enjoyment, you probably aren't spending your working time effectively. There are occasions where this might not be true. It could be that your disconnected work time pays very handsomely and you find it worthwhile to trade that limited time for the very substantial security gain you receive in return—you find it worthwhile to spend a shorter period of your time in unpleasant activities so you can gain more free time as a result.

On the other hand you may find that your bigger pay cheque simply translates into bigger debt as you trade your work for material things you don't really get much enjoyment from; the machinery of advertising can be very effective in this regard. I propose that this would be a waste of time.

If on the other hand, you find your work activities dovetailing nicely with those activities you do for a hobby, you can probably be confident that you are spending your time wisely.

In-between season can be great time to get onto those projects that give us pleasure, a restful pause before the frenetic activity of spring. It can also be a time when we can review some of our spending habits. Maybe it's time to look at time.

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Cool Eateries of the West Kootenays

with Daniel B. Nicholson

Hello food fans!

I made the journey over the Slocan Range last Saturday morning to visit the Village of Kaslo, and one of my favourite West Kootenay eateries—The Treehouse Restaurant, a staple on Kaslo's Main Street for years. Ronnie Martin has been the owner since 1986. She brought in her business partner Pauline Carlson in 1995.

I made a point of arriving for breakfast, so that I wouldn't have to deal with menu stress. The lunch/dinner menu is about a gazillion pages long. By way of contrast, the breakfast menu is printed on both sides of a single 8 1/2" x 11" piece of cardstock. My eyes lingered over the Eggs Benedict. It is, after all, my favourite breakfast. They make it with a choice of bacon, smoked salmon, tomato, shrimp, or spinach. Too many restaurants make their hollandaise sauce from a package or buy it pre-made from a distributor, though, and it just doesn't taste quite right. So I move on.

I look down to the omelettes. You can get 'em in two sizes—two egg or three. The variety of fillings is almost endless. Choose from onions, tomatoes, peppers, olives, mushrooms, jalapenos, spinach, green chiles, bacon, ham, sausage cheddar, mozza, Swiss, feta or cream cheese.

Mexican breakfast specials include huevos rancheros (both carnivorous and vegetarian), the Mexican scramble and the breakfast burrito.

I turn the menu over and see a long list of traditional breakfast favourites—all the usual combinations of ham/bacon/sausage/steak and eggs, there's French toast and pancakes. I love both of these entrées and regard them as an excellent source of maple syrup.

Below that is a list of cereal and fruit selections and a plethora of side orders that I won't get into. Suffice it to say, that if you happen to feel a little peckish after eating one of the Treehouse's breakfasts (unlikely, in my opinion), there's a wide variety of options to fill up on.

I flipped the menu over again and had more-or-less decided on the breakfast burrito when my charming waitress, Chantal Doucet, sidles over to tell me about the breakfast special—a two-egg scramble with bacon, spinach and onion. I'm about to tell her that I want the burrito, when she mentions that it is topped with the Treehouse's *homemade* hollandaise sauce and comes with panfries and my choice of four types of toast.

That gets my attention.

"The sauce is not made from a package," I say.

"No, no," she insists. "It's made right here in our kitchen."

I hesitate for perhaps another nanosecond before I say, "Please bring me the special." I spend the next few minutes debating whether I should have had the Eggs Benny instead.

When my meal arrives, I know that I've made the right choice. The egg scramble is delicious and the hollandaise sauce that smothers it is incredible. In case you haven't noticed, I'm a bit of a snob when it comes to hollandaise sauce, and this was the finest that I've ever tasted. As I push my panfries through the gobs of hollandaise sauce that remain on my plate, I muse that it's odd that during my many trips to the Treehouse over the years, I've never gone to breakfast there.

I pop my head into the kitchen to ask Ronnie what the secret of her hollandaise sauce was. She tells me that she makes it fresh in the restaurant, "using butter, egg yolks, lemon juice and..."

"And what?" I say eagerly.

"My secret ingredient," she finishes. I try not to look too downcast as she tells me that she uses the egg whites to make the incredible Angelcakes that are such an important epicurean component of the Treehouse dessert menu. As I leave the restaurant I note that they have a fully stocked bar, with a number of passably good brands of Scotch whiskey. The restaurant is wheelchair accessible.

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- Daniel B. Nicholson, *The Valley Voice*

ANNOUNCEMENT

A wedding of interest in the area took place on February 25, when Joyce Marie Jupp of Nakusp and Charles Herbert Horrey of Castlegar exchanged vows in St. David's Anglican Church, Castlegar. The Rev. Canon Katherine Loynd performed the double-ring ceremony. Ann Fowler was organist.

The bride was attended by her daughter, Jennifer Jupp of Trail, and Bruce Horrey of Calgary was his father's Best Man.

A Celebration Tea followed the service, catered to by the Anglican Church Women of St. David's.

Guests included: Douglas and Amy Horrey, Dallas, Texas; Bruce and Cheryl Horrey, Calgary; Marilyn and Bob Oliver, Warren and Cory Oliver, S. Slocan; Jennifer Jupp and son Sidney, Trail; Gary and Rose Marie Jupp, Salmon Arm; Monica Irwin and Kathleen Angrignon, New Denver; Philip and Corry Angrignon, Sharon Minter and daughter Molly, Tom and Laima Allis, Castlegar; Nelson Woldum and Bea Pickard, Vernon; Barbara and Greg Craine, Doreen and Bob Hamling, Nakusp; Tamara Martin, Nelson; Mary Anne Leschiutta, Trail

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BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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CALL FOR ENTRY

NELSON AND DISTRICT ARTS COUNCIL announces their call for entry to artists for their annual Artwalk in downtown Nelson July 7 to September 16. Two five-week exhibitions will be held over the summer at 12 downtown businesses. Please call Pat Henman at the Nelson and District Arts Council, 250-352-2402 or email her at ndac@netidea.com for applications to participate as an emerging or professional artist or as a gallery/venue. Deadline for applications is April 14, 2006.

CARD OF THANKS

UPPER SANDON SNOW DAY FEBRUARY 11, 2006 WAS A GREAT SUCCESS. The Directors and Members of the Silver Ridge Community Club and Sandon Historical Society extend our sincere thanks to the Volunteers and residents of the Slocan Valley, Nelson and Nakusp who helped make Snow Day such a success. Volunteers prepared hot food, baked and worked very hard during the event. It was wonderful to see the rosy cheeked children and adults enjoying the snow, bonfires and groomed ski runs in the brilliant sunshine and digging into the home made goodies afterward.

We were delighted to welcome RDCK Chair and New Denver Mayor Gary Wright and our MLA Corky Evans enjoying the day. and thank them for their ongoing interest in our activities.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to Upper Sandon for our Second Annual summer event.

COMING EVENTS

BE THERE or BE SQUARE - March 30, Lucerne Library, 6:30 pm, for a Lucerne School PAC meeting. All Lucerne parents are warmly invited. Parents have a voice in their children's education through PAC.

ST. PAT's B-FAST at Passmore Lodge, Sunday March 19. Enjoy Rita's famous breakfast and buy a raffle ticket for an Alf Crossley original painting to be drawn at the breakfast. To benefit the Vallican Whole Community Ctr. Info 226-0097.

SUMMIT LAKE SKI HILL AGM March 30, 7 pm, Nakusp Secondary School Library. (Originally scheduled for March 16.)

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

COMING EVENTS

WRITERS FESTIVAL-Lucerne School and Community-4th Annual-April 18th to 21st. A literary line-up not to be missed. All workshops are open to the public so watch for schedule and plan to attend the writers coffeehouse. Stuart Ross adult evening workshop, Tuesday, April 18th.

KOHAN GARDEN SPRING CLEAN UP/PRUNING PARTY Sunday, March 26 starting at 10 am. Bring your own pruning tools & smiles and lunch will be provided. Weekly work parties start April 5 at 6 pm. Everyone welcome. 358-2478.

CONTROLLING KNAPWEED: Mechanical and Biological Controls. Juliet Craig, Co-ordinator of the Central Kootenay Invasive Weed Committee, speaking Thursday, March 30 at 7 pm. Vallican Whole Community Centre. Sponsored by RARTS. All welcome. FREE.

THE SILVERY SLOCAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S Annual General Meeting, will be held at the Interpretive Centre on Wednesday, March 15th, at 1:00 PM.

FLEA MARKET Saturday, March 25. 9 am - 1 pm. 210 8th Ave. Nakusp Seniors' Hall. Everyone welcome. Hot lunch available. Free admission. Vendors wanted. Call Faye 265-0096.

CALL FOR PERFORMERS! Vallican Whole's 8th annual Coffee House will be on April 1st. 5:30 - 10 pm (or later). Any Musicians that would like a space call Bevan @ 359-6654. Featuring an Indian Dinner, Local Performers, Silent Auction and Delectable Desserts. Admission is $5, childcare is $2. Call 226-7737 for more info.

EDUCATION

YOGA TEACHER TRAINING: Complete a 200-hour basic certification program in three 9-day sessions. Taught by Kripalu teacher Rasika Martha Link at the Villa Dome Quixote in New Denver. Beginning session May 13-21, 2006. New Denver contact: Jane Murphy 358-7143.

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NOTICES

FOR INFORMATION ON AA MEETINGS in New Denver and adjacent towns, call Dave at 358-7265.

HAVING PROBLEMS WITH DRUGS? Narcotics Anonymous meetings at Slocan Community School, Slocan, 6:30 Thursdays. Miles 355-2519.

OBITUARY

HARRY GRISWOLD (age 89) passed away February 25, 2006 at the Salmon Arm Hospital. Harry and June lived south of Kaslo for 28 years. Before moving to Enderby in 1990, they were honoured by an Open House and Tea on board the S.S.Moyie. Harry was a lifetime member of the Kootenay Lake Historical Society where donations may be made in his memory. A memorial is planned for May. (Contact 832-2355).

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Another batty day in Winlaw!

by Craig Lawrence

Why do valley residents like bats so much? Because of their potential for feasting on mosquitoes and other insects. Anything that helps reduce those flying pests is always a welcome addition to the community.

Join Biologist Juliet Craig as she combines forces with the Slocan Valley Recreation Commission to present the third annual Bat House Building Day. This year the event takes place April 2 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Why not come to the Winlaw Hall where you can build a bat house for a nominal fee and/or get an update on the Kootenay Community Bat Project?

At last year's bat house building event, soon-to-be MLA Corky Evans (right) joined his friend Tom Bradley to make some bat houses.

In the past two years more than 100 bat houses have been made and the results are starting to show. The bat houses are all pre-cut and only a screwdriver or cordless drill is needed to complete assembly. If you have a caulking gun and staple gun, bring them along, but there's usually some to share.

Bat houses will be constructed throughout the afternoon and at noon Juliet will give a talk on all things batty and an update on the Kootenay Community Bat project that she's been working on for the past two years. You don't have to make a bat house to take part in the talk. Bring any bat questions along because Juliet is the person who can answer them. You can meet a live bat, too!

All bat houses must be reserved, so call Slocan Valley Recreation at 226-0008 by March 24 to make sure there's enough supplies to make one for your property.

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Summit Lake Racers' success at provincials

Nakusp Secondary School sent 21 athletes to compete with 300 of BC's best boarders and skiers in the BC High School Alpine Provincials at Panorama Resort February 26 to 28.

The girls' ski team—Jaimee Hamling, Kristin Likness, Kristen Sokoloski, Sam Toering, Sara Varga, and Liz Waterfield—placed sixth overall, pulling out of eighth place after the first day of racing.

The boys' ski team—Dane Olsen, Bryar McQuair, Brent Wanstall, Robyn Crosby-Bone, and Cameron Carruthers—also placed sixth.

The girls' snowboard team, Tierre Bekker, Lara Eigelshoven, Shannon Fulmore, Chelsea Groffen, Jesse McDonald, and Carly Thorp, rode to success and placed an amazing second out of 13 teams.

The boys' snowboard team came in 13th overall. Luke Andrews, Justin Detta, Connor McKee, and Alex Thorp displayed the outstanding sportsmanship that Nakusp is known for.

The fastest eight individuals in British Columbia are recognized in each discipline, and our athletes topped the list. Jesse McDonald came fourth in her category, Carly Thorp placed fourth in hers, and Alex Thorp pulled himself from third after the first day's race to place first. LESS student Amber Brown-Dahl competed as an individual and placed sixth.

Allison Alder, who travelled with the team, commented that they are "amazing athletes who showed excellent sportsmanship. The kids are exceptional ambassadors for Nakusp, with a completely amazing team spirit. They were utterly a joy to ski and ride with, travel with, and coach!"

"Three of the girls' team, one of the boys' snowboard team and two of the girl skiers were new racers, never having raced at all. What a thrill to try it out, work hard and bring home great memories."

• The BCSA Provincial Snowboard Cross was held March 5 at Big White. Although the day was cold, the Summit Lake Racers were there in force. Alex Marshall placed third in the amateur men 19+. Jessica Hogg placed third in the amateur women 19+. Alex Thorp placed third in the amateur men 13-14. Jesse McDonald placed fifth in the FIS pro women, while Carly Thorp placed eighth in the same category. The riders showed great team spirit despite numerous delays in the race.

Nakusp Secondary School sent 21 athletes to compete against skiiers and snow boarders across the province, February 26 - 28. In this photo, Alex Marshall chases an opponent during a race.

REPORTS FROM THE RCMP

These reports are based on press releases and may have been edited

Nakusp Detachment

• Two skiers were killed and a third injured in an avalanche on McBride Mountain, three km east of Fauquier, on March 3. Nakusp RCMP say one man dug himself out, called for help on a satellite phone, and began to dig for the other two but found they had already died.

A helicopter in the area landed and took the survivor to Arrow Lakes Hospital where he was treated and released.

RCMP say all were experienced back country skiers, equipped with avalanche beacons and rescue equipment. They were part of a group of 12 staying at Valkyr Lodge in the Selkirk Mountains.

Slocan Lake Detachment

• A Lemon Creek couple were arrested February 26 after their home on Mon Amie Rd. was raided by RCMP from New Denver, Nakusp, Trail, the highway patrol and Nelson City Police on a drug search warrant. Police seized 157 marijuana plants, 1,900 grams of dried bud and grow equipment, and estimated the street value at $176,000.

Roger and Therese Thickett were arrested and charged with production and possession for the purpose of trafficking. They were scheduled to appear in Nakusp Court March 13.

• Nakusp RCMP have received a number of complaints about vehicles not stopping for school buses which are picking up or dropping off students. They remind drivers if they come upon a stopped bus, in either direction, they must stop and wait until all children have moved a safe distance away from traffic, and the bus has folded its stop sign and has started to move.

Anyone not yielding to a school bus can be fined under the Motor Vehicle Act.

Nelson Detachment

• Black ice on the road caused a double accident near the Taghum Bridge March 1. Police say a Slocan Park woman lost control of her pickup truck and slid off the road into the rock face. A Nelson woman driving in the same direction lost control of her car and slid into the rear of the pickup, severely damaging both vehicles.

Neither driver was injured, but the Nelson woman was ticketed for driving without a licence.

Police remind drivers there is black ice forming on the roads and they should be driving with extreme caution.

Take me out to the ball game! Registration continues until the end of March in the Lower Slocan Valley for soccer, micro-soccer, T-ball and slowpitch. All ages of children are welcome to participate in the various leagues organized by Slocan Valley Recreation. For more information contact them at 226-0008.

Most municipalities sign on to RDCK proclamation

Only Slocan and Castlegar are holdouts from the list of municipalities and areas who have signed on to the regional district's proclamation for regional development. Kaslo's mayor Jim Holland added his signature to the list February 25, joining the rest of the villages, towns, cities and all 11 electoral areas.

The document sets our voluntary standards of "close, full and friendly co-operation" on matters of boundary restructure and referenda for joint services. It calls on local governments to co-ordinate planning and development activities with neighbouring jurisdictions.

"Support for the protocol is really symbolic of our members' desire to communicate honestly and work together for our residents' benefit," says RDCK board chair Gary Wright.

16th Annual Photographic show

The West Kootenay Camera Club invites photographers to enter images in their 16th Annual Photographic Show. The show is open to all photographers. Entry forms will be available March 28 at Vogue Studio in Nelson and Castlegar and at Doel Photography in Trail. Entries may also be dropped off at these places. The deadline is April 28..

The shows will be held at the Kootenay Gallery in Castlegar, June 2-4, and in the Chahko Mika Mall in Nelson, June 23-25.

For information call Nel at 365-6072 or Joan at 825-0072

Electrical problems delay ferry

by Jan McMurray

On March 9, electrical problems with drive motors caused the Galena/Shelter Bay ferry to shut down for about four hours.

The ferry was down from about 9 am to 1 pm. David Batchelor of Western Pacific Marine Ltd., which operates the ferries, said the interruption in service did not pose too much of a problem. "There was no real backlog," he reported.

Computer Virus?
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CAR WASH
Silverton Fire Department's Annual Fundraising Gala Carwash and BBQ Banquet will be held Saturday, March 25, 11 am - 3 pm at the Silverton Village Office Parking Area.
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