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

Regional community pulls together in face of Slocan Valley flooding

by Jan McMurray

Last Thursday night, after four days of record high temperatures and snowmelt, the Little Slocan River crested and the Slocan River was rising very quickly. On Friday, the RDCK activated its emergency response plan. Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) were set up at the Passmore Fire Hall and at the RDCK building in Nelson. A reception centre was set up at the Passmore Community Hall.

Flooding in the Passmore and Slocan Park areas over the May long weekend resulted in an evacuation order affecting about 53 homes between 2220 and 3153 Slocan Valley West Road, commonly known as 'the back road,' on the west side of Slocan River.

When an evacuation order is issued, people should leave the area immediately and register at the reception centre. As of Monday, 14 families (31 people) had registered at the centre, according to Lara Perzoff, Media Relations officer out of the EOC in Nelson. Some of these people are staying with friends and family, and others in local accommodation.

"Lots of people have signed denial forms and won't leave," reported Terry Warren, Emergency Co-ordinator for the Slocan Valley and Nakusp.

Also as of Monday, at 5 pm, an evacuation alert was in effect for 12 homes on Indian Point Road, 98 homes on the west side of Hwy 6 from Cunningham Road to Slocan Valley West Road bridge and three homes on Filipoff Road.

When on evacuation alert, people should be ready to leave on short notice.

The original evacuation alert, issued Friday evening, was for 425 residences in the Passmore and Slocan Park areas. On Sunday, officials lifted the alert for most of those homes.

Over the weekend, about 200 volunteers gathered at the Passmore Fire Hall and filled about 5,000 bags with sand. Search and Rescue teams from New Denver, Nakusp, Nelson, Castlegar, Beaver Valley and Rossland, and fire departments from Winlaw, Passmore and Nakusp have all rallied to the cause.

"We are grateful to everybody who has come out to support the community at this time of need," said Emergency Co-ordinator Terry Warren.

The Province deployed two 20-person Ministry of Forest fire unit crews and two three-person Initial Attack teams to assist with sandbagging.

John Ludwar, one of our local heroes on site and a long-time Passmore resident, says there has been flooding like this in years past, but it was dealt with locally. "The difference this time is that it is a co-ordinated effort, with the RDCK and the Provincial Emergency Program on board," he said.

"The RDCK has been excellent," said Warren. "It's been a good experience to get organized with our emergency efforts."

Information from the Ministry of Environment River Forecast Centre was that Slocan River had peaked early Sunday morning and had receded 30 cm from its peak by Sunday night. However, it was expected to remain well above flood stage into Tuesday-Wednesday, and could rise further, depending on rainfall.

Late Monday afternoon, with heavy rainfall warnings for the area, Emergency Co-ordinator Terry Warren said, "We're hoping we're on the edge of it, but we don't know what's coming at us."

Warren knew of no damage to homes or livestock.

Indian Point Road was closed until Monday afternoon. Although it has been re-opened, there are washout areas, clearly marked with traffic cones.

In Salmo, the Province deployed 10,000 sandbags to reinforce a dyke along Erie Creek, and in Glade, the Province is assisting 90 homes with drinking water resources, and is working with local government and the Interior Health Authority to establish an alternate drinking water supply for the community.

There is also flooding in the Grand Forks area, with 40 homes on evacuation alert. Sandbagging efforts have occurred in Grand Forks, Greenwood and Rock Creek, and there have been drinking water issues in Invermere and Fruitvale because of flooding.

Canoe jousting always draws a big crowd. Jim and Bob of Hellman Canoes won in the adult category this year.

At New Denver's May Days, Simon Hellyer and his boys, Justin and Travis, are continuing a 25-year soapbox family tradition. Last year their blue-and-yellow custom-built "hellracer" outraced every car in its category to win the soapbox trophy. This year the blue-and-red "Scotty Masters" kit car, custom fitted to Justin, won every race, including one against last year's model!

Steele to appear in Nakusp court June 19

by Jan McMurray

Charges have finally been laid against Kevin Jason Steele, the man behind the investment scam that affected many people from the New Denver area. He pled guilty to a single count of fraud over $5,000 in the Nelson courthouse, via video link from Vancouver, on May 16.

Steele will appear in the Nakusp courthouse on June 19 for the sentencing hearing, which is expected to last a full day.

"We felt it was important to have him sentenced in the community where the crime happened," said a representative from the RCMP Integrated Marketing Enforcement Team (IMET) in Vancouver.

Corporal Heidema from the Slocan Lake detachment said he was not sure if the victims would be allowed to speak during the proceedings, but is hoping so. "People have been very patient so far and they deserve to express how it has affected them," he said. "I really believe the people deserve their day in court and I would encourage them to be there."

Steele allegedly defrauded 229 people who invested in his commodity pool from December 2002 to May 2005 of about $US 8.1 million ($Cdn 10.3 million). Heidema confirmed that the majority of the 229 are from the Slocan Valley.

About one year ago, the news broke that the commodity pool was a scam, and the US Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) submitted a complaint against Steele to the Illinois court. The court issued him with a restraining order and asset freeze. He had about $242,000 in bank accounts at the time. In November 2005, the court gave Steele 30 days to pay restitution of over $7 million to investors plus $6.2 million for violating US federal commodities laws. CFTC launched an investigation, with help from RCMP's IMET, the Slocan Lake RCMP detachment and BC Securities Commission. On May 11, IMET investigators charged Steele with a single count of fraud over $5,000.

Belly-dancing made its Kaslo May Days debut on Saturday morning at the gazebo in Vimy Park. More May Days photos on pages 8 & 9.

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Conservation officer kills two bears in Summit Lake

by Jan McMurray

Two black bears were trapped and shot last week in Summit Lake.

After losing several chickens to a bear, farmer Maggie Bajer called the Conservation Officers in Castlegar on Monday, May 15. They came up that afternoon with a trap and a bear got caught in it that night. A Conservation Officer (CO) came up Tuesday morning to shoot it.

However, Bajer continued to lose chickens. "The dogs have been treeing bears all week, but the bears are not letting off," she said in a telephone interview. "They are hungry."

Another Summit Lake resident who was having the same problem with chickens called the CO on Wednesday, May 17. The trap came up again on Thursday afternoon and another bear was trapped Friday morning. According to the Castlegar office, the CO was advised about 10 am that a bear was in the trap, and headed up the valley to shoot it just before lunchtime.

Bajer was distraught about the treatment of the bears. She said the first one was in the trap for 12 hours, spent half that time fighting to escape and hurt itself in the process. The second one was in full sun on that very hot Friday for hours until the CO arrived, she reported.

There are two full-time COs in Castlegar, and this year the office has been staffed with one more officer from May 19 to the end of November.

Tobe Sprado, full-time CO out of Castlegar that did not attend in Summit Lake, explained provincial policy — when it comes to property damage or predation, COs have to attend. Any black bear that is trapped is shot. The policy is different for grizzlies — only adult males are put down. Females and cubs are re-located. "It is considered too big of an impact to the local grizzly bear population otherwise," said Sprado.

Wayne McCrory, bear biologist with Valhalla Wilderness Society (VWS) calls the kill policy "antiquated" and says he doesn't think it reflects public sentiment. However, he is optimistic about the government's Bear Smart program, and plans to initiate that in the upper Slocan Valley for next season.

McCrory has worked on these programs in Whistler, Squamish, and Vancouver's North shore, "so I'm kind of on the front lines," he says. "My opinion is we're further ahead here — we're bear aware — we just have to take the next steps and help the public bearproof their homes and farms."

He says the Summit Lake incident underscores the need for people to be more diligent about bearproofing chicken coops, garbage storage areas, pet food and livestock feed storage areas.

Mike Badry out of the Ministry of Environment office in Victoria explains that once a community becomes "bear smart," non-lethal methods can be used to keep bears out of residential areas. These include rubber bullets, hazing and relocation.

"When black bears make the connection that people equals food, it is very difficult to turn that around. Once you are a bear smart community — you have dealt with the problems and educated residents — then bears will not be getting readily accessible food rewards. Then non-lethal options are available to you," he explained.

Under the Bear Smart program, communities come up with a hazard assessment and a management plan to try and mitigate the hazards. No community yet has gotten the designation, reported Badry, but there the bear aware education component is up and running in several comunities, including Kaslo, Nelson, Castlegar and Revelstoke.

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Scotch broom invading West Kootenays

submitted

This is the time of year that you may be enjoying the beautiful yellow flowers of Scotch broom along the highways or in your garden. Scotch broom is often admired as a beautiful ornamental species. With bright yellow flowers and lush green stems, it is certainly attractive. However, scotch broom is considered a highly invasive alien plant.

Broom is originally from Scotland, and was brought to BC in the 1850s as a garden ornamental to new immigrants of their homeland. Since then, this seemingly harmless plant has spread dramatically throughout the coastal areas of BC and is now moving into some areas of the Southern Interior, changing the landscape and its ecology. Broom is a member of the legume family and can form a close relationship with nitrogen fixing bacteria. The ability to access nitrogen helps the plant become established in disturbed areas with poor soil. Broom also acidifies the soil where it grows, reducing competition from other plants. It is well adapted to grow in harsh conditions, and aggressively out-competes native species.

Broom has escaped cultivation and continues to spread throughout the central Kootenays. You may have noticed the thickets of bright yellow flowers in the Nelson area, Riondel, and Nakusp.

Since broom has no natural enemies in BC, the only way to get rid of it is to remove it yourself. You can do this by pulling small seedlings, less than a pencil width, when the soil is moist. Larger plants must be cut down, preferably in May when the flowers are out but have not yet gone to seed. It is important to try to prevent plants from going to seed as this is the major method of spread. Broom does not grow well in shade, so to help prevent older plants growing back, cover the cut stump in plastic to prevent light access. It is also important to remove cut plant material from desirable areas as these old plant parts will release materials that prevent re-establishment of desirable plants.

For more information on Scotch broom and other invasive species, see www.kootenayweeds.com.

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Back-country recreation takes its toll on caribou

submitted

On May 3, members of the Canadian Avalanche Association, which includes mountain guides, heli-guides and members of the snowmobiling community, heard from Lawrence Redfern of the Mountain Caribou Project about the impacts of backcountry recreation on mountain caribou in BC.

The backcountry recreation industry was until recently considered 'non-consumptive,' but recent studies have shown that this kind of recreation does affect mountain caribou by driving animals away from preferred habitat and into less favourable habitat. The delicate balancing act necessary for these animals to survive is then tipped against them, causing drastic population declines.

Nearly every mountain caribou herd in the world, and all herds in Super Natural BC, are in decline. Many biologists believe that the only increasing herd, located in the Hart Ranges, has been put at risk by a recent government decision to award a 500,000-ha heli-ski tenure in their habitat.

A lively Q&A session followed Lawrence's presentation, indicating great interest by members of the Avalanche Association surrounding this emerging issue.

For further information please contact Lawrence Redfern at the Mountain Caribou Project.

BC Liberals undermine local decision-making with Bill 30

submitted

The BC Liberals have introduced legislation that undermines local government autonomy and community decision-making, according to NDP Municipal Affairs critic Norm Macdonald, MLA for Columbia River-Revelstoke.

Bill 30, the Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, proposes changes to several pieces of legislation already on the books in BC. While the title of the Bill suggests that those changes are merely a matter of housekeeping, Macdonald is sounding the alarm over section 56 of the Bill, which would remove local control over zoning decisions in relation to independent power projects.

Macdonald added that rural communities in particular will resist the proposed changes contained in Bill 30. "The people of rural British Columbia remember the flooding of our valleys. They remember how arbitrary and arrogant the provincial government acted during that time. And they will not quietly return to a time when rural communities had no control over their own fate," said Macdonald.

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A bit more paving for 31A

by Jan McMurray

It's not as much as we'd like, but a 15-km stretch of Hwy 31A is being paved this season. Work is scheduled to begin this week and to end in mid-July.

Okanagan Aggregates Ltd. was awarded the $2.9 million contract to pave the section from Bear Lake heading east towards Kaslo for 15 kms, as well as some roads in the Kaslo and Meadow Creek areas. These are in the Allan subdivision, Pineridge Road and Twin Bay Road in the Kaslo area, and Meadow Creek Road and McLaughlin Road in the Meadow Creek area.

"This section of the highway was last paved in 1989, so it's overdue for a new coat of asphalt. It has been patched over the years, but it's ready for paving," said Jeff Knight, communications officer for the Ministry of Transportation.

Knight said the job would not only give us a smoother ride, but also save on maintenance costs, as pavement prevents water from seeping into the roadway.

He says the ministry hopes to do another 15-km section next year. The 13-km section from about 4 kms outside of New Denver to Bear Lake was paved in 2003.

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Public speaks out against proposed Burton School closure

by Jan McMurray

A public meeting was held May 16 to discuss the possible closure of Burton Elementary School (BES). The board of trustees for School District No. 10 started the 60-day consultation period at its April 12 meeting. There will be at least one more public meeting before June 12.

Pattie Adam, board chair, outlined the district's history of restructuring and reductions in order to keep a balanced budget. She explained the impact of declining enrollment on the district's funding, which has decreased by $500,000 since 2001/02 and is anticipated to drop another $600,000 over the next three years. Projected figures for operating BES show a loss of $38,525 next year and $83,525 the year after. Seven children are expected to attend BES next year, six the year after and eight the year after that.

Trustee Bill Hilton said, "Unfortunately, I had to support the motion to close the school because of these numbers" and urged people to let the board know of any children that may not be counted in the projected enrollment.

It was pointed out that if Burton and Edgewood kids were not allowed to go to Nakusp Elementary School (NES), there would be 32 K-7 kids from the two communities. Adam answered that as far as she knew, the parents' choice of schools had to be respected as long as there was room in the school of choice. She promised to double-check this.

Hilton said, "If anyone who has been sending their kids to Nakusp is considering sending their kids to Burton, we need to know now."

He said that some might question last year's decision to reconfigure BES from a K-7 to a K-4, and Edgewood Elementary School (EES) from a K-4 to a K-7. "We have a thriving school in Edgewood and the community supports it. In the past, BES was supported by the community," he said.

Ben Sopow, who taught in the Southern Zone from 1979-92, called last year's decision "flawed" and said that the board "owes it to the community to pay for that mistake."

He spoke of the $100,000 donated by community members and local companies, as well as the volunteer labour that went into building the school gymnasium. "In respect of this building and all the volunteers, if you have to operate at a loss for a couple of years, you owe it to this community. The southern zone has too long a history to let it go because next year's budget doesn't look good."

He suggested that BES and EES both be K-7 "twin schools," co-ordinating on sports teams and field trips.

He pointed out that last year, two full-time teachers were committed to teaching 11 kids in Grade 12 to experiment with video conferencing. "The board was prepared to do this to try something new. So let's try twin schools in the Southern zone."

Other suggestions were that Burton be a middle school, with one Grades 6/7 class and one teacher. Adam said this suggestion "came to our table a couple of days ago" and that the board would consider it. Another suggestion was to run a special education program out of the school.

To accommodate the 12 current BES students at NES next year, a potential configuration for NES would be to have 10.5 classes, with 20 students in the smallest class (K) and 27 in the largest (Grade 6), with a total of 258 students in the school. The handout prepared by the board states, "The BES students can be easily accommodated at NES in good size classes."

However, it came out at the meeting that there are indeed space issues at Nakusp Elementary — not for classroom space, but for special needs programs. The board is planning to move a portable from Glenbank onto NES property to create more space for Special Education Assistants to work with individual students and small groups. Posnikoff said that the portable would probably only be needed for two years.

A number of people expressed that it would be a shame to close the newest school in the district, and a building that was so important to the community. A woman who volunteers in the school's library pointed out that if the school closed, there would be no library in the community. Another said there would be no Southern zone basketball players if the school closed. A woman who has taught in the district for 30 years said she knew the value of smaller classes. Adam responded, "I truly wish we had the money to run small classes."

Hilton mentioned that Glenbank School was for sale, and that he would not support the same fate for Burton School if it closed. He said he would prefer to see a community group form to use the school at no cost to the district, as in Fauquier.

One person wanted to know why we would accept the government's funding formula. Adam said that as trustees, board members lobby the government for more money per pupil and "make sure that the money the district gets is spent properly and in the students' best interest." Andy Cruden, CUPE employee in the district, reminded that there were two ways we could influence the situation — through the government we elect and our MLA, and through our trustees.

A BES student had the last comment of the evening: "This is the best school I ever went to and if you close it, I will have to home school," she said.

Human error to blame for Poznikoff incident

by Jan McMurray

NEW DENVER—The Interior Health Authority has done a full investigation into the incident at the Slocan Community Health Centre Pavilion where John Poznikoff wandered off from the facility in the late night of April 22. His body was found floating in the lake near the Pavilion at about 7:15 the next morning.

"We found that human error and poor judgement around patient safety issues were the primary factors," said Carol Markowsky, Chief Operating Officer, Kootenay-Boundary Health Service Area. "We determined in the investigation that policies and procedures around checking the doors and alarms were not properly followed and implemented."

The investigation revealed that the magnetic lock on one exterior door was disarmed and the alarm system disabled.

"Given the seriousness of the outcome, appropriate disciplinary actions have been taken," she said, but would not give details, as "human resource issues and discplinary actions are confidential."

She said that Diane Gagnon, Community Administrator who oversees the site (as well as the Kaslo and Nelson sites), will assume all management responsibilities "in the meantime."

She added that the full set of recommendations coming out of the investigation will go out to all Interior Health residential care facilities.

"I'd like to apologize to Poznikoff family who have had to endure this tragic incident and the loss of their family member, Mr. John Poznikoff," she said.

"This was a very unfortunate event."

Peterson goes to bat for Summit Lake Ski Hill

by Jan McMurray

Area K Director Paul Peterson attended Silverton, New Denver and Nakusp councils to ask them to support his Summit Lake Ski Hill proposal. He wants RDCK to raise $20,000 in taxation to go towards the ski hill's operating costs. Area H Director Don Munro, New Denver and Nakusp have agreed to support it and Silverton has tabled it until its next meeting.

"I think everybody knows that the ski hill is in a little bit of trouble," he said. "I have four sons and two stepdaughters that learned to ski there and I'm sure that speaks for a lot of families, so I'm trying to raise $20,000 from Enterprise Creek to Edgewood. That's less than $5 per $100,000 property value. And that won't quite cover the cost of their insurance."

He explained that if RDCK agreed to move forward with the proposal, the next step would be to advertise the proposed taxation bylaw and invite the public to submit comments. If 10% of any constituency signed a counter-petition against the taxation, it would have to go to referendum.

"The only objection people might have is that the hill has had two bad seasons weather-wise," he said, "but I don't think two years is enough time to know that."

He also explained that the tax would not continue if the ski hill shut down.

"All five constituencies (Area H, Area K, Nakusp, New Denver and Silverton) have to be in or else someone doesn't pay, but benefits," he said. "I hope there is no counter petition — I don't want it to go to referendum."

Church used to dry and trim marijuana

by Jan McMurray

When members of the United Church congregation Theresa Gerow and Agnes Emary entered Zion United Church in Silverton early on the afternoon of Wednesday, May 17, they were more than a little surprised at what they discovered. The place was littered with marijuana.

The RCMP were called in and Cst. Scott Rennie attended. The RCMP press release says, "Culprits had gained entry to the building and used it to process and dry their marihuana harvest."

"This was a first for me," commented Rennie.

Church service took place on Sunday as usual. No one from the church had been to the building between Sunday afternoon and Wednesday afternoon.

On Wednesday, three women from the congregation had planned to do some church business in the building, but instead had to clean up after the intruders.

Wayne Gerow from the church went to the building Thursday morning and discovered that the culprits had probably first entered through the bathroom window. There was a piece of plywood set up as a ramp to get them within reach of the window, and a puncture hole in the screen where they had pried it open.

He said they managed to light one of the oil space heaters, after loosening some fittings on the unit, causing oil to be spilled on the floor.

"They made themselves quite at home," he reported. "There were butts on the table, and the remains of a half gallon bottle of wine — they used the chalice to drink out of."

He said that Rennie had pointed out that most of the 'bud' had been trimmed off the plants.

"Although there is a humourous side to this story, the act was invasive and a fire could have been started," he said.

Someone broke into Zion United Church in Silverton to dry their pot.

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Voices from the Valleys

Freedom of speech valued

It is really sad when you attend a meeting in your community and have a couple of people get into a harangue over a published letter.

Does not Canada's Bill of Rights protect Freedom of Speech and Press?

Sometimes letters of criticism can be a wake-up call to realize that you have messed up.

Helen Woolgar
Kaslo

What are we fighting for?

"... Oh, it's One, Two, Three: What are we fighting for? Don't ask me, I don't give a damn! Next stop ..." -- Country Joe and the Fish

Southeastern Afghanistan is resplendent when opium poppies bloom. Poppies... The "international narco-drug trade" has been a source of local income for millennia. Wars are often fought for control of these valuable, medicinal poppies. Brits might remember the Opium Wars. Modern War Lords built substantial, deadly guerilla armies, controlling vast expanses of flickering poppies and supplying work and income for the impoverished farmers. Basic Capitalism 101: demand drives suppliers who order from growers who harvest poppies. Hundreds of millions of dollars spent on an ineffective US charade of "eradicating" the multi-billion dollar uncontrolled, underground drug trade, pushed the price of poppies to all time highs. The US Government wages its bogus Wars on Drugs, Terrorism, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran but other, covert, deadly interventions too numerous to mention, both domestically and internationally, are fuelled by the profits of narcotics trade. Covert funds generated for illegal, diabolical, covert American activities worldwide. This is what Stephen Harper, Chickenhawk PM, Grand Commander of Canadian Forces, Bush butt kisser, has sent Canadians to Afghanistan to protect for the USA.

Enthusiastically endorsed by Stephen Harper, Canadian Forces new role in Afghanistan is not Canadian "aw-shucks" peace-keeping, but offensive US Neo-Con styled "peace-making". Americans call the Colt 45 pistol the Peacemaker. When NATO takes over the never-ending Afghani battle, Canada will fight on and on. Understand the difference: Canadian Forces are actively seeking out and killing Afghani men, women and children, freeing up US and British troops, who have been killing Afghani men, women and children, so they can redeploy to their new Iraqi oil fields and pipelines, to kill, imprison and torture Iraqi men, women and children by the tens of thousands while Canadian troops kill the so-called Taliban, protect the poppy War Lords, capture figureheads, who are turned over to be tortured, and search for Osama bin Laden. Remember Osama? Did I mention Afghanistan is on the other side of Iran from Iraq like the jaws of a vice?

Stephen Harper involves us directly in the American War in Iraq, sets Canada up as a stooge for an American War with Iran and diverts Canadian resources to bullets and bombs instead of humanitarian assistance like water purification systems, electricity, medical services, construction, health and educational needs. Every day this folly continues, with each young Canadian body returned dead, broken or mentally shattered for life, with every Afghani killed, maimed or tortured, Canada becomes more aligned with US foreign policy and we are less secure abroad and at home. Why does Stephen Harper want to destroy Canada's peace-keeping reputation in the World arena to support America's insupportable wars of occupation? For what gain, Mr Harper? For what reason?

Canadians demand a clear answer, they want you to "give a damn" and tell us "what we are fighting for?"

Joel Harris
Passmore, BC

MP votes against extension in Afghanistan

As the federal representative for the BC Southern Interior I voted against the motion to extend Canada's military mission in Afghanistan until February 2009 because I believe it is the wrong mission statement for Canada.

The gunshot debate in Parliament was a clear example of Stephen Harper's back door methods of supporting the American led insurgence into Afghanistan. This in no way reflects the peace-making values that Canadians want to see our forces undertake on the world stage. I could not in good conscience support a motion that ties our Canadian foreign aid to such an ill conceived war making agenda.

It is quite clear that Harper's Conservatives are not interested in due diligence. They are only interested in dragging us further into a US-style combat role and away from a fundamental peacekeeping role. Afghanistan has seen numerous invading armies come and go throughout her ravaged history. Mughal rulers of South Asia, Russian Tsars, Soviet Armies and the British Empire have all suffered humiliating defeats in this strategically important country. Most recently we have witnessed the rise and fall of the Taliban and an invasion by a US led coalition many of whom are no longer making new commitments to this mission.

After six hours of debate the Conservatives emulated the Liberals before them and refused to answer any questions put forward by the opposition such as what the chain of command and control will be, how Canadian troops may define success at the end of the mission or what the exit strategy will be. Many Canadians have written me wanting answers and it is my duty as their elected representative to get them those answers. As any soldier knows, time spent on reconnaissance is never wasted.

If there is to be peace and security in this region then clearly the United Nations need to commit to and develop a comprehensive peace plan that is based on a defensive rather than an offensive military role.

I am afraid that May 17, 2006 will go down in history as a tragic day for Canadians and all those seeking peace in these troubled times.

Alex Atamanenko, MP
BC Southern Interior

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*.

Let's build a skating rink

This letter is in response to the May 10 article/update on the state of affairs of the different groups involved in the potential construction of a skating rink in the mid-Slocan Valley. The opening line of that article read, "The concept of a mid-Slocan Valley ice arena isn't dead." This concept will never be dead, as long as there are people living in the valley who would like to have a recreational facility for themselves and their families to use.

Councillor John Gates (Slocan) was quoted in the article as having "expressed concern that the society seemed to be pressing for 'the full meal deal'- a regulation-sized rink complete with change rooms that would be difficult for a community of Slocan's size to support financially." Indeed. This is why the Slocan Valley Community Complex Society questionnaire was mailed out to all residences from Hills to the Junction area. This is a Slocan Valley project, and it will require the support, (financially and otherwise) and the patronage of the population of the entire valley.

The reason the facility would be located in Slocan is that it is central within the valley. Located farther north or south, the arena would become secondary to other facilities in Nakusp or Nelson and Castlegar.

Certainly the society is hoping to construct a regulation-sized rink. Other small communities in BC and abroad have managed to do so. The primary objective of the questionnaire is to determine whether sufficient support exists to construct such a facility here.

The SVCC Society gave Paul Hughes the floor at a recent meeting, and as he gave his presentation, two important points became clear. First of all, it is a very well thought out plan for a facility that could be successfully constructed in the valley. The second point that must be made, however, is that it is a plan for a 'micro-rink.' Such a facility would preclude usage by several important user groups, the most obvious being adults. I give credit to Paul that his plan did accommodate potential additions in the future, and many people at the meeting agreed that it was an excellent 'plan B.' However, many of us still are actively working towards constructing and successfully operating a full sized ice rink in the valley. We look to small communities like Lac La Hache, Chase, and 100 Mile House for ideas and inspiration.

I believe the most important thing for valley residents to remember is that in each instance that a small community has succeeded in building these sorts of facilities, there has been a great deal of support, cooperation and dedication from the members of those communities. Mr. Hughes used the cliche: "if you build it, they'll come." I prefer, "Come, let's get together and build it."

Darcy Repen
Slocan

Proposed small hydro projects are a huge giveaway

British Columbians should be alarmed about the blatant giveaway of our water resources and the privatization of our electricity grid in the guise of so-called "green" micro-hydro. The run-of-the-river hydro projects proposed for the Duncan Valley's Glacier, Howser and East Creeks are part of a gold rush of 469 applications about to receive approval by the BC government. A call for proposals by BC Hydro lists 572 streams and rivers throughout the province as potential sites for micro hydro projects. Nearly 125 of them are in the East and West Kootenays, many of them sensitive habitat for our native bull trout.

Yes, hydroelectric power is renewable energy. However, the environmental cost is being glossed over in the rush to get independent power producers into business. As yet no studies exist to demonstrate the cumulative effects of micro hydro systems on hundreds of streams and rivers across the province. The Campbell government's slashing of civil service staff in recent years will leave far too few people on the ground for objective monitoring of these projects.

What kind of impacts will Glacier Power BC's hydro projects have on the bull trout populations of Howser, Glacier and East Creek? This species, which is native to the Columbia River and its tributaries, has already been placed on the 'threatened' list downstream in the US. According to biologist James C. Bergdahl in his 1998 study of bull trout in southeastern BC, a scientifically sound approach would be to 'entirely protect' the remaining habitat. Some research shows a 2-3% increase in water temperatures from micro hydro systems, which can use up to 80% of the available flow of water from a creek's ecosystem. Yet Bergdahl warns that "any activity that results in significant modification of stream channel stability, substrate composition, instream or streamside cover, water temperature, (etc.)should be considered a threat."

And why is the power pole line being routed to the BC Hydro substation at Invermere, crossing the Jumbo Pass via an underground line? It's fine for Glacier Power BC to say they won't be selling directly to the Jumbo Glacier Resort. Of course not — under the terms of their contract, they can only sell power to BC Hydro. But you don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out that once the power infrastructure is there, conveniently linked to the East Kootenays, BC Hydro could sell that power as a third party to the Jumbo resort.

Let's not forget that a mere 50 years ago, many of the Kootenay's finest wild rivers were dammed, creating huge environmental damage in order to build hydro generating facilities that were mostly for the benefit of the United States. We don't need private developers controlling the last wild creeks for their own profit. Let's recognize that protecting the last remaining creek drainages for fisheries and wildlife and future generations, wild and free, is the most important legacy we can leave for our children.

Colleen McCrory
New Denver
Valhalla Wilderness Watch

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Slocan Council, May 10: Budget issues dominate question period

by Don Currie

•The draft budget was presented at a public meeting May 5. Total 2006 revenue showed as $959,926, but an $11,000 addition error was pointed out, making the revenue $970,926.

During the May 10 council meeting question period, Len Mortensen, pointing to this discrepancy, proposed the $11,000 be used to reduce residential taxes. He said the 13% residential tax increase could be reduced by 2.3% this way.

Budget figures showed residential tax revenues of $37,828 on a total assessment of $11,462,600. This is about a 15% increase in overall residential tax revenue over last year. Councillor Ellis said the tax on residences had gone up because of increased property assessments, over which council had no control. She said the mill rate ($3.30 per $1,000 assessment) had been set lower than the previous year.

Administrator Ludlow proposed the $11,000 be used instead to reduce the transfer of funds from surplus. The budget showed a $198,320 transfer from Village reserves and surplus.

Council projected total business revenues at $154,322 with the largest amount, $142,915, coming from the assessment of Springer Creek Mill property. Total tax revenue is projected at $212,675.

John Sarjeant wanted to know why the five-year financial plan showed a drop in total taxes from $210,675 for 2006 to $188,600 in 2007 and then carried forward to 2010.

Administrator Ludlow said lower taxes could be projected for future years because council anticipated increased revenues from the Wellness Centre and increased grants from the provincial government. She circulated a letter from the Province which stated, "The total value of the Small Community Protection grant program will be doubling over the next four years."

After questions and discussion, council gave three readings to the budget and taxation bylaws.

•Council ratified grants from the Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiatives funds of $500 to Mother Goose Day Care, $500 to the Fred Fraser Garden Project and $1000 to assist with furnishings to the new firehall. Councillor Perriere moved a motion that council apply for funding to proceed with the Overall Community Plan.

•John Gates, reporting on RDCK, said that water users may soon have to pay for water on a full cost recovery basis. This could impact residents of Brandon if current studies require upgrades to their water system. The Village of Slocan budgeted $54,746 to operate the water plant and maintain the water delivery system in 2006. All Village water revenue will be derived from water user fees. Council rescinded water frontage tax last year.

•Councillor Ellis reported back on the Slocan Integral Forestry Cooperative's concerns about Springer Creek Forest Products Ltd. management practices regarding the Community Forest Plan. Councillor Ellis said that follow-up meetings had addressed all issues among all owner groups and the meetings had gone well. A meeting with the IWA was planned and "all hurdles have been crossed and everyone seems to be happy."

•John Patterson's request for a variance to proceed with renovations to his property sparked a discussion on the process of obtaining variances. Administrator Ludlow said council had no variance board but was empowered to establish one with three members from the community who were "impartial and understood the Village bylaw." Mayor Van Bynen said he had drawn up a list of five names for council to consider. The board of variance, according to Van Bynen, would have "absolute" power to determine the granting of variances and would put council at arms length from variance issues. Ludlow explained that until a board was appointed council was empowered to decide on variances.

She said that residents must apply for a variance before proceeding with construction. If hardship can be proven, the variance is usually granted. If a structure is built before a request for a variance and the structure violates Village building regulations, it must be removed and a new application made.

Patterson had not started construction and had applied for a variance. Council decided to visit the Patterson residence and view the situation first hand.

•Council received a petition signed by residents including Mayor Van Bynen and Councillor Perriere who live on or near Dick Avenue, objecting to an alleged suggestion by council that Dick Ave. be opened to through vehicle traffic. The mayor said it was all a mistake arising from a rumour that Dick Ave. was being considered as a route to re-direct traffic from Arlington St. Council will advise the petitioners that no proposal to open Dick Ave is being considered.

•Works foreman Jerry Simmons reported that BC Dock will install the anchoring center block at the new boat ramp on May 18. The ramp itself was finished and is considered 'first class.' A steel floating breakwater from O'Brien's Repair Shop in Nakusp will be ready early June. Two 80-foot sections with a 40-foot walkway for access from shore will be assembled using the Village crew and local welders. Decking will be supplied from salvaged trees from the RV park and cemetery. The foreman said clean up week was "a huge success."

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)

In honour of the Valhalla Community Choir's 20 years

To mark the Valhalla Community Choir's 20th year, conductor Francie Oldham shares some reminiscing with us:

It was one of those beautiful sunny days while driving down the Slocan Valley on my way to Nelson, the Hallelujah Chorus blasting away in the background, singing at the top of my voice (because no one can hear you in the car), that the idea of a choir came to me. I started thinking about all the musical talent we have in the valley and thought we could sing this. My idea really was to just sing the Hallelujah Chorus, but one thing led to another and the Valhalla Community Choir was born.

It would be fair to say that I knew nothing about choirs. I had never sung in one and I had certainly never directed one. I have to thank my mother for my love of singing and of music.

Our first practice was in the fall of 1986, rehearsing in the Activity Room at the New Denver Pavilion. Finding music we could sing was a bit tricky. It had to be what I call "good" music, and it had to be in two parts or maximum three parts for us to be able to manage. Just trying to learn our parts that year was a challenge and putting it all together even more so. Our first Christmas concert was held in the Lucerne School gym, and we even managed to sing the Hallelujah Chorus in three parts.

Over the years the choir's numbers have gone up and down but seem to stay fairly constant in the range of 30-36. Christmas 2005 still saw us with four of the original choir members who joined the choir in 1986. Our wonderful piano player has been with us for 15 years.

Thinking back through the years brings a smile to my face. I remember our first concert. I was so nervous about standing up and conducting in front of the choir that Donna Jean Wright (bless her heart) agreed to conduct with me. Can you believe it? We all stood in a semi-circle with Donna and I on either end, facing each other, directing. Amazing!

Then there were concerts where complete lines were left out, the choir didn't come in when it was supposed to, the tenors missed a whole line in a song — you know, just little things. But to our credit, we have learned to just keep on singing, not to turn our heads and look at the person next to us in horror, cringe, or let the audience know that the way we sung it wasn't the way it was written.

Yet, through all these years we have come together to form the most wonderful group of people I have ever had to work with. The joy of making music together is something I will always treasure.

The Valhalla Community Choir recently hosted three other local choirs in 'A Spring Sing.'

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

THANK YOU

The local state of emergency in the Passmore area has triggered the first real test of the Regional District of Central Kootenay's young emergency services program.

Right now, we are hopeful that people will be kept safe and that flood damage to property will be minimal.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the local residents who gave up a lot of time over the long weekend to help fill sandbags and build dykes in flooded areas. Your concern and hard work shows that we have a strong community that is as willing and ready as human beings can be to work together in a crisis situation.

I would also recognize and thank the members of the following agencies:

Emergency Social Services
Search and Rescue – Castlegar, New Denver, Rossland, Beaver Valley, Nelson & Nakusp
Swiftwater Rescue Crews
Passmore Fire Department with Mutual Aid support from RDCK regional fire departments.

A special thank you to the RDCK's Emergency Services Coordinators and the staff from the RDCK's Nelson office who have manned the Emergency Operations Centre and coordinated the special efforts of highway maintenance contractor YRB crews, volunteers, medical and police units, and the Provincial EOC.

On behalf of the Board of the Regional District of Central Kootenay, I thank you all.

Sincerely,
Gary Wright, Board Chair
Regional District of Central Kootenay

Art in the Park returns to Winlaw on Sunday, May 28

submitted

On Sunday, May 28, the 5th Annual Art in the Park takes place at the Winlaw Regional and Nature Park from noon to 4 pm. It's a unique afternoon that brings together artists and entertainers in a beautiful outdoor setting on the banks of the Slocan River.

Soccer in the lower Slocan Valley is in full stride these days. Over 160 players on 15 teams ranging in age from 4 to 13 years are playing on soccer pitches from Bonnington to the Village of Slocan. It's the largest participation level ever for this popular spring activity. Slocan Valley Rec guy and head referee, Craig Lawrence can be found blowing his whistle just about everywhere in the valley at this Slocan Valley Recreation sponsored program.

Spend a Sunday afternoon wandering through the park enjoying the work of several local artists. These artists use materials as varied as clay, metal work, watercolour and oil paint, as well as mixed media and other creative forms.

Many artists will be painting on site, a forger will be crafting metal and there may be an interactive art opportunity for the kids to participate in. As well there'll be an entertaining blend of local musical offerings including the first collective performance of the valley women's drumming circle. Karin's Pastry will once again be offering a selection of her delectable desserts and refreshments to help accent a perfect day. It's an event that all ages can come out and enjoy.

To get to the Winlaw Regional and Nature Park, cross onto the Slocan River backroad at the Winlaw Bridge and turn right. The park is located about 1 km north of the bridge. Signs will be posted to help the hopelessly lost find their way. Support for this event has been provided by the Slocan Valley Arts Council and the Slocan Valley Recreation Commission. For more information phone 226-7925 or 226-0008.

Celebrate Frog Mountain with a day of art and stories

submitted

It's all in how you see it! Frog Peak Mountain, the well-known Slocan Valley landmark will be the focus of an exciting day of painting and learning on Saturday, May 27 beginning at 10 am. It doesn't matter if you're a dedicated artist or a casual sketcher, everyone is invited to render their own unique interpretation of how Frog Peak looks to them, in the media that suits them best.

Interested participants will meet at Barbara Wilson's studio in Winlaw at the beginning of the day. Over a cup of coffee, they'll gather a potential list of locations where they can view Frog Peak in all its glory. Join them and spend the day at one location, or hop around between several sites. It's a self directed exploration.

In mid-afternoon (3 pm.), everyone will return to the studio, where there will be an opportunity to share what's been created. As well, Marilyn James will be on hand to share legends and stories surrounding Frog Peak. Everyone in the community is invited to come and view the art and learn some local history over a cup of tea.

Artists will also have the option to display their work the next day at the 5th Annual Art in the Park event which takes place at the Winlaw & Regional Nature Park. This event is sponsored by Slocan Valley Recreation. For more information, contact them at 226-0008

MSS
Springer Creek Forest Products Ltd.

Students, staff and parents of the Mount Sentinel Forestry class would like to thank Springer Creek Forest Products for their continued financial and technical support. The Forestry program enables students to acquire an overview of the forestry sciences while recieving an exposure to exciting forestry careers through participation in actual forestry work projects.

The Mount Sentinel Forestry Program is an example of Industry and Education forming successful partnerships that shape our communities in which we live.

Fine Art is focus at Winlaw School

submitted

Fine arts are playing a big role at Winlaw Elementary School this year. The two school goals this year are improving literacy and fine arts achievement. Winlaw is the only school in School District No. 8 that has a fine arts goal.

During the past year, Winlaw School has been working on a project called Visual Thinking. The project combines our two school goals of literacy and fine arts. Focusing on imagery is a powerful tool in both literature and visual arts. Our students have been working with local artist Ron Mulvey, who has used a variety of techniques and media to explore images with the students.

Using Smart Learning strategies, teachers and students work towards an in-depth understanding of a children's book, focusing on mental imagery. Students record their images in writing.

Mulvey then helps students record their images visually through sketching and painting focusing on techniques such as using light and shadow; positive and negative space and colour.

If you visit a classroom when Mulvey is working with students, you will see a group of enthusiastic, highly motivated learners.

The project has been generously supported by a $2,000 grant from ArtStarts in Schools. The grant has helped to pay the artist for his teaching time and to provide art supplies for the students' artwork.

During the past week Winlaw students have been exploring theatre arts.

Aboriginal education was combined with this project — Earth, Air, Fire and Water: Our Legends. For theatrical expertise, we engaged Trickster Theatre, a group from Calgary well known for its fine work in schools.

The company of two have helped Winlaw School's young actors develop plays using improvisation, theatre games and the students' wonderful imaginations. During the course of one week the students wrote and produced the work, then presented it to the community on Friday.

What a fantastic week it has been at Winlaw Elementary! Thanks to the Trickster team and to all the parent volunteers, students and staff for a fine piece of teamwork.

On May 11, Winlaw Elementary school students participated in fundraising for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. The students practiced skip rope jumping for three weeks prior to the 'Jump Off.' As well as benefiting from the physical activities, the students raised a whopping $3072! This is the school's third year fundraising for this worthy cause. Congratulations to all the participants and a huge thanks to the community for the generous donations.

Silverton council, May 9: Trial of tent sites in day park to go ahead

by Jan McMurray

•Council passed a motion to prepare and make available five tent sites in the wooded creekside area of the day park on a trial basis for one season.

•The tax rate and five year financial plan bylaws were given three readings, and final adoption at a special meeting May 11. The residential tax rate is $3.92 per $1,000 taxable value; the business rate is $6.40. The residential rate has decreased slightly from last year, but property assessments have markedly increased. The business rate has increased slightly to cover the $2,000 annual cost of fire inspections, previously covered by the Province.

Highlights of the budget are that one computer lease expires at the end of 2006; $5,600 has been set aside to start up a general reserve fund; and all the gas tax money for the next five years has been allocated to the water system. Improvements to the water system are anticipated because of problems associated with the old system not being totally decommissioned.

•Public Works foreman Leonard Casley reported that they had completed the turn-around at the end of Victoria Street and had managed to keep it on Village property. He also said he had started removing trees at the campground at the request of BC Hydro, and noticed three or four birch trees that would probably need to come down.

•Mayor Everett reported that the Red Mountain Internet Society project was moving forward, although with difficulty. He will sit on the board of directors as a Village representative.

•Council passed the Facilities and Recreation Committee's recommendations. The campground and overflow campground policies will be revised to clarify rules around reservations, and that the campground attendant will be available from 8 am-10 am and 4 pm-7 pm. Also, doggy bag dispensers will be installed at the day park, Dewis Park, the main campground and downtown near the the bulletin board.

•Council also decided to act on Councillor Griffith's suggestion to send an emergency preparedness checklist out to all mailboxes in Silverton as part of Emergency Preparedness Week.

•The Village will provide the New Denver May Day Committee with a $40 grant-in-aid to go toward the cost of the silver trays given to the Citizens of the Year.

•Silverton will recommend to the RDCK the following projects for CBT Community Initiatives funding: Valhalla Summer School of Fine Arts Society for its scholarship fund ($200); Silverton Historical Society for its archival preservation project ($200); Healthy Housing Committee for its needs assessment ($100); Slocan Lake Gallery for the Christmas by the Lake project ($100); Heritage Federation of SE BC for a group marketing effort ($100); LESS PAC for the large outdoor chess project in New Denver ($100).

Let's go camping!!

Terra Cotta Citronella Gift Set
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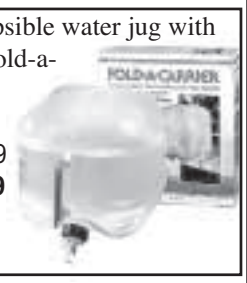

Coleman Polylite 3.7 l w/spout, water jug
Reg. $17.99
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New Denver council, May 9: Budget and tax rates set

by Leah Main

•The Five Year Financial Plan (Bylaw No. 599) received three readings, and was adopted at a special meeting May 11.

Budgetted for this year is $60,000, to be taken out of the water reserve fund, to purchase a new backhoe. The current backhoe was bought in 1974 when the water system was installed, and is used mostly to maintain the water system.

Council has also budgetted $5,500 to bring underground power to "the rock" at the top of the main street. Of this, $5,000 would be from a BC Hydro grant. The waterfall effect is currently powered by the nearby building through an agreement with the building's owner. The Village would prefer to provide the power itself, in case the building sells and the new owner is not interested in continuing with the agreement.

Another project council is considering for 2006 is to apply for a 2010 matching grant for a big screen TV and sound system for Knox Hall. The plan would be to transfer $10,000 into the budget from reserves, and to apply for $10,000 from the 2010 program to fund the project.

•Tax Rates Bylaw No. 600 received three readings, and was adopted at a special meeting May 11. The residential rate is 3.0667 per $1000 assessment; the business rate is 6.1334.

Municipal taxes are up 8% overall, which translates into about $9,000 more than last year that the Village will collect from its residents. About half of this is to cover salaries and operating costs. The other half is to cover costs associated with the new fire service contract, which are higher in the first year. The contract, however, saves money for New Denver — without it, the Village would have to start saving for a new fire engine.

Administrator Carol Gordon explained that because the homeowner grant has been increased by $100 this year, the 8% increase will probably not make much of a difference for those with lower assessed homes.

•The OCP, Zoning and Permit Procedures Amendment Bylaw No. 602 received three readings, and final adoption on May 11. This bylaw creates the procedure, fees and forms for application for temporary commercial or industrial permits. A temporary commercial or industrial permit can be issued for a non-renewable six-month term at a cost of $500 per individual property.

•John Powers, owner of the Copeland building, attended, representing both himself and David Harley of Valhalla Pure. The two would like to purchase the 30-foot lane allowance between their properties down at the end of the main street. Council voted to begin the process.

The first step will be for Powers and Harley is to sign a consent form for the lane to be stopped up and closed. Then council would set a purchase price. If agreeable, a bylaw to close the lane would be drafted, with Powers and Harley responsibile for all the costs involved in the lane closure and sale.

•Councillor Bunka, New Denver Emergency Services Co-ordinator, brought her concern around ongoing training resources to council's attention. RDCK Emergency Planning Service meets regularly; however, New Denver is not part of this service, and Councillor Bunka is therefore not formally included in the meetings. Council voted to have Mayor Wright ask RDCK to allow our co-ordinator to attend these training exercises and planning meetings, and to report back to council on the reply.

•Councillor Greensword submitted a letter on behalf of a constituent. The letter presents concerns about the United Church on 7th Ave, which appears to now be operating as a hall, counter to Village zoning regulations. A letter will be sent to the congregation asking for its response to these concerns.

•Rental rates for Knox Hall were raised, effective June 1, to: $20 per hour; $60 per half-day; $90 per full-day; $300 annual fee.

•Council considered applications for Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiatives funding, and will recommend the following for approval by RDCK: Community Outdoor Chess Project, Phase 2, $900; VSSM Local Student Scholarships, $300; Silvery Slocan Heritage Society's Lancet (the boat Dr Brouse built in the attic of old hospital) restoration project, $450; Heritage Federation of Southeastern BC—Heritage Profile Pages, Kootenay Rockies Heritage and Culture Guide, $250.

Streamkeepers say: "Plant trees!"

submitted

The Streamkeepers started the year off with good news — the count of spawning rainbow trout and their redds (fish nests) are up from last year. This is tempered by the fact that overall, counts of fish in the river remain low, except for a few prime habitat sections.

The Streamkeepers' annual snorkel float to count spawning fish took place at the lower bridge below Slocan. Spawning occurs at other sites, but the majority of fish return to a relatively short section of river just above the bridge.

On the day of the swim, the first temperature sensor of the season was installed. Eventually, five will be installed at locations on the main river and on the Little Slocan. The sensors take hourly temperature readings. 2006 marks the fourth year this valuable data will be collected.

As everyone who swims in the river knows, the Slocan is delightfully warm in summer. This is not great for fish or any aquatic life — and local air temperature trends are going up. Global warming is a reality that we are seeing in the Slocan Valley.

The Streamkeepers' response and suggestion to everyone is: Plant Trees! Plant them especially beside the river, but anywhere on the riparian will help. Trees will help regulate water levels and begin restoring those large logs needed to make the Slocan a healthy river.

The Streamkeepers are fortunate to work with Columbia Power Corporation in its Riparian Restoration Program. The program provides funding to landowners living by the river. The funds go towards fencing, planting trees and restoring riverbanks.

Streamkeepers participate in the program by helping landowners with proposals. The first project for the year was located at Gary and Heather Burns' ranch. Here, over 90 trees were planted and fenced. The Burns' land is located just downstream from the spawning beds, near critical fish habitat.

Anyone interested in Streamkeeper activities, becoming a member or planting a tree, call Jen at 226-7339.

One project that received funding from the Slocan River Riparian Restoration program this year was the Mt. Sentinel grad class tree planting initiative. The students planted 500 trees at Passmore Slide and at two places along the Slocan Valley Rail Trail.

Slocan River riparian restoration projects approved for 2006

submitted

The Slocan River Riparian Restoration Program will see 12 new riparian (riverbank) restoration projects completed this year.

Approved projects range from fencing landowners' property to prevent livestock from damaging the riparian zone, to planting trees as enhancement features to a riparian zone.

The Slocan River Riparian Restoration Program steering committee consists of members of the Slocan River Streamkeepers, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Ministry of Environment, Canadian Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Commission and Columbia Power Corporation representatives. The committee reviewed and evaluated each application by making site visits, where possible, in an effort to ensure the $20,000 provided for this year's program would be most adequately distributed.

Over the next few months landowners along with volunteers, Streamkeeper representatives and others will be working on this year's approved projects. They will also be providing any maintenance and monitoring required on last year's projects. Post-project monitoring is conducted at specific intervals to determine the success of the program and to adjust techniques as required. Signage will be installed in areas where riparian restoration projects are completed so that the public will be able to identify and, where possible, view this restoration.

For more information on the Slocan River Riparian Restoration Program or the Slocan River Rainbow Trout Enhancement Project, visit Columbia Power Corporation's website at www.columbiapower.org or contact Llewellyn Matthews or Audrey Repin at 250-365-8585.

Red Mountain Internet Society

needs to know the number of people interested in high speed internet.

There will be two sign up sheets: **Silverton and Rosebery**. Please advise John at Gaze & Chat at 358-2878 if you are interested.

VILLAGE OF NEW DENVER

PUBLIC NOTICE – INTENT TO GRANT TEMPORARY COMMERCIAL PERMITS

Pursuant to Section 921 (5) and Section 921 (6) of the Local Government Act the public is requested to take notice that the Council of the Village of New Denver intends to give consideration to adopt a resolution to grant 3 Temporary Commercial Permits. Specifics of the permit are as follows:

The purpose of the permits are to allow for the weekly short term rental of residential dwellings.

The lands subject to the proposed permits are Lots 9, 10 and 12, Block 5, Plan 9501, District Lot 432, Kootenay Land District, known as 604, 612, and 616 Eldorado Avenue.

The proposed permits may be inspected at the Village of New Denver municipal office Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., between May 24 – June 8, 2006.

The resolution to grant 3 Temporary Commercial Permits will considered at the June 13, 2006 Regular Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the New Denver Council Chambers.

Carol Gordon, CMC

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New Denver royalty named for 2006

by Jan McMurray

Sawako Yoshida is Miss New Denver 2006, and Panina Ironi is princess. Sawako was also named Miss Congeniality and won the talent award.

Both girls started attending Lucerne this year and have become great friends. Both are very musical, and this is what we saw at the pageant on Thursday, May 19. Panina's talent was singing and Sawako's was piano playing.

Sawako is from Wakayama, Japan and is here on a student visa. Currently in grade 10, she wants to graduate here. Although she sometimes gets homesick, she says she likes the relaxed atmosphere and nice people here. She was also surprised to learn something about her country here in New Denver.

"I didn't know until I came here about the internment. I find it very interesting, and to see Japanese ladies and hear their stories," she said.

Sawako is motivated to go through the program because she is a people person and always likes to try new things. She is looking forward to practising public speaking in English.

Panina, in grade 11, moved here from Castlegar and says she likes the people here, the smaller community and the beautiful area. She is interested in going through this program to learn people skills, public speaking and to see a bit of BC.

Izack Miller is this year's page boy and Destiny Mengler is flower girl.

BIKE RACE PHOTO BY LORALEE BREKKE

There were 23 riders in the 22nd annual bike race from Summit Lake to New Denver. Bill Yearwood placed first overall with a time of 45 minutes 10 seconds, followed by Nicholas Garmulewicz (45:13), Nyree Caton (46:30), Tobias Spindler (46:42) and Alysia Garmulewicz (46:48).

Panina Ironi (left) is New Denver's Princess 2006 and Sawako Yoshida (right) is our Queen.

The Nunn family's float won best overall in the parade.

Shelley Thring's Grades 4/5 class did a fantastic job of the Maypole dance.

Heather Huether is one of our Citizens of the Year, in recognition of her vision to create the Valhalla Summer School of Music.

In the parade, Silverton Mayor John Everett was driving and New Denver Mayor Gary Wright was...trying to escape?!

Gail and Mel Swanson won a Citizens of the Year award. They helped establish the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre and continue to sit on the board of directors. The couple also help to organize all kinds of community events.

Photos from Kaslo May Days

Antique vehicles on Front Street drew appreciative stares on Saturday morning. This 1931 Fire Service truck was no exception.

Brenda Boyko sends Tyann McFall into the drink at the log burling competition at Kaslo's Logger Sports.

The hotsaw competition is a crowd-pleaser.

Kaslo's May Queen, Josée Gagnon; organizer Tammy Grant; Kaslo Princess, Gabby Alpaugh at the May Days festivities.

Tyann McFall chops through a log at Kaslo's Logger Sports.

A large crowd appreciated the spectacle of this mustang burning out its tires during Kaslo's May Days festivities.

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Nakusp council, May 11: 2006 budget and tax rates set

by Jan McMurray

• Hot springs borrowing bylaw (no. 584-1, 2006) was given three readings. This bylaw allows for $610,000 to be transferred to the hot springs reserve account from other municipal reserve accounts in order to complete the renovations required to re-open the facility. The hot springs will repay this loan at 3% interest over 20 years.

The $610,000 will come out of the four Village reserve funds, as follows: $100,000 from the sewer reserve, leaving $166,000 in the sewer fund; $200,000 from the water reserve, leaving $262,000; $210,000 from equipment reserves, leaving $444,000; $100,000 from general reserves, leaving $217,000.

Mayor Hamling reported that no financial assistance was possible for the hot springs, according to the Minister of Community Services Ida Chong, whom she and Councillors Mueller and Roberts met with at the recent meeting of the Association of Kootenay-Boundary Local Governments (AKBLG).

Hamling said she had directed staff to look into Community Bonds as a way to finance the renovations.

Area K Director Paul Peterson announced that he will pay for half the building permit for the hot springs out of his discretionary funds.

•The Hot Springs Standing Committee Bylaw was amended so that the mayor would not necessarily be the chair, and to make the Village treasurer the financial manager of the hot springs.

•The tax rates bylaw (no. 599, 2006) was adopted. The residential rate is $5.1619 per $1,000 taxable value. The business rate is $14.0920. The mill rate has gone down, but assessments have gone up, so the Village will collect 3% ($21,000) more than last year to cover the cost of inflation.

•The financial plan bylaw (no. 598, 2006) was adopted. The hot springs is the big project this year, of course, and $200,000 has been budgeted to complete the first well. For this year, $10,000 is budgeted for consulting fees for the sewer system to determine what work might need to be done there.

•Council received a report from Delterra Engineering Ltd. with an estimated budget for the mechanical/electrical contract for the first well. Chernoff is anxious to get the water flowing from the well before summer, so that problems experienced last year will not be repeated. Delterra's estimate came in at $240,178; the Village had budgeted $200,000 for the project. Council decided to allocate its gas tax money for the project to make up the shortfall, and to have tender documents prepared immediately.

•At AKBLG, Mayor Hamling and Councillors Roberts and Mueller met with BC Hydro officials.regarding the wharf and lake levels.

Hamling reported that after an engineering assessment of the wharf is completed by Wesmar Engineering, BC Hydro will be ready to discuss the wharf with council. Council indicated that it would like to include users of the wharf in the discussions.

Hydro reps also informed the council members that the highest lake level this year will be 1425 feet. Hamling reported that council members objected strongly to the low levels, and lobbied for a yearly, specified minimum level in order to stabilize lake levels. Hydro reps explained that non-treaty storage water allows for the sale of cheaper electricity.

"It appears we are having low reservoir levels so that the rest of the province can have cheaper electricity," states Hamling in her report. "I, as well as the rest of council, believe we should be compensated for this."

•Councillor Mueller reported on a Seniors' Care Society meeting on May 10. She said that the Halcyon Assisted Living project was moving forward.

The Arrowtarians however, are still struggling to find the funding needed to begin Phase 4 of their independent living project.

Renovations allowing for the 10 new beds at Minto House are to be completed by June 2007. Six of the beds will be operational by this date, with four coming online later.

Mueller also reported that the building inspector "came very close to shutting down" the Seniors' Hall because the basement was buckling under too much pressure. Apparently, two posts were removed to make way for the pool table some time ago, and the remaining two posts are not adequate. She said that four posts were being installed immediately, and suggested that the Village review its contract with the Seniors' Society. It was confirmed that structural changes to the building were not allowed under the contract.

•Bob Toews and Corinne Tessier of Affirming Workplace Solutions Inc., who facilitated the hot springs charrette and the May 4 public meeting where results of the charrette were presented, have put forward a proposal to facilitate the Official Community Plan (OCP) process for $17,000.

Councillor Roberts questioned spending that much money to do "nothing that can't be done by us." Councillor Heppner agreed.

Administrator Bob Lafleur relayed his experience in Keremeos where they did an OCP without consultants and "it consumed us." He said that if council was willing to put in the time, he would be able to help facilitate the process. However, he said he thought they would "bog down" because of the existing work load.

Mayor Hamling said she had been through two OCP processes when on council before, and did not have the time or energy to do it this time without help. She felt $17,000 was reasonable, as the Village had paid Urban Systems $30,000 to facilitate the process once before.

Councillor Mueller also was in favour of hiring the pair, thankful that they would do the "grunt work," such as organizing and facilitating meetings, and writing up the minutes.

Roberts said he wanted a more detailed breakdown of the couple's role as facilitators in the process. Lafleur will ask them for this and bring it back to another meeting.

•Council received a letter from a resident with concerns about heavy truck traffic on Government Hill. Superintendent of Operations Jason Chernoff reported that highways are public routes and the Ministry of Transportation cannot restrict anyone from using them. However, Chernoff was to meet with local MoT representative Bruce Lintott the following week.

Corporal Wlodarczak said he had contacted the head office of the Chambers chip truck company, and was told the drivers would be asked not to use the hill. He suggested that council write to the company, as well as other logging truck operators that may use the hill route, asking them to consider that people live along that route. Council decided to act on his suggestion.

•The Village will send a letter of support for a second Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services Skills Link project. Twelve area youth went through the first six-month program, and most are now engaged in a work placement with a local employer. The goal of the program is to assist at risk youth to become employed, self employed, or make the decision to return to school.

•Beth McLeod was selected for the position of Community Co-ordinator. This position will be funded by the Community Tourism funding through the Union of BC Municipalities. Part of her job will be to look at implementing the suggestions made by the "undercover tourist," Roger Brooks, to make the Village more visitor friendly.

•Marilyn Boxwell, Nakusp and District Senior Citizens' Counsellor/Advocate attended as a delegation to ask for council's support in principle for the establishment of seniors' advocacy offices in municipalities across the province. The Seniors' Advocacy Steering Committee, formed by 15 seniors' organizations in BC in 2003, has a long-term goal to secure provincial and federal funding to establish and maintain community-based advocacy offices. Council passed a motion of support in principle for these regional offices.

•Council proclaimed May 21-27 "Child Care Week" in Nakusp. The Stepping Stones Children's Centre will hold its annual Toddle-a-thon on May 23.

•The Village will send a letter of support for Trail's bid to be named "Hockeyville."

Regional park status for Morton's Beach to be investigated

by Jan McMurray

Area K Director Paul Peterson asked the Village of Nakusp to partner with him in an effort to establish Morton's Beach as a regional park. Council voted to support the idea in principle at its May 11 council meeting.

At the meeting, Peterson said he believed the Ministry may be interested in a local solution to the problem, indicating he would like the two local governments to try to acquire the property for $1.

Many local people use the beach, and there has been environmental damage — four-wheel vehicles have disturbed nesting birds and spawning creeks — and some Bayview citizens have been harassed and trespassed upon, reported Peterson.

"The unfortunate part of this problem is that everyone using this area is suspect and that just isn't fair. A few people out of control are causing grief for all. People are getting hurt by association," he said.

Some four beach users and RCMP Corporal Owen Wlodarczak met with Peterson and he said they were willing to be part of solution.

He believes the Province will barricade access to the beach, which has been unsuccessfully tried in the past.

Peterson said BC Hydro expropriated the land from the Morton family because it was sluffing into the lake, and then gave it to BC Parks.

He said there would be meetings with locals, and a Parks Commission would have to be formed. "It will definitely be a community effort," he said.

He also reminded council of a $23,000 "kitty" that both local governments contributed to for a regional park 23 years ago.

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- Miller 175 Wolf pac Honda welder
- (3) Stihl chain saws
- 11 hp portable c/w diesel fired steam cleaner
- Honda EZ 2500 gen set
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- Rad pressure tester
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- 1" electric impact
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- '88 GMC 3500 Crew 454 gas
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- Angle snow blade for 5-ton truck
- Quantity fir 8" x 8" x 14' timbers
- Logging rigging – climbing gear
- 10 bush radios, Midland, TAD, 1 COM
- Steel racks
- Electric hack saw
- Stihl TS 460 cut-off saw
- Stihl FS 86 gas weedeater/saw
- Honda 1-1/2" trash pump
- Quantity truck chains, tarps, straps, wrappers
- Bombardier 4x4 ATV
- Quantity of safety equipment (baskets, spine boards, kits)
- Firefighting equipment (pull 1000 gal. tanks)
- (2) Wajax Mark 3 pumps c/w tanks, hoses, etc.
- Quantity shovels/Pulaski's
- Office equipment: desk, chairs, fax & stuff
- '94 Crew GMC 3500 Diesel
- '94 SLE GMC 2500 Diesel
- '97 F350 Ford shop truck-power stroke (c/w welder & compressor)
- '89 1500 Chev Suburban (350 gas)
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Interested parties can inspect the contract of the Campground, during regular Office hours (8:30 – 4:30, Monday – Friday) at the Village Office (91 1st Street NW).

Closing date for applications is 4 pm, May 29/06.

The VILLAGE OF NAKUSP reserves the right to refuse any or all applications received.

Kootenay cycling guide sure to boost tourism

by Jan McMurray

Kootenay Rockies Tourism has just come out with a great publication called *Bike Vacations*. It features Kaslo/New Denver as a "Kootenay Rockies Cycling Hot Spot" along with Nelson, Revelstoke, Rossland, Fernie, Golden, Invermere and Kimberley /Cranbrook.

The 44-page guide will be distributed in key markets worldwide and is available at Visitor Centres throughout the province. One section of the book outlines riding opportunities, such as freeride/downhill, Rails to Trails, bike parks, and road tours. The other section focuses on each geographic area of the region. It is filled with stunning photography and great articles. The cover dons a beautiful photo of Kootenay Lake from Mt. Buchanan.

"The goal of this publication is to give the reader an informative and entertaining look at the incredible scope of our region's biking product," says the guide publisher, Kootenay Rockies President Chris Dadson. "Our organization identified the significant potential for the cycling sector to impact our tourism industry, and were able to develop this key marketing tool with special funding from the Province."

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• Johnny Tier, Sat. June 18: $15.00
• Club Championship, June 24-25: $15.00
• Club Open, Sat. Aug. 13: $40.00 members / $50 non-members*
• Bushwackers, Sat. Sept. 9: $20.00/couple
• Club Closing, Sat. Sept. 24: $15.00.
(* fee includes dinner)

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• Springer Creek RV Park & Campground (250) 355-2266
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• Nakusp Village Campground (250) 265-1061
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• Silverton Municipal Campground (250) 358-2472
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• Selkirk Inn Ph: 1-800-661-8007 / (250) 265-3666 Fax: (250) 265-4799
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MUSEUMS

• Sandon Museum & Visitors' Centre (250) 358-7920 www.slocanlake.com/sandon
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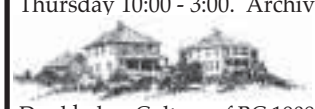
• Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre (250) 358-7288
The only historic site in Canada dedicated to telling the WWII internment story. Located in *The Orchard* in New Denver, open 7-days-a-week 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

• Arrow Lakes Historical Society Ph/Fax: (250) 265-0110 265-3323 alhs@netidea.com
e-mail: alhs@columbiacable.net Location: 92B - 7th Avenue NW (BC Hydro building). Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 - 3:00. Archives and publications. Best source for area history and family research.



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NOTICE TO VALLEY VISITORS:

Stop in at *The Valley Voice* office in New Denver (across from the Credit Union on Main St.) to pick up a copy of *THE SILVERY SLOCAN HERITAGE TOUR GUIDEBOOK*, or a *SANDON PAYSTREAK* newspaper, and maybe even some helpful advice and handy tips about things to do in the area!

Kaslo council, May 9: Plastics recycling bin comes to Kaslo

by Jill Braley

•The financial plan and tax rates bylaws were given three readings. The residential tax rate is $4.052 per $1000 of taxable value; the business rate is 10.94. These mill rates are slightly down, but because of increased property assessments, the Village will collect 8% more in taxes than it did last year.

The budget includes, among other things, $11,200 for a zero turn mower; $50,000 for improvements to the water treatment plant, especially to upgrade monitoring capabilities; $50,000 for paving; and $20,000 for beachfront trail development.

•RDCK has agreed to give Kaslo a recycling bin for plastics. It will be at the recycling depot in the public works yard on May 24. Residents will be able to recycle any rigid plastic food and beverage containers that display a loop with the numbers 1,2,4,5, or 7. Acceptable items include yogurt, margarine, and plastic milk containers, detergent bottles, shampoo and conditioner bottles and plastic drink containers. Residents are encouraged to clean, rinse and flatten any items dropped off. Styrofoam, plastic wrap/bags, electronic equipment, plastic appliances and children's play toys will not be accepted.

•The Earthworkers sent information on its funding sources for the community composting project, as requested by the Village. This was referred to the Public Works committee for information.

A petition objecting to the location of the compost area, signed by several residents of Spruce Avenue (beside the Public Works Yard), was submitted to the Village. Residents complained of problems with rodents, bears and ravens, as well as the dumping of unapproved debris and garbage. They asked council to remove the compost facility from the present location as soon as possible. This was referred to the Public Works Committee for recommendation to council.

•The Kaslo Library advised council that the asbestos flooring materials had been removed and disposed of, and new flooring installed. The library asked the Village to consider cost sharing of the approximately $1800 project. The request was referred to the Community Services Committee for recommendation to council.

•Airpac Diving Services submitted a report on its recent inspection of the sewage outfall line. The company found that there was no flow coming from the four diffusers, so informed Paul Kelly, who is addressing the matter. Also, the pipeline is in a compromised position.

The report was forwarded to the Ministry of Environment for information, and referred to the Public Works committee and to 2007 budget deliberations.

•The RDCK advised council it had received a letter from a resident in the McDonald Creek service area. He is asking for a potential water service connection to an existing residential property for up to four tourist cabins. Council will inform the RDCK that until an agreement is in place between the Village and the RDCK, no response is possible.

•The RDCK will also be informed the South Kaslo Water Study location will not be included within the Village boundaries until inclusion is reflected in Kaslo's OCP, and supply of water outside Village boundaries will only be considered when the municipality is assured there is sufficient water to service all developable properties within its present boundaries.

•The Mayor and CAO signed a lease agreement between the Village and the Kootenay Lake Independent School Society (Periwinkle Daycare) for the Vimy Park Pavilion for a three-year term beginning December 1, 2005 for a monthly cost of $101.00 and $103.03 in the third year.

•Helen Woolgar sent in a letter, making several references to the Community Charter that states members of the public can sit on Village committees. She asked that the Village advertise for any interest from the public. This was referred to the Administration and Finance committee for recommendation to council.

•Pat Mackle wrote to council with various concerns, ie: potholes, picking up of yard waste and hauling it to the gravel pit to be burned at a later date. Public Works will review the matter.

•Public Works will be reviewing the Village policy on donation of equipment time.

•The North Kootenay Lake Community Services requested a 4th Street and Front Street closure on May 30 to celebrate 30 years in the community. Live entertainment, burgers and hot dogs will be served. Council offered the society use of the Vimy Park shelter for this event.

•The Village will proceed with pavement assessment of the airstrip.

•A gate will be installed at the east end of D Avenue, to be closed 9 pm to 7 am daily from May 15 to September 30, during baseball games and tournaments, and 24 hours daily from September 30 to May 15.

•The Kaslo & District Arena Association was granted permission to reduce the front line setback from 24.61 to 7 feet to allow for improvements to the arena lobby and dressing rooms.

•Terry Geche's Development Variance Permit was referred to the Planning & Development committee for recommendation to council. Geche has plans to build a restaurant, attached to her residence. Some neighbours have voiced their concerns, ie: health issues from exhaust, noise, traffic congestion, and parking.

•Eva Bostrand, a voice teacher/choir conductor in Edmonton, approached council for rehearsal space and is interested in the top floor of the Village Hall to run a summer workshop for singers. Bostrand said the acoustics are excellent and there is room for singers to freely move. The Community Services committee will make a recommendation to council.

•Accounts payable of $81,788.35 were approved for payment.

Kaslo's annual May Days Slow-Pitch Tournament was held over the weekend. Results next issue, we hope.

World's longest rummage sale on east shore

Residents along the beautiful eastern shore of Kootenay Lake will be holding the world's largest rummage sale on Sunday, June 4, 10 am-4 pm. This event is being held to draw attention to the night time (8 pm-8 am) closure of the Creston Valley Hospital's emergency room. Over 1,000 residents along Kootenay Lake's East Shore will have to travel 2-3 hours to Cranbrook for night time emergency treatment.

The objectives of this event are twofold. The first is to raise money for additional training and equipment for our emergency responders, so they can keep us alive until we reach Cranbrook. The second objective is to raise hell about the lack of services that should be paid with our tax money.

There will be sales at the following locations (listed from south to north): Wynndel Station, Sirdar General Store, Boswell Hall, Destiny Bay, Lakeview Store, Cedar Grove Campground, Crawford Bay Park, Fairy Treats at the Kootenay Bay Ferry Landing, and Riondel Community Center. Several locations will also have live music, games and food sales.

Come out & raise cain with us on Sunday, June 4 from 10 am-4 pm! For more information, call Nancy Galloway at 250-227-9233 or email wedgwood@netidea.com.

Langham hosts two new exhibits

submitted

Two new exhibitions at the Langham Gallery will be opening on Friday May 26, 7-9 pm, Maggie Finlayson's, "am was" and Nathan Bartley's, "mind in Body in mind".

Finlayson recently completed a diploma in clay at KSA in Nelson. Informed by a previous degree in philosophy and world religion, her work investigates ideas of self and belonging. "am was", her current body of ceramic and mixed media work, explores the fragility and tenuousness of the systems of meaning we create, despite their very real, very solid presence in our lives.

Bartley graduated from the University of Guelph in 1995. He then lived in a Buddhist temple in Japan for a year, studied with a medicine woman in the Yukon, worked on an orphanage in Tanzania, travelled through India, sold didgeridoos around the US, then at thirty decided to start his art career.

The exhibition runs until July 2. Regular gallery hours are Thursday to Sunday, 1-4 pm. Check: www.thelangham.ca for more info.

Kaslo hosts crystal meth forum

submitted

Parents and community members are invited to attend an educational forum on crystal methamphetamines and other street drugs on May 29 at 6:30 pm at JVH Lighthouse Theatre. A forum for students will be held in the afternoon.

Crystal meth, as it is commonly called, has become one of the fastest growing and most devastating drugs to be used by young people in the last decade. It is not thought to be widely used in Kaslo; however, young people may be taking the drug without knowing it, as it is commonly used in another popular drug. Education is key for youth in Kaslo and for those who will be leaving for major centres.

The forum is sponsored by the Village of Kaslo and North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society, which successfully applied for provincial funding under the Community Methamphetamines Response Program.

Area health and social workers will provide information regarding youth drug use in Kaslo and the region. A guest from Vancouver will recount his experience with Crystal Meth and describe a peer support program that is helping youth in Vancouver. The effects of popular drugs will be outlined, as will ways to discuss drug use with youth. A small discussion group break-out session will encourage community members to brainstorm proactive ways to keep Kaslo a healthy place for young people.

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Paid advertisement by Jane Lynch in support of the Valley Voice

Get Outta Town!

with Peter Roulston

Blending bicycles with buses

Last Thursday I was able to combine business with pleasure as I made a trip down the valley to deliver a repaired bike to Slocan Park. My planned van trip down wasn't worthwhile, and I really wanted to do a longer day ride on my own bicycle anyhow. Weather forecasts suggested cooler cloudy conditions after several days of heat.

I rode my bicycle and held the coasting other bike alongside me and got down to Mountainberry store without consequence. The Nakusp to Nelson bus rolled up at 9:15 and I was able to cram the bikes onto the front bus bike rack in moments. I got on the bus to find it really pretty full and found a seat with an old Nakusp neightbour. Virtually any two bicycles can be carried on the bus rack without cost and with complete security.

All the way down to the Slocan Valley, the streams and creeks were raging at full fury. Big rocks clattered down under bridges and the water was the colour of strong coffee with cream. Hot days and warm nights are melting all elevations of the snowpack at an alarming rate. From the Slocan bluffs you could see lots of flotsam and debris out on the lake and also more and more beetle-killed trees over in Valhalla Park. The early cloud cover broke up and it looked like another stinking hot day would ensue.

I jumped out and unloaded the two bikes at Slocan Park Service and left the one, so the guy could get it later on.

After a coffee at the new and improved but still very genuine Cowpuccino Cafe, I began the 65 km ride northward to New Denver. After 200 metres, I stopped in at Valley Spoke to visit Randy and Eric and talk about the valley's rail trail.

Finally enroute at 11:00 am, the sun was in full force and the heat was very real. The ride up the valley is so beautiful and pastoral, and despite the narrow shoulder and odd rough pavement, the ride was fine and traffic passing seemed pretty considerate. My road touring bicycle is one I bought new back in 1982 at a former shop in Kaslo and I still love it after all these years. I find the 700/35 sized tires make life way easier than the very narrow ones that are the roadie's preference. Eighteen gears and drop bars work just fine.

At Winlaw I got a couple of beer from the store and crossed over to the backroad across the river. This ride is even BLISSFULLER than the highway and offered a little more shade. Past the Winlaw Nature Park and 8 km of good pavement, the road crosses my favourite bridge in the whole valley and meets the highway at the Threads Guild beside the rail trail. From there to the Lemon Creek rest area, it was furnace-hot with no wind at all, but I spent some time in the shade there and listened to Lemon Creek thundering down, muddy and dangerous.

Things felt cooler rolling into Slocan City with the lake breezes. After a snack from Eldorado Store, I rode north up to the old highway thru the historic tunnel. This 3 km section of the old Hwy 6 is amazing to experience and easy to get to. Just go past the mill's weigh scales and head up the east shore below the cliffs. Huge fallen boulders have been moved enough to allow cyclists and walkers thru, and the eventual ascent up to the modern highway is a good grade and now quite shady and mossed over.

Nice thing about cycling the bluffs is that you can stop and gawk around easily on either side of the road, whereas in the car you have to go 90 and you really miss a lot. From the bluffs only a few moderate hills remain to be endured. Passing by Enterprise Creek, I had a nice rush of cold outflow wind and stopped to look at the torrent.

Silverton Lookout was quiet and inviting, and after a final siesta, I enjoyed the long coast down to Silverton. The hotel seemed busy, and there were lots of visitors strolling about taking it all in. Shortly after, I pulled into my yard and hit the shower, the lake still too cold for my liking. This tour took several hours and I made the most of it. All you need to do is see, smell, feel, and be on your bike, in the moment. Not much else seems to matter.

Peter Roulston started the Bicycle Hospital near Nakusp in 1992 and now lives in New Denver.

IT'S REALLY ALL QUITE SIMPLE

Modern bicycles can seem too fancy with all the gears, shocks and brake systems.

But the act of riding remains simply even if you don't always use all those new features.

Come by my place to see/talk bikes and for tuneups, repairs, parts and accessories.

It's really pretty simple.

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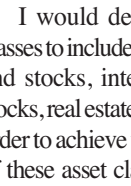
Financial forum



with Debbie Pereversoff

Understanding real estate investing

The basis of financial planning is to develop a well-diversified investment strategy that will help you to achieve your specific goals and objectives. Most investors truly do not understand what "diversification" means.

The average investor thinks that diversification is about owning different types of stocks, bonds or mutual funds that invest in large, medium and small companies and focusing on different management styles (growth vs. value). This represents diversification to a point, but in reality it's about owning different "asset classes".

Asset classes are defined as various categories of investments that are affected differently as economic conditions change. They do not go up or down for the same reasons and are distinctly different from one another.

I would define the major asset classes to include: cash, Canadian bonds and stocks, international bonds and stocks, real estate, and commodities. In order to achieve true diversification, all of these asset classes must be utilized without concentrating too heavily on just one or two.

Some investors who own their own homes may consider it to be the real estate portion of their portfolios. Although a primary residence is considered to be real estate, we typically do not like to include it as part of the overall asset mix for investment purposes. Most people do not use their house as an investment, they use it as a place to live. Therefore, it is their security. An investment is something you benefit from, either via an income stream (like owning a rental property) or speculative property that you buy, hold and sell for a profit some time down the road.

Outright ownership of "investment real estate" is generally very simple. A person can easily gain an understanding of the numbers, including debt services, expenses, income generated, appreciation potential, etc. The potential risks involved can also be easily identified. The downside risk is that considerable time might be required to hold the investment property. If a situation arises where the investor requires immediate cash, it could be very complicated and costly to sell the property. The investors may find themselves in the midst of a real estate downturn and be forced to sell their property at a loss. Another thing to consider when investing in real estate is that the maintenance and management of the property will fall on the owner's shoulders. If a person decides to hire a third party to take care of these issues, he/she should be sure to include those costs in his/her expenses.

Another way to own real estate is through an investment known as a REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust). A REIT is an operating company which owns and manages commercial real estate. They are chartered as a corporation or business trust and they provide investors with the pass-through of income. You can purchase single REITs on their own or you could diversify further by investing in specialized mutual funds that hold a series of different REITs within their list of holdings.

The main advantage of this type of real estate investing is that REITs are equity investments that can produce generous cash flow along with the potential capital appreciation. The average REIT yields approximately 7% - not bad considering our low interest rate environment.

Understanding real estate investing and diversifying your portfolio accordingly can have a huge impact on your overall investment success. It's important to remember that diversification is about investing in asset classes that do not respond the same as economic conditions change.

Most individuals consider themselves to be long-term investors as opposed to market timers. The only way to be truly successful over the long term is to have exposure to asset classes that compliment each other by not all going up or down with the markets at the same time. However, one of the challenges to this approach, is that an investor must recognize that it is not mainstream investing.

It takes some knowledge and discipline to make solid investment decisions in order to create a long-term strategy that can be held during the good times and the bad. Be sure to talk to your financial planner to review your current investment strategy.

Debbie Pereversoff CFP CSA is the co-founder of The Affolter Financial Group Inc. specializing in portfolio management and design.

Cool Eateries of the West Kootenays

with Andrew Rhodes

No Shirt, No Shoes, No Problem

I had been wanting to try out THE PADDY WAGON for a long time. It sits just outside of Nakusp on Highway 6 next to Carson's Corner store. It's a 1971 Chevy step van that has been converted into a small road-side restaurant specializing in guess what? Burgers! On the drive there I had high expectations because lots of people had recommended the burgers, and also because I've always loved small outdoor food stands. So like I said, I did have high expectations. Isn't it interesting how expectations can colour your final opinion of something, and isn't it wonderful and amazing when your highest expectations are met and surpassed. That's exactly what happened when I went to THE PADDY WAGON last Friday afternoon. It was a sunny day, and the drive north from New Denver was beautiful. I saw a big black bear half way there and felt even better. THE PADDY WAGON sits on a well trimmed grass lawn with six picnic tables (four of them with umbrellas) and some Adirondack chairs and a bench. There is also a cute little kids picnic table, but the central attraction (besides the food!) is the sole proprietor, cook, waitress and manager, Angela Carson. She is a sparkler of a gal. I don't know when I've met someone so unfailingly friendly, welcoming, gracious, sociable, pleasant, and funny. She has the place decked out with hanging flower baskets and flower boxes. There is a menu painted on the side of the step van and a very big open window into the 'kitchen' where you can place your order and joke with Angela. This is her eighth year at THE PADDY WAGON, and for the last three years it has been a one-woman show. I had to laugh out loud at the sign she has hanging on the wall that says NO SHIRT, NO SHOES, NO PROBLEM. Indeed, it is a place where you can walk around on the grass in bare feet, read the menu, and order. While waiting for your food you can stare out at the snow-capped peaks on the far side of the Arrow Lakes.

Now, I've been a big burger fan for a long time, and I'm here to tell you that the food is simply wonderful. I wanted to order a 'wagon burger' with three patties and loads of trimmings, but Angela laughed at me and said I'd never get my mouth around one. She recommended I have 'The Bigger Burger:' Two patties, bacon, cheese, toms and ketchup. Best burger I've had in a long long time!

I asked Angela "How are your fries?" She replied with a smile "I've got the best fries in the world!" And even though I'm not that big on fries, these were crispy and delicious. (She imports them from a secret source.) I also figured I'd better have a coke to make the food group complete.

Angela's menu includes fifteen kinds of burgers, four wraps, including THE ULTIMATE WRAP, Hot dogs, chicken strips, fish & chips, fries, onion rings, poutine, jalapeño slammers, spring rolls, a wild APPY PLATTER, and GRAVY in large and small sizes. Don't ya love it!!

Angela knows most of her customers by first name, and says on Fri and Sat afternoons the place is packed. She also drives the PADDY WAGON to the Nakusp Music Fest and sells her fabulous food there. You can call her at 265-3255 and order in advance. THE PADDY WAGON is open Tuesdays through Sundays 'till the end of September. Go there and have some great food and good laughs with Angela. She does it all. As I left she said "Guess what? I love my PADDY WAGON!" You sure can tell.

Angela Carson invites everyone out to try a burger at the Paddy Wagon.

the Paddy Wagon

Great food in the great outdoors!

Hiway 6 Nakusp 250-265-3255

Village of Silverton
Summer Career Placement 2006

Start Date:	May 29, 2006
End Date:	September 1, 2006 (14 weeks)
Hours of work:	35 hours per week Flexible and may include weekends
Rate of Pay:	$12.00 per hour

Eligible Participants:

- Must be between 15 and 30 years of age (inclusively)
- Be registered as full-time students in the previous academic year
- Intend to return to school on a full-time basis in the next academic year
- Not hold another full-time summer job during their placement

The Summer Student will assist the Public Works Supervisor and Administrator in the daily maintenance of the Village of Silverton in the following duties:

- Streets and boulevard cleaning and maintenance
- Water monitoring and weekly reporting
- Assist with summer programs and special events within the community
- Assist with office administration including photocopy and data processing
- Assist with weekly refuse pickup and disposal
- Assist the Public Works Supervisor in areas of maintenance and repairs
- Various other tasks related to the daily operations of the Village

Interested students are encouraged to submit a detailed resume to:
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421 Lake Avenue
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Between the hours of 9:00 am and 4:00 pm

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WANT TO START YOUR OWN BUSINESS? Community Futures offers business counselling and start-up information. Appointments available in Nakusp and New Denver. Contact Farhana at 265-3674 or email nakusp@futures.bc.ca

CALL FOR ENTRY

A call for entry for the **ALFA GUILD GALLERY** "Local Focus" show. The show will run from June 7 through the 25 th, with an opening reception on June 9 th, from 6 - 8 pm. All works, maximum 3 per artist, should be submitted to the Gallery, 619 Broadway, Nakusp B.C., between 9 am and noon on June 5 /06.

CARD OF THANKS

I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS my sincere appreciation for all the support and help I've gotten from the communities of Hills, New Denver and Silverton. It is too hard at the moment to thank all the people individually who have helped in this time of need. My heart goes out to ALL for their generosity. Thank you. Rose Nachtigall.

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU to the people of the Slocan Valley for their generous help after I lost all my personal belongings in a fire. Thank you again. Jonathan Parker

COMING EVENTS

THE FRIDAY MARKET in New Denver begins again on June 2. Locally grown produce and artisans' wares, Fridays 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Info: 358-7733 or fridaymarket@netidea.com

TIME IS RUNNING OUT - Before the school year ends, come out to a PAC meeting! Next one: May 25, Lucerne Library, 7:00 pm. All Lucerne parents are warmly invited. Parents have a voice in their children's education through PAC.

W.E. GRAHAM COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY AGM In the Library at W.E. Graham Community School, 915 Harold St. Slocan City, 3:15 PM, Thursday June 8, 2006.

KSA OFFERS SUMMER SCHOOL! Isabelle Hunt-Johnson instructs a workshop that will focus on traditional and contemporary approaches to transparent watercolor in the Kootenay School of the Arts at Selkirk College Summer School Program July 4 - 7th. A variety of other 4 - 5 day workshops in clay, drawing, felting, image transfer, jewellery, metal, painting, and digital photography are offered between July 4 - 14 at 606 Victoria Street, in Nelson. For program details visit www.ksac.bc.ca or call 1-877-552-2821.

MOUNTAIN SKY SOAPS Spring Clearance Sale! Lots of great deals, so bring your bags for soap seconds by the kilo! Saturday, May 27, 9-5, 2276 Hwy #6, Crescent Valley. 359 6850

SLOCAN VALLEY HERITAGE TRAIL SOCIETY - Annual General Meeting. Tuesday, May 30th, 7:00 p.m. Slocan Park Hall. Info 1-888-683-SVRT(7878)

FAMILY NATURE WEEKEND - This years theme: INSECTOPIA- July 7-9th at the TIPI Camp on Kootenay Lake. To register 1-866-800-2267.

KASLO SATURDAY MARKETS start June 10 th! Vendors and performers wanted! Book now and save. Contact Jen Sibley at kaslomarkets@shaw.ca or 353-7592.

ARTIST TRADING CARD SESSIONS in Nakusp to be held the last Sunday of each month. 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm at the Broadway Deli. Bring your cards to trade! All ages welcome, no fee Next session May 28/06 For more info call Debra 265 3288.

EMPLOYMENT WANTED

SEEKING EMPLOYMENT: Tree service (climbing, limbing, falling, spacing, bucking,) Also carpentry, timber framing, log building - particularly small outbuildings. Odd jobs.

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COLLECTIBLE BEER STEINS, a bar and two stools, bar lamp, chainsaw, skill saw. 250-269-7634.

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HELP WANTED

Interpretive Centre Assistant

Silverton Historical Society is looking for a full-time Assistant for the Interpretive Centre. This position is funded through a grant from Human Resources Development Canada and is open to students currently attending and planning to return to school, college or university in September. The position is available from June 26, 2006.

Duties may include interpretation and explanation of historical artifacts and displays to visitors; basic maintenance of museum displays (organization, painting as required); cash collection (donation to the Centre, sales, memberships); development of tourism-related activities, such as walking tours of Silverton & area; and others as needed. Applicants must be interested in local history and tourism.

Please send resumés to: Silverton Historical Society, Box 17A, Silverton, V0G 2B0, or by e-mail to judigardiner@look.ca by June 16.

THE VILLAGE OF NEW DENVER is now accepting applications for a labourer for summer employment for 2006 to work with the Public Works Department. Eligible applicants must be registered full-time students during the preceding academic year and intending to return to full time studies in the fall. Eligible candidates must be reliable, have good communications and public relations skills and should possess a valid BC Drivers Licence. The position is for 40 hrs per week for 8 weeks at $9.00 per hour and commences on July 4, 2006. Applicants are invited to send a cover letter and resume to Mayor and Council, Village of New Denver, PO Box 40, New Denver, B.C., V0G 1S0. All applications must be received by June 8, 2006 at 4:00 p.m.

W.E.GRAHAM COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY in the Village of Slocan is inviting applications for summer positions in its Day Camp program, these jobs are suitable for high school and post-secondary students who will be returning to school in the fall. Please forward you resume and a cover letter documenting all relevant experience and qualifications to Attn: Coordinator, W.E.G. Community Service, Box 10 Slocan BC V0G 2C0, Fax 250-355-2389 or E-mail comschl@netidea.com. Applications deadline is 1; 00 pm, Monday June 12th 2006 (only those short listed will be contacted) A criminal record check will be required of the successful applicants.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN the newspaper business? Do you have experience or a great desire to learn? The Valley Voice is looking for the right part-time person to help out with their popular bi-weekly publication.

If you have interest or experience in any of the following areas:

Writing/Reporting/Editing; Bookkeeping/secretarial; Layout (Pagemaker); Ad Sales send a resume to: Attn: Jan McMurray valleyvoice@netidea.com / fax: 358-7793

SUMMER STAFF: Kitchen, servers. Picardo's/Wylie's in Nakusp. Must have some exp. Drop off resumes from 2 to 5 pm.

DISHWASHER WANTED. Must have restaurant experience and Food Safe Certificate. Must be 19 or older to apply. 358-7744.

SWIM INSTRUCTOR WANTED - For swim lessons in Slocan Lake in Mid July. $20+/hr plus travel! Contact Slocan Valley Rec' at 226-0008.

THE SLOCAN DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE is now accepting applications for a Visitor Information Counsellor for summer employment for 2006. Eligible applicants must be registered full-time students during the preceding academic year and intending to return to full-time studies in the fall. Eligible applicants must be reliable, have good communication, public relations and organizational skills, have computer experience and work independently with minimal supervision. Applicants are invited to send cover letter and resume to Box 448, New Denver, B. C. V0G 1S0. All applications must be received by June 1st, 2006.

COUNTER HELP for new business opening in early or mid-June, part-time to start. Must be energetic, cheerful, able to multi-task and have good customer service attitude. Will train the right person. Mail resume and cover letter to Box 245, New Denver V0G 1S0.

NOTICES

JC ROOFING COMPANY, 15+ years experience WCB. All work guaranteed. For all your roofing needs, call Curtis, 265-9087. Many references available. Free estimates.

SLOCAN VALLEY SENIORS HOUSING SOCIETY is looking for Board members. The Society's purpose is to support seniors in the valley and this includes managing Passmore Lodge with ten independent living apartments for seniors. The work of the Board is conducted at monthly meetings and some additional committee work may be required. Although the work is frequently challenging, the reward is the satisfaction of assuring affordable, appropriate housing for valley seniors. We would be pleased to answer questions and would welcome Board and/or committee participation. You can contact us by leaving a message at the Lodge office 226-7136 — one of the Board members will call you back.

OBITUARY

Al (Alexesander) Lowe passed away suddenly at home in Winlaw, BC on May 13, 2006 at the age of 61.

Born in Hamilton Ontario, on Aug. 13, 1944, Al served in the RCAF, was married in Dec. 11, 1965, and moved to BC in 1967. Al was a building contractor before retirement and was an avid gardener. Al was also a curler, avid golfer and loved to fish and hunt. He loved his family, good food, and friends. Also loved to laugh a lot. Al's wish was to be cremated. Predeceased by his father Alex Lowe. Survived by his wife Elena (Riva), mother Stella McGrath, Hamilton, Ont., sister Cathy (Gerald) Wenninger, Hamilton, Ont.; sister Janice Valliere, Hamilton, Ont.; sister Debbie Kattlus, Hamilton, Ont. and several nieces and nephews.

A celebration of Al's life was held Sunday, May 21, 2006 at Carol Alexander's home in Winlaw, BC. Al will be very sadly and dearly missed by all.

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Co-op to celebrate the opening of its cardlock, May 27

submitted

The Slocan Valley Co-op is having a party and you are invited!

On May 27, members, customers, board and staff will all get together for the long-awaited Grand Opening celebration. After years of planning, reams of number-crunching, and months of construction, the co-op cardlock is up and running full tilt — it's all paved, signs are in place, and customers are lining up for gas and diesel. Fortunately, the new installation has four dispensing units. Bernie Kosiancic, whose busy hardware department also services the pumps, says, "We just keep running — our customers get fast service, and we're getting fitter by the moment."

"These are really exciting times for us!" says co-op manager Bob Rode. "This expansion means the co-op will be able to serve the Valley even better in so many ways. It gives us a secure base to improve our service throughout the store."

"We're really looking forward to celebrating with all our friends and neighbours," says co-op president Vince Salvo. "We hope everyone who was so patient throughout the construction phase will come and share in the fun, have a burger on us, and put their names in for all the prizes.

"Of course, we'd especially like it if they came and filled their baskets with our Grand Opening specials as well," he says with a grin.

Staff at the store are noticing a hum of excitement now that the pumps are up and running and summer's on its way. All three tills are kept busy, and as Ven Shkuratoff, our new produce manager, says "I'm sure not having any trouble keeping the fruit and veggies fresh — things fly off the shelves so fast I've barely turned my back before I have to fill the display coolers all over again!"

So on May 27, come and party at the co-op. The fun gets underway at 1 pm, opening remarks are at 1:30 pm, and the ribbon-cutting will be at 2 pm. The barbecue, prize draws and general schmoozing will go on all afternoon. This is the most fun we'll all have till a year or so from now, when the co-op will be celebrating its 50th birthday.

The Slocan Valley Co-op has come up with an apt phrase for what's going on these days: "Building on the past, looking towards the future."

Megan "Queen of Tigers" Foley sits on a rock at Kaslo May Days.

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