The Valley VOICE

Free!

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

Nakusp Music Fest organizers plan to expand festival site for 2008

by Jan McMurray

Nakusp Music Fest organizers would like a bigger venue and have come up with a preliminary plan to expand the existing festival site in time for the 2008 Music Fest.

Willi Jahnke, creator of the festival, attended the November 23 council meeting to present the plan. He asked for and received council's support in principle, so that the Nakusp Roots Music Society could move forward with a grant application due January 15.

Jahnke explained that the expansion plan would enable the festival to stay in a spot that has proven to be popular among guests and locals alike, with its proximity to downtown. It would allow for "a slow and controlled growth," whereas the site as it is, with a capacity of 5,500 people per day, limits the festival's revenue to $700,000 – and this is not enough of a budget to attract the bigger headliners that Jahnke would like to.

He emphasized that the plan offers a win-win situation for the community and the festival, and will not cost the Village any money.

What does not change in the plan is the main stage, the beer garden and the VIP tent.

The plan involves extending the festival grounds to the west, currently a treed area that has been used as a camping area for festival goers. Jahnke said that the area would remain treed, and would house Vendors' Village and a stage for the children's programming during the festival. It would be open to the community at all other times. "Our plan for the area is to create a park-like setting for the community to enjoy and to be utilized before and after Music Fest, all year round," states the written proposal submitted to council.

Jahnke said he'd like the children's stage to be permanent so it could be used by the community year round. He also suggested building washrooms and showers in this new vendor area, creating 50 full-service campsites for the vendors, and paving or putting gravel down on the trails here. Jahnke suggested that the Village use the new camping area at non-festival times of the year, creating a source of income for the Village.

In the expansion plan, the current Vendor Village site in Kathy Pederson Park would become the location for the secondary stage. Jahnke explained that this location provides an adequate backstage area, which has been lacking for Stage 2, with access via the road in the municipal campground. Jahnke's written submission states that part of the ball park's permanent fencing would have to be made removable to avoid congestion in the new Stage 2 area.

To compensate for the loss of campsites for festival goers resulting from the expansion plan, Jahnke says new sites will have to be created in a more remote location, with a shuttle service.

Jahnke hopes that the project can be done between April and November 2007 and estimates the project cost at $571,000. He made it clear that the Village would not be asked for financial contribution, but perhaps for the use of equipment or for gravel at cost. Also, the Village may be eligible for some grants that the society is not. He said the project would be done as a partnership between the Village, Nakusp Roots Music Society (NRMS) and Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services, with Octopus Productions providing the administration. He said that NRMS is "happy to invest $200,000," and listed other possible funders as Service Canada's Youth Employment and Job Creation Partnership programs, the Columbia Basin Trust and corporate sponsors. "I guarantee there will be major contributions making this possible," he said.

Jahnke said the project is in its preliminary planning stages and indicated a willingness to work through all the concerns that would come forward. Mayor Hamling asked if there would be a buffer zone for nearby residences. Jahnke answered that yes, there would, adding, "and people will come up with a lot of concerns we never thought of." He also mentioned that Superintendent of Operations Jason Chernoff had no objections to the plans and that the society wanted to help purchase the tools Chernoff and staff need to maintain the sports field.

New Denver Mayor Gary Wright and Recreaton Commission #6 Chair DJ Wright were among the several dignitaries in attendance at the Grand Opening of the Community Fitness Centre and Gym at the Slocan Community Health Care Centre. Story on page 7.

BearSmart presentation well attended in Silverton

by Art Joyce

Every year in BC, up to 1,000 black bears and 50-100 grizzlies – a species at risk – are killed as a result of bear-human conflicts. Part of the problem, says bear biologist Wayne McCrory, is that bears and humans share the same preferred habitat – food rich and accessible valley bottoms. McCrory gave a PowerPoint presentation on the BearSmart program and the Spirit Bear conservancy area to an attentive audience in the Silverton Memorial Hall on Sunday, November 26.

McCrory opened with a summary of principles designed to educate the public on how best to avoid bear encounters. Top of the list is the proper handling of garbage. In urban areas, this means using 'bear-proof' certified containers, and only putting garbage out on designated pickup days. It only takes one householder who frequently leaves garbage outside to create a problem bear. Provincial regulations stipulate fines of up to $345 for repeat offenders, though with current conservation officer staffing, enforcement is a problem.

The exceptional intelligence of these creatures can pose a challenge. McCrory joked that one bear had already figured out how to open the new screw-top bin he had on display. The ideal system is a metal dumpster centrally located in each neighbourhood, though this can be expensive.

The Village of New Denver is investing in a second metal dumpster for Centennial Park. For rural property owners with gardens and chicken coops, an electric fence can be an effective deterrent for bears.

Backcountry encounters with black bears and grizzlies can be dealt with most effectively with red pepper spray. An audience member made the suggestion of freon-powered bullhorns. McCrory said these work too, but recommended using a more ozone-friendly version. Mountain bikers should keep to groomed trails located away from known bear habitat zones.

Coolers should be locked inside vehicles, not left outside or put inside tents. McCrory showed slides of bears snacking on the contents of backpacks hung up in trees – another mistake. Hikers can also carry a small starter pistol to frighten away bears.

McCrory said the Valhalla Wilderness Society recently applied for and received a $3,000 grant to do a bear hazard assessment, the first step toward a community receiving BearSmart status. Biologists look for telltale signs such as rubbing trees and travel corridors with multiple bear tracks. The best grizzly habitat is found in the backcountry and marsh areas, including the Bonanza Creek delta in Hills. McCrory said bear hazard assessments have already been completed for Valhalla, Goat Range and Kokanee provincial parks. New Denver and Silverton are next but VWS hopes to expand north to Summit Lake and south to Enterprise Creek. Biologist Maggie Paquet, who authored the BC Bear Conservation Strategy, has been hired to carry out the assessment.

The second step is to create a bear/human conflict management plan, followed by step three, a revision of community planning and decision-making regulations to include BearSmart priorities. Step four is an ongoing public education program capable of reaching the widest possible audience; step five involves a community-wide waste management plan; and step six the setting of bylaws providing penalties for those leaving out bear attractants. BearSmart designation means Conservation Officers may exercise the option of removing problem bears instead of killing them as a first option.

McCrory next presented a slide show celebrating the Spirit Bear conservancy area. He started by giving a brief history of VWS, and the 18-year campaign to have white kermode or 'spirit' bear habitat protected. McCrory spoke of the society's first expeditions to Princess Royal Island, which "felt like being dropped into the middle of the Amazon." McCrory, bear biologist Erica Mallam and several others had to set up camp in a tidal marsh crisscrossed with bear trails, yet it took until the last moment of the last day to finally make a sighting of the white bears. McCrory's camera finger was ready—he caught some of the first photographs of the kermodes. It was enough to begin building international support for the protection of the wilderness.

McCrory acknowledged the many organizations and First Nations who supported the campaign, mentioning VWS, Greenpeace, David Suzuki, Sierra Club, and the Spirit Bear Youth Coalition. He thanked many individuals within VWS and the late Grant Copeland, a staunch supporter. Some work still remains to be done to protect critical kermode bear habitat not covered in the conservancy area, such as Green Inlet.

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Selkirk College appoints Regional Innovation Chair in Rural Economic Development

by Jan McMurray

Selkirk College's Regional Innovation Chair in Rural Economic Development was officially announced November 15. On the job since October 1, George Penfold is a community planner with an impressive background in both the public and private sectors. He moved to Castlegar from Vancouver Island to take what he describes as "the best job in the province."

"This is an interesting position because it's a new resource available to communities in the West Kootenay - Boundary. It will take both the community organizations and myself some time to figure out how to best use that resource," he explained in a telephone interview.

He explained that he is there to provide support in the way of research and development. "I am not doing economic development, but supporting it," he said. Penfold is initially spending most of his time contacting organizations and asking them how he can help.

The Selkirk Geospatial Research Centre at the college has initiated a few projects that Penfold will be involved in. One of these is in partnership with BC Hydro to develop a better understanding of the values of the Arrow Lakes reservoir, and how climate change and changes in the management of the reservoir could affect those values. Two smaller projects he mentioned involve interface wildfire and child care. "People are being excluded from the labour market because they can't get access to childcare," he said.

George Penfold is the Regional Innovation Chair for Rural Economic Development at Selkirk College.

Penfold says he spoke with Derek Murphy of the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission and the main issue that emerged was the socioeconomic impact of people looking at the region primarily for its amenity. He says the same questions were asked on Vancouver Island. "There may be a germ of a regional project there," he said.

Penfold attended the November RDCK board meeting to ask the directors for their help in identifying issues, and to ask for two RDCK representatives to sit on his standing advisory committee.

Director Josh Smienk said he would like to see a baseline of information showing the importance of the rural contribution to the provincial economy. "Baseline information would help us to represent ourselves better," he said, referring to the urban / rural imbalance in the provincial political arena, and explaining that the rural areas "have to fight for every scrap."

Director Andy Shadrack said he would like to see some research on access to post secondary education for rural people and ways to attract businesses to our area.

Chair Gary Wright asked if the RDCK could appoint private citizens or representatives from the economic development commissions to the advisory committee. Penfold replied by indicating that he wanted representation from the organizations that funded his position. He said the advisory committee would be made up of 12 people, which is big enough to include people from other organizations as well. He also said that he wants to be flexible, so that if certain interests are not represented, he can expand the advisory committee or set up an ad hoc committee.

Penfold's position is funded by a 50% investment from the province's Leading Edge Endowment Fund and matching funds totalling $1.25 million, thanks to a first-class fundraising effort orchestrated by Marilyn Luscombe, Selkirk College President. Contributors are the Regional District of Central Kootenay, Regional District of Kootenay Boundary, City of Castlegar, City of Nelson, Columbia Basin Trust, Nelson and District Credit Union, Heritage Credit Union (formerly Castlegar Savings), the BC Real Estate Foundation and a number of West Kootenay / Boundary businesses.

Report released on real estate prices

by Jan McMurray

Landcor Data Corporation has distributed a report on property sales values in the province of BC.

The report shows the average property sales values in every BC town for the first six months of 2005 and the first six months of 2006. The average values are calculated using all property types (residential, commercial, farm, etc.).

For Kaslo, the report gives the average property value in 2005 at $104,000 and in 2006 at $210,441. This is a difference of $106,441 or 102.35%.

The figures for Nakusp Rural are $115,440 in 2005 and $119,417 in 2006. This is an increase of $2,977 or 2.56%.

The Village of Nakusp has seen an increase of 19.82%, with the 2005 average at $123,643 and the 2006 average at $148,155.

Property sales values in the Village of New Denver have risen 70.14%, from $100,211 in 2005 to $170,500 in 2006.

Silverton has seen an increase of only 2.16%, from $139,000 in 2005 to $142,000 in 2006.

Slocan is up 7.67%, from $101,401 in 2005 to $109,180 in 2006.

Credit unions merge insurance agencies

submitted

Three Kootenay based credit unions – East Kootenay Community, Kootenay Savings, and Nelson & District Credit Unions – recently joined forces to form a new insurance company.

Effective January 1, 2007, each of the three credit union owned insurance companies (East Kootenay Community Insurance Services, Kootenay Savings Insurance Services, and Allard Insurance Agencies) will officially become Kootenay Insurance Services Ltd. All three will share equal ownership. The new insurance company will have offices in Trail, Nelson, Crawford Bay, and Cranbrook.

Kaslo in the running for *A Week Without Women*

Kaslo has been shortlisted as a potential town for the national television series, *A Week Without Women*.

This ambitious documentary series will follow what happens in a small Canadian community when all the women leave town for a week and the men are left to their own devices – will the guys thrive or barely survive?

During the month of December, the director and producers of this series are holding town meetings and interviewing possible participants in three BC towns: Kaslo, Lilooet and Clinton. A meeting has been scheduled in Kaslo for December 7 at 6 pm at the JVH Lighthouse Theatre.

Kimara Brilling, researcher with the film company, says that New Denver is still in the running. "It's been tough to make these initial decisions to get on the road before the Christmas season hits. Hopefully we will be visiting New Denver in the New Year! Until then, Kaslo awaits..." she said.

Green realtor comes to the Kootenays

by Jan McMurray

The West Kootenays is now served by a 'green realtor,' who is working from his new home office in Vallican. Licensed with Dexter Associates Realty of Vancouver, James Rodgers comes to the Slocan Valley from Tofino.

Dexter has teamed up with GreenerHomes.ca to provide a BC-wide green real estate service.

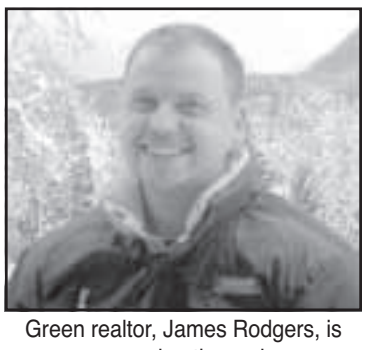
"With energy and fuel costs continuing to increase and awareness of climate change spreading, more people are choosing to buy homes with greener features such as energy efficient appliances, water-saving fixtures, and environmentally sustainable building materials," he says. "There is certainly a niche market out there for green realty."

Green realtors go beyond the usual scope of real estate service and help both buyers and sellers explore the existing and potential greener aspects of a home as well as how to protect ecologically or culturally sensitive property.

"People are happy to find a realtor who takes into account not only the financial bottom line but also the social and environmental bottom line, and who can answer questions about the impact of building a cabin on the river, for example, or burying an old oil tank," explains Rodgers.

Green realtors also come with a 'green team' of professionals such as green mortgage brokers, lawyers and notaries, Rodgers says. "These people share the green philosophy and put it into practise in their day to day operations. A green mortgage broker, for example, can make sure that your money is being invested in an ethical way. When we consider how much we spend on mortgage payments, it is worthwhile asking what economy we are supporting every time we make our payment."

Rodgers says he works mainly with green professionals from the coast, but would like to gain contacts in this region.



Green realtor, James Rodgers, is now serving the region.

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BC Hydro representatives field questions from RDCK directors

by Jan McMurray

Two BC Hydro (BCH) representatives attended the November RDCK meeting as a delegation. Neal Dermody, Manager of Lower Columbia Facilities and Amy White, Stakeholder Engagement Advisor gave a brief presentation and then took questions from board members.

Director Paul Peterson had a question about the upgrade to the Revelstoke Dam, where BCH is adding a fifth penstock, turbine and generating unit, to be in service by October 2011. Peterson sits on the core committee (CC) for the project, where stakeholders discuss the impacts of the project and ways to mitigate or compensate for them. He said that at the last CC meeting, the group was supposed to "sign off and give the green light" but the committee refused because BCH and the Water Comptroller had not yet lived up to their commitments under the Columbia River Water Use Plan. He asked how it would affect the project's timelines if the CC refused to sign off. White said she would have Neil McPhie, Public Affairs Co-ordinator, get back to Peterson.

Director Andy Shadrack explained that the RDCK board is responsible for emergency planning and flood issues, and needs to know when operations on the American side of the Columbia River system could cause an upstream flood risk. He said this happened last spring, resulting in $25,000 worth of damage to one business on the northern end of Kootenay Lake. Dermody said he'd commit to passing this on to the appropriate person.

Director Tom Mann spoke about how BC Hydro's grants-in-lieu of taxes do not fairly compensate the rural people of BC. He asked that fair compensation to the rural areas of the province be in the company's next submission to the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC). Dermody said he'd pass that comment on to BCUC.

When Director Josh Smienk asked when the demolition program was to begin at the Hugh Keenleyside dam, a look of alarm and confusion overcame both White and Dermody. Smienk explained, "Grants-in-lieu for Hugh Keenleyside have been reduced by 70% so we're assuming that 70% of the infrastructure is also being removed." Dermody said that they would pass this on to the Minister of Finance, who makes decisions about the grants-in-lieu. Smienk asked if there had been any work done between BC Hydro and the Ministry of Finance to reduce the amount. White said that she was not aware of any, but that she would double-check.

The BCH delegation's presentation highlighted the growing demand for electricity and the intiatives of the company to fill the gap. White said the demand is so high that BCH has been a net importer of electricity for the past five years – and the demand is expected to grow between 20% and 45% over the next 20 years. Canadians are among the highest consumers of electricity in the world, even ahead of the Americans, and BC uses 40% more electricity than does Alberta. BCH is working to fill the growing electricity gap by conserving through Power Smart activities, buying from Independent Power Producers, upgrading its existing facilities, and investigating new options for generating capability.

White also spoke about the company's Corporate Donations Program, which gives grants to non-profits in education, environment and community involvement. Application is made online at www.bchydro.com/outreach.

The annual Silverton Christmas Faire on December 3 once again showed off the amazing talents of our area's artisans. We couldn't resist snapping one of Elly Scheepens' pottery garlic bulb, with Elly and Sawako.

International Selkirk Loop releases results of study

submitted

The International Selkirk Loop has recently completed two economic impact studies that provide valuable information to the loop's member communities.

One part of the study determined who is travelling the Selkirk Loop, where they come from, and how they spend their money. Thousands of consumers who requested a Selkirk Loop brochure in 2006 were surveyed to provide data. Another component, a stakeholder survey, asked members and non-members alike how their membership benefited them and why or why not they are a member.

Survey results show that visitors to the loop are male and female, in their mid 50s. They are travelling without kids from Idaho, Washington, California, Alberta and British Columbia primarily for sightseeing and relaxation. The most popular destinations include Sandpoint, Bonners Ferry, the Kootenay Lake free ferry, Nelson and Creston. Most make their decision to travel the loop less than two months prior to their trip. One in four people requesting the visitor guide ended up travelling the loop with an average stay of 3.6 days, although 50% of travelers stayed for longer than four days.

The majority of visitors (88%) said the Selkirk Loop information they requested influenced their decision to come. When asked if they were satisfied or dissatisfied with their trip, 0% said they were dissatisfied.

The research is the first phase in the development of an overall marketing strategy to be developed in January of 2007. The Hingston Roach Group is conducting the research and developing marketing strategy. Initial data shows that the loop has been very effective in attracting its target group of travellers.

In 2004, a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for the loop was developed which was integral in obtaining the All American Road designation by the US Secretary of Transportation. This designation will provide additional grant and funding opportunities to further develop awareness of the Selkirk Loop.

A complete summary of survey results will be available from Mike Rowland, Canadian Operations Director at 877-428-2046 or canada@selkirkloop.org, or Carol Graham, US Operations Director, at 888-823-2626 or selkirkloop@verizon.net. For more information on the International Selkirk Loop or to join, visit www.selkirkloop.org.

New secretary-treasurer for School District No. 8

by Art Joyce

School District No. 8 recently welcomed Monica Schulte to its staff. Schulte started as the district's new secretary-treasurer on October 23 and comes from School District No. 23, Central Okanagan, with its office in Kelowna.

She brings more than seven years of private sector experience as a chartered accountant plus her experience with the Kelowna office as finance manager for payroll. Schulte said paying off School District No. 8's outstanding deficit is the key priority for the current board.

"We're making strong headway to repay the deficit. It's our goal to always be in a surplus situation."

Schulte said the issue isn't funding for students Ministry of Education per student funding has been increasing every year. School District No. 8 is looking at ways of reducing its capital infrastructure overhead by combining or closing some school facilities.

At present Schulte and her husband are waiting for their home in Penticton to sell so they can complete their move.

"After commuting an hour to work every day, I'm looking forward to living in Nelson close to the office."

Former secretary-treasurer Bruce Buchannon died suddenly of a heart attack last sumnmer, while playing golf. Assistant secretary-treasurer Colin McClure was in charge of the day to day operations throughout the hiring process.

KSA Christmas Jewelry Show

submitted

Naughty or nice? Either way, adorn yourself with things that sparkle, shimmer and shine! Kootenay School of the Arts (KSA) at Selkirk College is holding its annual Christmas sale at 606 Victoria Street, Nelson, on Friday, December 8, 5:30 - 9:30 pm and Saturday, December 9, 10:00 - 4:00 pm. The opening reception is Friday evening from 5:30 6:30 pm.

Fine handmade jewelry will be featured, along with fiber, clay and metal. For the past month and a half, second year jewelry students have been creating beautiful handmade silver jewelry. Each student has developed their own original designs.

"I've really been enjoying the hands-on creativity this course offers and I'm looking forward to getting feedback from people at the jewellery show." said Laura Parr, jewelry student.

Daniel Bremer will display his work at KSA's annual Christmas sale

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

VILLAGE OF NEW DENVER – OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

Residents of the Village of New Denver are requested to take notice that the village is preparing to review and update the Official Community Plan with the assistance of the Regional District of Central Kootenay. The first in a series of Public Meetings to gather input from concerned village residents will be held on Monday, December 18, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. in the Knox Hall. Please come and share your views on how you envision the future of our community.

Carol Gordon, CMC
Administrator

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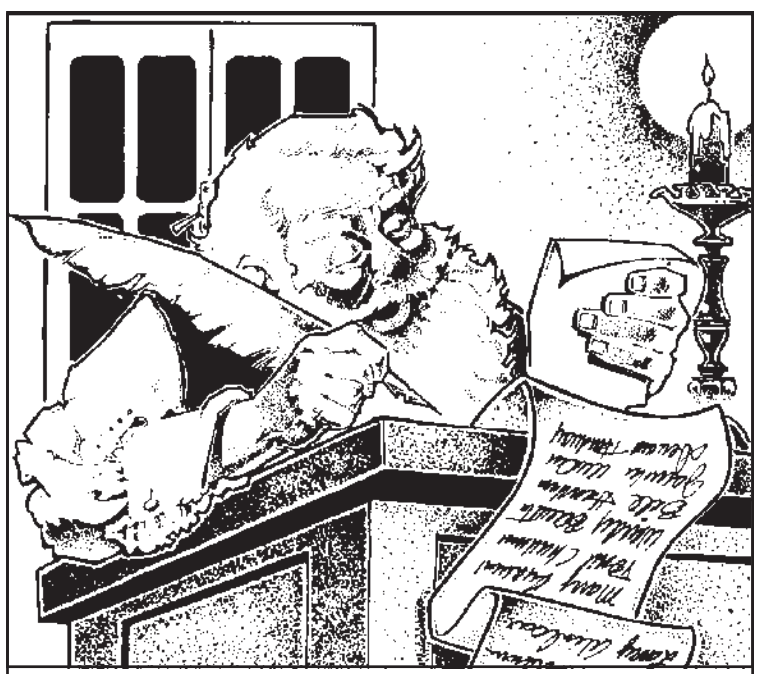

Last issue of 2006 is December 13. Advertising deadline is this Friday, December 8. Call 358-7218 for details. email: valleyvoice@netidea.com

Voices from the Valleys

Troops not terrorists

As I listened to Jack Layton the other day from the House of Commons I thought, "What a pathetic leader of a more pathetic party." The only hope for them is another great Tommy Douglas.

Then there is the other BC wannabes NDP. This hopeless bunch called our troops terrorists. I hope everyone will remember this because I will, and I will make sure it is not forgotten the next time around.

Our troops are doing a great job. They did not run off and hide in another country with all sorts of made-up reasons. To our troops, Canada is behind you, so cover your ass and come home safe.

Jamie Rice,
Rosebery

Closure of Edgewood Outpost Station

We are dismayed to hear our Edgewood Outpost Nursing Station will be closed from November 28 to December 11. How can you justify this closure with a clear conscience when so many residents in the area depend on the services of this Outpost?

We keep paying for health benefits and the government keeps slowly eliminating valuable medical services to the interior communities. We as seniors value the Nursing Station to help us in time of need and save us the travel time and expenses in lieu of a doctor's visit for non-emergency treatment.

Why, I ask you, hasn't an effort been made for a replacement for that two-week period so as to keep the Outpost Station open?

L. Jean Rigby
Fauquier

Shooting predators absurd solution for mountain caribou

I have just learned of an extremely barbaric solution to the decline of one of BC's endangered species, the mountain caribou. Shoot all the predators! Now what kind of a solution is that? Kill off one endangered species (the grizzly in this case) in an attempt to preserve another. Is this for real?

The solution staring in everyone's face is: preserve their habitat. Stop logging old growth stands in caribou habitat! Prohibit motorized recreation in caribou habitat! If animals have food and a safe place to live and reproduce, they can usually take care of themselves.

We point fingers at third-world countries for allowing the slaughter of their forests with the resulting loss of endemic species. The rapid decline of orangutans in Borneo is a case in point. Yet right here in British Columbia exactly the same thing is happening, also with the blessing of the government we are expected to trust.

Shirl Bayer
Passmore

Don't tax me for services I don't use

This is just an observation in regards to the Alternative Approval Process. When the letters of support for Summit Lake Ski Hill were printed in your paper, most people said it is only a little bit of tax money – everybody can afford that. First of all I am surprised that other people speak for me and what I can afford or not. Now I read in your paper from November 22 on page 3, about the high speed internet service proposed for the rest of the valley. They are thinking also about financing by means of taxation, and having it approved through the Alternative Approval Process. Like with the Ski Hill this is also just a little bit of money taken out of my pocket. I say if a business cannot stay alive with the sales of the product or service they sell, they should not be in business. If your newspaper ever fails (heaven forbid) maybe you can get it financed through the Alternative Approval Process. My point is if I want to ski on the Summit Ski Hill, or if I want high speed internet service, I should be willing to pay for it. I hate to be forced to pay for something I will never use.

Albert Boers
Hills

Quakers oppose the war

The following statement was approved by the Argenta Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) at its monthly meeting for business on August 6 and September 10, 200:

In a world where moral compromise is all too common, the Religious Society of Friends in Canada has historically adhered to the position that war as an instrument of national policy is morally wrong.

During the past year, Canada has become a nation at war, without the formality of a declaration of war, and with only a perfunctory parliamentary debate on the subject.

Opinion polls have revealed a nation divided, unclear as to the reason for our involvement and the purpose of the military campaign. We are being told that we are in Afghanistan to rebuild the country, to help it achieve democracy, to liberate Afghan women and to pursue the war on terrorism. Unfortunately, many people accept the attempt at moral justification without question. Others suggest that the basic reason for our military presence in Afghanistan is to ensure permanent US access to Central Asian oil reserves.

Friends' historic role, in addition to peace testimony, has been to "speak truth to power." In truth, Canada cannot help to build democracy, nor do physical rebuilding in a war-ravaged country, when we are also carrying out search-and-destroy military actions.

Canada seems to be abandoning the role of peacekeeper for which in the past our country has received international appreciation and respect.

Argenta Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends urges Canada to cease all war-making actions in Afghanistan, including the tendency to label one side in the conflict as good and the other as evil.

For lasting peace, there is a need for dialogue among all the conflicting parties to create a sustainable political solution. We urge Canada to take on the role of supporting and facilitating such dialogue, as a mediator not aligned with any of the parties.

Agnes Herbison
Dorothy Ross
Argenta

Agricultural Land Commission delays Hills firehall construction

With the rains, short hours of daylight and cold weather of late fall upon us, the window of opportunity has passed for constructing our fire hall/multipurpose building in Hills this year. Our fire truck will have to sit outside in the wet for another winter with no roof over it, and with no water in the tank because it might freeze in the cold weather.

The reason for the delay? Lack of funds? Lack of volunteers? Lack of a good site for a much-needed facility for our community? None of the above.

The reason for the delay in commencing construction on the hall is that the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) took three months to decide, in its wisdom, that it is permissible to put a small building on land that is in the Agricultural Land Reserve, on ground that is pretty much rocks and clay and that is clearly not agricultural in any way.

This summer our construction committee diligently moved the project along, held community meetings, prepared building plans and applied for a building permit.

Documentation from the Regional District relating to our Crown Grant of the property indicated the land was NOT in the Agricultural Land Reserve. However, when we applied for a building permit the Regional District planning department seems to have changed their mind, and informed us we would have to get an exemption from the ALC to build our firehall because apparently the land IS in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Forms were filled in and a hefty fee paid. Then we waited, and waited. Without the permission for a 'non-farm use of the land' from the Agricultural Land Commission, the Regional District would not issue our building permit and we could go no further than clearing the site and excavating for the foundation.

Finally in mid-November we received a form letter from the ALC informing us that we had the necessary permission to proceed. By then, the weather dictated that our window of construction opportunity had closed.

We hope to begin work on the building, which will function as a combined firehall and multipurpose community hall, as early as weather permits in the spring. We will let you know the approximate start dates so that those of you who can volunteer will be able to plan accordingly. Stay tuned.

The Directors
Hills Recreation Society

More on Munro's plans for us

Another aspect of Don Munro's attempt at confining our community to systematic and systemic bureaucratic abuse called 'planning and zoning' is the fact that heretofore we have been free to create whatever economic initiatives we believed could be appropriate to the needs of our ability to be industrious and creative, in the marketplace, on our existing property. When the 'dull thud of mindless suburban restriction' occurs, anyone who has an idea about economic development will have to purchase a place which is designated as suitable for that activity according to the dictates of Munro's doctrine. Yes folks – there may be some measure of latitude given for needlework and birch-syrup tapping, but generally speaking – you will have to purchase another property to make your economic development dreams come true.

And there ain't no magic to economic development. You either make something, or provide a service, and then either bring your client to your business, or your business to your client. That's what economic development is. And the only clout that any government has to stimulate risk investment and economic development into an area, is tax deferrals and infrastructure creation. And as a rural community, we don't rate. What you see is who we are.

As far as the proposed Munro doctrine goes – it will kill our presently reasonably healthy entrepreneurial initiatives, hopes and dreams – and ability – and otherwise tie us potentially to larger and more corporate styled risk investment, should they ever become interested. As it stands, we have a beat-up highway, with poor winter road maintenance, unreliable electrical service due to the nature and indeed quality of our living experience as individual landholders and entrepreneurs in our presently lovely valley (our trees are always falling down on the hydro lines) – and other qualities of life, which will always severely restrict any broad economic initiative – and I'm thankful for it.

You want planning and zoning – go to Kelowna.

And, as the Munro doctrine restrictions begin to strangle our community, please be advised that the RDCK bylaw enforcement officer will definitely be an increased presence in our lives, and on our landholdings. To the best of my knowledge, that individual is presently a retired RCMP officer. By reputation, I understand that he is a very capable and amicable individual, who does his job well. Be sure to say "Hi" when you've parked your gravel truck at home for the night, because you're dead tired after a 17-hour day – and your neighbour has complained that according to the new restrictions – you can't do that. And that, folks, is the reality infused with the proposed Munro doctrine initiative. Don't worry – be happy.

Eric Nygren
Winlaw

Goats in New Denver

We moved to New Denver two years ago and brought with us three milk goats. We live in the village against the eastern boundary. Soon after settling we discovered that keeping goats violated New Denver village bylaws.

Our North American lifestyle appears to have led us to the belief that keeping small livestock in a residential area is old-fashioned and more of a third-world phenomenon. This is not really so. Last summer we spoke to a man from Switzerland who described a traditional situation existing in his home village, where a herdsperson picks up livestock from the village in the morning, takes the animals out for grazing all day, and returns them to their respective homes in the evening. This manner of keeping livestock may still

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LETTERS POLICY

The Valley Voice welcomes letters to the editor from our readers. Please mark your letter "LETTER TO THE EDITOR." Include your address and daytime phone number.

Letters should be no longer than 500 words. Letters may be edited. Please email your letter if possible.

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

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

The Valley Voice Box 70, New Denver, BC V0G 1S0

Phone: 358-7218 Fax: 358-7793 E-Mail:valleyvoice@netidea.com Website: www.valleyvoice.ca

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Voices from the Valleys

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be found in many other European countries and worldwide.

Jeremy Rifkin, an economist in Washington, DC, wrote a book on energy called Entropy. He points out that contemporary agribusiness uses 100 times as much energy as traditional agriculture. (This study does not include the cost of food distribution, which is also much higher in the industrial model.) Such facts suggest that industrial agriculture may not be sustainable in the long run.

Besides the efficiency and sustainability of producing milk and meat locally, there are several additional benefits to keeping small livestock in and around a village.

Livestock in and around a village support organic gardening initiatives. There is a symbiosis between plants and animals that supports the health of both.

Local initiatives toward self-sufficiency have a stabilizing effect on a community. Home gardens and small livestock increase the ability to live in New Denver with only a modest wage.

The tragedy of losing homes from fires that start in the interface lands (the wild land around residences) is a predominantly modern problem. Traditionally people utilized the land in and around villages for agriculture and grazing. This reduced the fire hazard and protected the villages. If you google 'wildfires' and 'goat grazing' you will discover that in places like California goat and sheep herds are used to reduce the fire hazard of the interface lands.

We have found in the last two years that our goats provide a unique educational and recreational function for the community. Individual children and local school groups visit the goats regularly and learn something about animal husbandry. Goats are particularly suited to children. They are non-aggressive, yet entertaining. Our neighbours also enjoy the goats and support us in our efforts to amend the village by-law to permit a limited number of small livestock within its boundaries.

Julia Greenlaw
Norbert Duerichen
New Denver

Preserve the Wheat Board

As farmers move toward mailing their ballots in the upcoming Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) directors election they must reflect carefully on the conclusions reached in the Murray Fulton report, The Canadian Wheat Board in an Open Market. These conclusions state that when it comes to the marketing of western grain and barley there are only two viable options.

1) Retain single desk selling, price pooling, rail car allocations and government loan guarantees, under the Canadian Wheat Board or...

2) Relinquish the political and market power of the CWB and move toward a US style open market but without the accompanying benefit of a US Farm Bill.

These conclusions are supported by the Agriculture Minister, Chuck Strahl's own Task Force report, Marketing Choice - The Way Forward which attempted but failed to justify that the CWB can exist in a dual market or voluntary system.

Under the first option the CWB powers are retained, and if enough pressure can be brought to bear on elected politicians, western farmers might one day look forward to the implementation of the CWB's new proposal Harvesting Opportunities, which outlines a vision where many more value added and marketing opportunities for farmers of western grain and barley would be provided. This new policy paper put its emphasis on being entirely 'farmer controlled' and operating completely independent of government. In the meantime the Board would carry on as it does now with a mandate to market western grain and barley and return the profits to farmers.

The second option would see the CWB stripped of all legislative advantages and the immediate movement toward a US style open market would begin. This option would service the biggest players like US multinationals, who are waiting to step in and gain control of the situation the moment the Board's farmer monopoly power is removed.

The Conservative Party's terms "marketing choice," "dual marketing" and "voluntary CWB," have relentlessly been promoted as viable options to replace the current marketing structure of the CWB. These have now been rendered irrelevant by the conclusions of both of the above mentioned reports. Farmers must now be wary of any editorial comment, opinion piece, politician, or candidate running in the upcoming CWB directors' election who continues to use this language when referring to marketing choices for wheat and barley.

The CWB has just filed a complaint with the CWB election coordinator requesting an investigation into the Minister's use of government resources to promote CWB director candidates currently campaigning on the government's agenda. Perhaps the Minister should consider using his department's resources to clarify his mythical marketing choices, ensuring that all western farmers are fully informed about what their future will really look like without the advocacy of the Canadian Wheat Board.

Alex Atamanenko, MP
BC Southern Interior

Not enough workers, not enough child care—coincidence?

There is not enough child care to meet the needs of families. Not coincidentally employers are struggling with finding enough employees.

First I would like to dispel a myth. No credible Early Childhood Educator (ECE) has ever advocated for an 'institutional, state run' child care system. Ever! We believe at our very core that families should have choice, choice to stay at home, or go to work. Choices in centre based or in-home care. Different choices work for different families.

The reasons why there is not enough child care are complex. When you boil it down, the bottom line is that there is not enough funding. Boiling it down further, government funding is needed to pay ECEs a fair wage. I know, I know — the critics will jump up and scream that we don't really care about kids, we just want to pad our wallets. That's an easy out for them.

In fact, the ECEs of this country have been subsidizing your child care through low wages for decades and many are not prepared to do so any more. It's hard work and it's important work. ECEs are leaving the field to find better paying jobs, because they too need to support their families.

In the West Kootenay, some child care facilities are not operating to full capacity because they can't find qualified staff. Others are looking at having to reduce their spaces or close.

Colleges report a significant drop in the number of students entering the ECE program.

Increasingly we hear that businesses can't find enough staff. This will get worse as our baby boom generation retires. We also hear of parents leaving their jobs or turning down work because they canít find or lose a child care space.

The federal government is promising to build more spaces by giving businesses incentives to do so. That's great. But once the spaces are built, who is going to look after the kids?

Families of the 21st century need child care. They need to work to support their families, buy a house, and just to get by. At the end of the day, what should matter most is what is best for our kids. Whether you believe in child care or not, the majority of kids in Canada who need it can't get it.

Properly funded child care, like education, is good for our kids and good for our economy. The time has come. We must create a child care plan that meets the needs of today's families, whatever their choice may be.

Kim Adamson, ECE, MBA
Children First
Nelson

Summit Lake ski area finances

I have to question on what the financial contribution has been based? The Summit Lake ski area (a gentle slope ski area) is in my opinion not an essential business or venture which should be financed by property owners of the RDCK district. It should be run as every other business and charge user fees as necessary to meet the operating costs. If the user thinks he should not have to pay the fee, the customer should be free to try another competitive ski hill. Perhaps Nelson or Vernon? Another option (which I found the best and cheapest bodybuilding exercise for young and old, for obese and skinny skiers) is for sure a simple cross country ski excursion. But of course this is a lot more strenuous than being pulled up the hill and then sliding down the hill.

I was made to understand that the operating cost was becoming excessive due to the insurance premiums. Would it be possible to have the users sign a waiver whenever they use the hill?

The maximum amount that may be requisitioned to operate this hill shall not exceed $20,000 annually? The year 2007? How much the years after?

Looking back I was told that the Silverton-New Denver TV Society needed money and that it would not be a great amount. So, in 1984 the amount for the society was $1.28, up to a high of $52 in 1997. In 2006 it was $36.22.

What will the maximum yearly contribution for the ski hill be in 2011? Still $4.20? Or $42? $420 on the first $100,000 assessment?

I tried to phone the RDCK in Nelson and got a garbled answer. Since I am hard of hearing I asked my wife to dial, and she got the same result. I find it very strange that I should have to drive a 205 km. round trip to pick up an alternate approval process form. Should this form not have been made available locally? I tried the post offices and the village offices in Nakusp and New Denver. They were not available in any of these offices. Curious. Did somebody forget about that in the RDCK?

Ever hear about the last straw that broke the camel's back? How about the property owners who have a hard time to pay the extra few dollars, and stand to lose their property to a delinquent tax sale? But no, all property owners are supposed to be filthy rich. Why is it that I feel we are being held at ransom for a non-essential ski hill?

P.S. Please don't forget to fill the donation boxes in the stores to well above the brim. A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.

Hans Schlaffke
New Denver

Save Jumbo for the wildlife

While a few of your readers have expressed that they have grown tired of the prolonged debate over the proposed ski village for Jumbo Creek, there is good reason for the lack of resolution.

After 16 years of study and discussion, the issue of protecting the public's interests in wilderness vs. private development of Crown assets has not yet been resolved because at stake is one of the most biologically rich and diverse intact wilderness areas in Canada, south of the Trans Canada Highway.

As wildlife biologists and environmental resource consultants with a long history in the East Kootenay and elsewhere, we can unequivocally state that no amount of environmental studies or mitigative measures will make up for the fact that once a ski village is placed into the core of a wilderness area, the wildland characteristics of that wilderness is lost forever. This is not a decision that can be taken lightly or in a hurry.

The issue is the protection of the wildlands of Jumbo and the wilderness of the Purcells vs. private commercial development. Allowing private developers to have their way with this irreplaceable wildland area should not be allowed, particularly not if we are serious about conserving land and resources for future generations.

A ski village in the very core of such an important wilderness tract would be a serious incursion on the wilderness values of the Purcells. It will also remove a layer of naturalness from the whole of the Rocky Mountain Trench. The connectivity of wildlife populations will be affected, roads and traffic will take their toll and more attention will be focused on human services rather than protecting wilderness and other natural recreational values, not to mention diverting valuable but scarce services from existing communities.

Protecting the wildland and wilderness values of the Purcells from private development will ensure that existing and future generations will be able to use and enjoy Jumbo Creek and the adjacent Purcell Wilderness just as we do today while maintaining the natural values that residents and visitors so cherish in the Columbia Windermere Valley.

Ray Demarchi
Carol Hartwig
Duncan, BC

Galena Bay great for farming

This letter is in response to the November 8 *Valley Voice* article: "Calgary developers plan residential subdivision in Galena Bay."

Head of Arrow Lakes Developments Ltd Lindsay Moir, in his efforts to have a 130-acre piece of land removed from the agricultural land reserve has stated that "It is no secret that this land is not good for farming." This is false.

My wife and I are year-round residents of Galena Bay. We plant our gardens from seed in the spring and without the help of greenhouses, indoor lights, chemical fertilizers or pesticides, we grow a wide variety of staple and specialty produce. We have also raised sheep in the past and know from our own experience and that of neighbours that Galena Bay is a very hospitable place to farm. The piece of land in question is already in the agricultural land reserve (having already been assessed) and is clearly suitable for agriculture. Subdividing the land into 2.5-acre (and/or larger) pieces would be acceptable, as small scale (micro) farming is proving to be the most viable way to sustain our economy as well as our health.

It was infuriating to read Mr. Moir's account of the "neighbourhood meeting" in which he states that of the 20 or so people who attended the meeting "most are for it" and those who are against it simply "don't see an individual win".

I attended this meeting and was shocked to see only two other year-round residents of Galena Bay – the other 20 or so locals were absent. I went from person to person to find out who they were and why they were at this "neighbourhood meeting" when they obviously don't live here and aren't part of the community. It turned out that some of them live in Kelowna and are promised work during the development, some live in Calgary and own summer homes nearby while others came out of interest from Trout lake or the Nakusp area. All of the Galena Bay residents I spoke to after the meeting said that they were never told of the meeting, or else they were told too late to take time off work. All said that they would have loved to voice their opinions had they been notified in time. This was a mock community meeting about development, held by the development company to make the agricultural land reserve board believe that this project has local support.

To say that the people who oppose this development do so because they don't see a personal gain is false (and degrading). We understand that there is more money to be made immediately in condos than in families homesteading or farming. This is not a financial argument but an ethical one.

Building a seasonal, closed-gate community for people who already have homes such as the one proposed by ALDL, with a 10-acre septic field, multi-story condominiums, marina and all the associated traffic and pollution, is a giant step to erase everything that Mr. Moir is selling to his investors. This is not a community and it cannot sustain itself.

I hope that anyone who wants Canada and its communities to support ourselves, who supports agriculture and eco/adventure tourism, or who simply sees the earth as more than dollars and cents will oppose ALDL's proposed development in Galena Bay.

Please contact: Lonnie Parker (Director, Columbia Shuswap Regional District) email: LParker4@telus.net ; Tel: 250-837-5804; J. Jay Simons (Manager of Development Services, Columbia Shuswap Regional District) 781 Marine Park Dr. NE, Box 978, Salmon Arm B.C. V1E 4P1; Corky Evans (MLA) email: corky.evans.mla@leg.bc.ca; Tel: 250-354-5944.

Andrew Harding
Galena Bay

Girls' circles initiated in Slocan Valley as after-school program

submitted

Chris Berger, a youth worker in the Slocan Valley, has started an after-school program at WE Graham school and the Vallican Whole School for girls between the ages of 9 and 13. The groups run twice a month and so far have been well received.

Berger has a passion for supporting young girls and adolescents through what can be tumultuous times in their lives. Many girls experience difficulties in their relationships with each other and a lot of girls end up losing themselves and their voices in their bid to maintain friendships. The group's aim is to provide a safe and supportive place for the girls to explore issues relevant to this age group. Groups of this kind have been shown to enhance critical thinking skills for making wise and healthy choices, and to counter trends toward self-doubt and low self esteem.

Among the topics considered are friendship, body image, honouring diversity, communication skills and girl's psychology. Through creative expression, discussions, self-reflection and group exercises the girls gain new self-awareness and assertiveness skills, helping them hold onto their unique individuality.

Berger will be using Girl's Circle Facilitator Guides, which recognize the importance of high self esteem in such areas as literacy and preventing juvenile delinquency. Copies of the guide were paid for by Kootenay Restorative Justice, Slocan Valley Community Literacy Program, WE Graham Community Service Society, WE Graham Community School and the Vallican Whole School. The Slocan Valley Arts Council has generously provided art supplies for the group.

The facilitator guides will be kept in the resource library of Kootenay Restorative Justice at WE Graham Community Services in Slocan City and may be signed out to other individuals or organizations who would like to run girl's circles. For further information contact Chris Berger at 226-7902.

Chris Berger has started girls' circles at WE Graham (pictured here) and at the Vallican Whole.

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Decorate the Christmas tree
(Healing Centre)
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All stores open for finding those gifts
and
FILL the PICKUP TRUCK with CHRISTMAS SHARING
DON'T MISS THE FUN !

Diagnostic equipment wanted at Slocan Community Health Centre

by Jan McMurray

During this year's Light Up the Hospitals fundraising drive, community members are invited to make a donation to the Slocan Community Health Centre (SCHC) for a diagnostic analyzer.

"This is a $4,000 piece of equipment that enables nurses to get a more accurate result when the lab is not available during off hours. It benefits our residents and ER patients alike," said Suzanne McCombs, Rural Nurse Educator for Nakusp and New Denver.

"The more services we can build in the Kootenay Boundary, the better," said Jane Power of the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital Health Foundation. "The analyzer will minimize trips to other health facilities in the region, and will allow for faster results."

Because SCHC does not have its own foundation to fundraise through, people can make their cheques out to the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital (KBRH) Health Foundation and write "SCHC" in the memo line. The foundation will send out charitable tax receipts. Power assures that the foundation has both an ethical and legal obligation to allocate the funds to the health centre of the donor's choice.

Power adds that there has always been philanthropy in health care. "There has never been a time when tax dollars have paid for it all," she said.

Light Up the Hospitals!

New Denver's Slocan Community Health Centre is fundraising for a diagnostic analyzer and is accepting donations

A big thank you to everyone who has donated so far. Pledge Day (December 1) was very successful. The centre will continue to fundraise until it has reached the goal of $4,000.

Please drop off your cheque at Slocan Community Health Centre

Cheque is to be made out to: Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital (KBRH) Health Foundation, with "SCHC" in the memo line. Charitable tax receipts will be issued

Columbia Power Corporation rocks Slocan Valley rail trail

submitted

The Columbia Power Corporation recently contributed $2,000 to fund improvements to the Slocan Valley Rail Trail, the 50-kilometre corridor passing through the Slocan Valley where the former Canadian Pacific Railway line was located.

"The portion of the trail that passes through an industrial area in South Slocan required some upgrading to make it safer for trail users," said Audrey Repin, Manager of Community Relations and Communications for Columbia Power. "The Slocan Valley Heritage Trail Society approached us with a plan to place boulders along the trail's edge, and we were happy to help by arranging and funding the rock delivery."

Slocan Valley Heritage Rail Trail volunteers helped place 19 loads of rock on the trail this year. Front row, left to right: Elizabeth Dekker and Linda Fraser, Selkirk Paving; Dennis Stefanik, Slocan Valley Heritage Trail Society; Barb White and Brenda Sinclair, Selkirk Paving; Audrey Repin, Columbia Power; Paul Markin, Cham Roadbuilding Contractors. Back row, left to right: Rory Lindsay and Brian Rehwald, Slocan Valley Heritage Trail Society.

The Brilliant Expansion Consortium provided the rock, Jim Ostrowalker of Keen Excavating loaded it, and Selkirk Paving placed the boulders. Paul Markin of Cham Roadbuilding Contractors agreed to haul the 19 loads of rock at cost.

"We're pleased that this section is now protected and we can begin vegetation restoration," said Rory Lindsay, Chair of the Slocan Valley Heritage Trail Society. The Society is responsible for managing and protecting the trail, which is being transformed into a world-class recreational attraction.

For more information about Columbia Power Corporation's Community Sponsorship Funding Program, contact Audrey Repin at 365-8585 or 365-9502 or visit www.columbiapower.org.

Slocan Valley Co-op looking for logo

submitted

The Slocan Valley Co-op invites all Valley artists to imagine and create a striking and simple logo reflecting the store's colourful past while looking towards the co-op's exciting future.

Next year the Slocan Valley Co-op will be celebrating its 50th birthday. The celebrations will begin at the annual general meeting some time in February. At that time, the board of directors is hoping to present a brand new logo to the community/owners.

Vince Salvo, board president, is enthusiastic about what will come out of this project. "This valley has so many people with outstanding talent, and we have so much inspiration right here," he says. "The mountains, the river, the Doukhobor history. Who knows what our local artists might do!" Artists/designers interested in dreaming up an image to represent our valley's co-op in the 21st century can contact Vince at 226-0012 to find out the details and how to enter the competition.

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Happy Holidays from all of us.
- Sita, Doug, Elmir & Chris

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Silverton council, November 28: Mayor gets community talking about cell phone service

by Art Joyce

•Mayor Everett reported that he has decided to table until the next meeting his draft motion to petition Telus for cell phone service in the valley. The mayor wanted more time to draft his motion to reflect conversations with Village residents on the issue. "I think everybody is of the same opinion – they enjoy the peace and quiet of the Village without cell phones. At the same time, they acknowledge it is a safety issue. They know progress will come sooner or later – they'd just rather it was later." Realistically, Everett admitted, Telus will be unlikely to invest in the infrastructure needed for such a small market share.

•Councillor Bell reported on her attendance at the RDCK planning meeting for the upcoming OCP workshops. The purpose of the meeting was to select the members of its advisory planning board for Area H. For the north Slocan Valley, they are: Carol Gordon, Wendy Harlock, Maggie Bajer, Liza Ireland, and Gloria Lisgo. For the south valley: April Anderson, Gerry Shaw, Greg Bachelder, Frank Nixon, Bonnie Baker, Derek Murphy, and Walter Swetlishoff. The appointments carry three-year terms.

•Councillor Laktin reported that the fundraising table at the Bosun Hall flea market for the Friends of the Memorial Hall was successful, but had no figures yet.

CAO Junko Ida reported that she and Mayor Everett met with the architect to review final plans for the Memorial Hall expansion.

•Councillor Masun was absent due to convalescence from the birth of her son Maksym on November 19.

•An email was read from ICBC Loss Prevention Co-ordinator Ingrid Brakop congratulating Silverton on the Zero Crash Month award of $2,500. Mayor Everett said thanks are due the RCMP for the Speed Watch unit's presence during October. "I'm sure that helped slow down traffic considerably."

•Three readings each were given of Bylaw 440-2006, bylaws to amend Village of Silverton water rates and regulations; and Bylaw 442-2006, which clarifies the existing bylaw. The discount of 10% given if water users pay for a year in advance by February 15 has been changed to 5%. Administration costs for water services have been amended from 10% to 15%. Mayor Everett said the change in rates reflects the Village's need to pay off an outstanding waterworks loan of $200,000 from the Municipal Finance Authority, dating from 2002.

•Bylaw 441-2006, a bylaw to amend Village of Silverton garbage collection rates, was given three readings. The annual fee for weekly pickup has been raised from $75 to $100. Householders are issued 55 garbage tags per year; the cost of additional tags has been raised from $2 to $3. Mayor Everett said the new rates reflect increases in Regional District transfer rates, as well as employee and transportation costs.

•Council's meeting schedule for 2007 was adopted.

Grand opening of gym and fitness centre

by Jan McMurray

New Denver's community fitness centre and gym at Slocan Community Health Centre (SCHC) is officially open.

A concerted effort of Interior Health, SCHC and its Auxiliary, Recreation Commission No. 6, the Village of New Denver and its Health Matters Committee, this facility is the first of its kind in the province. New Denver's is the first Primary Health Care Centre to have its own physical fitness centre on site.

SCHC will use the facility for some of its primary health care programs. The fitness centre, which Recreation Commission No. 6 has been operating since 2001 out of the health care centre's annex building, has moved to the newly renovated building. Members of the public are welcome to become members and use the exercise equipment and gym by calling Lorna Obermayr at 358-7965.

Renovations to the facility took about one year to complete. Many community members volunteered their time to help transform the building from the SCHC maintenance department's offices and storage areas to what it is today. Lumber salvaged from the renovation was tendered, and many of the items stored in the building were sold at a "gym sale." Proceeds were put back into the project.

IH leases the building to the Village and the Recreation Commission manages it.

The gym was originally built as part of a reform school for boys in New Denver.

The grand opening of New Denver's community fitness centre and gym took place November 27. The ribbon was untied several times so that representatives from all organizations involved could have a turn.

Shelley Welch and the New Denver Kootenay Savings Credit Union was one of VSSM's major sponsors this year. The society sends a big thanks to the ladies from the branch that came out to help serve at the VSSM picnic.

The Valhalla Summer School of Fine Arts Society (VSSFAS) would like to take this time to thank all the businesses & individuals that have contributed in some way to our programs and to the Society!! Thanks to your generosity we have had a great 8th year. Our four programs this summer have been very successful with over 400 participants & over 700 people coming into our communities to strengthen the economy. This community has opened its arms and embraced us with much support & enthusiasm, as well as, generosity from many corporations & individuals from across Canada. That is why we want to let you all know how TRULY GRATEFUL we are to all of you, for your donations & contributions!!

We simply could not do this without you!

Most Sincerely,
Heather Huether
President, Valhalla Summer School of Fine Arts Society

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Kaslo's Christmas Light Up event – taking it to the street - December 8

by Jan McMurray

Kaslo's Christmas street festival and Light Up is happening December 8 from 4:30 to 8 pm. The main street will be abuzz, so bundle up and come on out for a festive evening of fun.

There will be pictures with Santa, Christmas trees for sale, hot dogs and hot chocolate, the JV Humphries choir, street entertainers and the parade, of course, starting at 6 pm.

Most of the shops will be open. Fern is hosting a Red Hat competition. Anyone – man, woman or child – who shows up at Fern's Flowers in a red hat will be judged and could win a prize. There will also be a Christmas card contest. JVH students from K to grade 7 will have their cards on display at the various shops, and local artist Regina Thomas will be the judge. The Chamber will present prizes to the winners.

Sponsored by the Chamber and Front Street merchants, this year's Light Up in Kaslo is not to be missed!

Sylvester came out for the annual PALS Creative Hands Fair on November 25 in Nakusp.

Don't miss Kaslo's annual Light Up celebration on December 8!

Eric's Meat Market & Deli
"Serving Kaslo and Area since 1942"
635 Front Street
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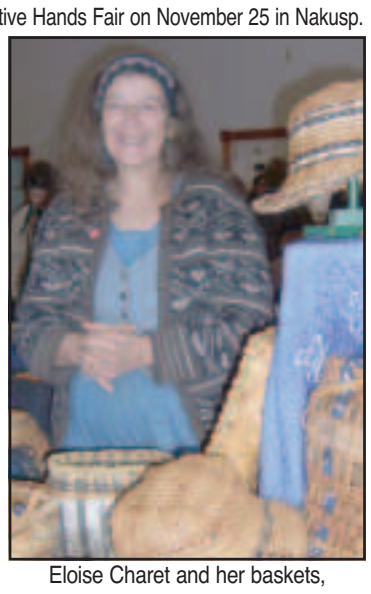
Fresh Turkeys and Hams



Eloise Charet and her baskets, Silverton Christmas Faire, December 3.

Kaslo Drugs 1980 – 2006
Twenty-six years of professional pharmacy service
Our thanks to Kaslo, New Denver, Meadow Creek, and area for your support.
Come out and Enjoy Kaslo Light-Up, December 8!!

Dara Ferrier was helping out at the Kootenay Spoons booth at the Silverton Christmas Faire.

The Clothes Hanger
441 Front Street
PO Box 881
Kaslo BC V0G 1M0
jimnbabs@telus.net
250-353-9688
Enjoy Kaslo Light-Up, December 8th

The Best in Canadian Crafts
Join us for Light-Up Celebrations and specials Friday, December 8, until 8 pm. We have lots of new stock, with unique gifts for every budget.
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phone: 1-250-353-7474 • Kaslo, BC • fernsflowers@telus.net

Anne Phillips of Essay Enterprises had a wide selection at the 33rd annual St. Anthony's Flea Market, November 25 at the Bosun.

Evelyn Kirkaldy was one of a dozen or so local artists at the Valley Artisans Christmas Salon at the Winlaw Hall on November 25. This piece is entitled Idaho Peakin'.

Festival weekends discussed at special meeting of Kaslo Council

by Jill Braley

Kaslo council held a special meeting on November 23 at the Seniors Hall to discuss festival weekends in the village. The meeting was called because of the many concerns stemming from 2006 Kaslo Jazz Fest.

In attendance were Acting Mayor Pete Vass, Councillors Rich Jones, Molly Leathwood, and Suzan Hewat, Vivian Tam of the Community Consultative Group, Trish Bennett, campground attendant, Marianne Johnstone, Kaslo Jazz Etc Society, Corporal Jason Fiddler, RCMP, and Kevin Hoffart, Chamber of Commerce and 25 members of the public.

The biggest concern was around the need for more infrastructure, particularly public washrooms. More garbage cans along Front Street was another suggestion. Unlicensed vendors and illegal camping were problems during this year's Jazz Fest. Corporal Fiddler was in favour of a Bylaw Enforcement Officer to deal with bylaw infractions such as these.

Fiddler said security was an issue for the RCMP on the Friday night, when a large Jazz Festival crowd moved from a confined facility at Kaslo Bay Park to the downtown core, with no security in place. It was suggested that concerned business owners could hire private security to protect their property.

Most citizens were very positive about festival weekends in Kaslo, but all agreed changes need to be made to ensure Kaslo's infrastructure is not stretched beyond its capacity and to ensure citizens are not subjected to overly loud noise or property damage.

The input from this meeting was referred to the Village's Planning and Development committee, which will make a recommendation to council.

Santa Claus made a grand entrance at Nakusp's annual Light-Up, November 24.

Coyote sightings in Kaslo area

by Jill Braley

Numerous, frequent coyote sightings have been witnessed in the Kaslo area, including 8th Street, A Avenue, the Valley, Zwicky Road and Mirror Lake. Coyotes are predatory wild animals and will hunt down small animals, including cats, dogs and chickens. Unattended small children can also be at risk. Nine cats have gone missing and one small dog is believed to have been killed by a coyote. The Village of Kaslo has been notified and is contacting Gillian Sanders, Bear Smart Co-ordinator, for assistance.

PHOTO CREDIT: SIMON KELLY

Winlaw PAC's annual fundraiser, Breakfast with Santa, was another great success this year. It was held December 3 at Appledale Hall.

Holiday tradition hits the stage

submitted

Scrooge's Christmas Carol – The Play is a stage adaptation of Charles Dickens' family holiday favourite brought to life at the Capitol Theatre through the direction of Jeff Forst of Cedar Street Productions. With a stellar line-up of local actors, the tale is told of Ebenezer Scrooge and his encounters with the spirits of Christmas Past, Present, and Future.

The production runs from December 14 through December 16 with evening performances each night at 7:30 pm and an additional matinee at 2 pm December 16. Tickets range from $10/adult and $5/child to $25/family of four and may be purchased at the Capitol Theatre box office Tuesday to Friday from 12 - 4:30 pm (352-6363).

Buy a *Valley Voice* subscription for out-of-town relatives
Only $55.12 (includes GST)
Call 358-7215 for details

Counselling service for New Denver

by Jan McMurray

Andrea Wright, a recent graduate of the Vancouver College of Counsellor Training, has opened her home-based business, West Kootenay Counselling Service, in New Denver.

After 20 years of running a busy restaurant, Andrea was ready for a new career. "Nearly all my life I've been involved in resolving difficult situations of one kind or another which is why I am attracted to counselling. You know, life has a way of throwing curves – problems come up. It's nobody's fault. Sometimes you just need to talk it out."

Andrea offers counselling services for marital or relationship problems, stress, depression, eating disorders, family violence and abuse, the loss of a loved one – "just about anything," she says, "the whole ball of wax."

Andrea says that counselling is basically about change. "Talking to another person about something you want to change in your life is remarkably effective. Everybody knows this works with family and friends but it isn't always a good idea to unload on them all the time. It's good to have an impartial listener. That's where I come in."

Seeking counselling is a huge sign of strength and emotional intelligence, she says. "Most people these days think nothing of visiting a doctor to take care of their physical health. It's beginning to be just as important to care for your emotional needs as well. Like my daughter says, 'All good star trekkies know that even the Captain must occasionally go to the counsellor!'"

To contact Andrea, call 250-358-7995.

Andrea Wright has recently opened her counselling business in New Denver.

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Saturday	$ 65.00	$ 75.00	$ 85.00
Sunday	$ 65.00	$ 75.00	$ 85.00
+VIP Pass	+$ 115.00	+$ 125.00	+$ 150.00
Youth (13-18)			
3-Day Pass	$ 60.00	$ 70.00	$ 80.00
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Nakusp Music Fest July 13 - 15 2007
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All prices incl. 6% GST.
FREE SPECIAL EDITION POSTER - with all Christmas Special ticket orders.
One adult ticket must be purchased to receive one child's pass at N/C.
For more information or ticket orders call 250.265.2141 or 1-877-265-5565 or go online at www.nakuspmusicfest.ca or visit our office at 119 Broadway Street in downtown Nakusp.

Nakusp hot springs: plans for Phase II and source protection in the works

by Jan McMurray

The hot springs was once again a hot topic at the most recent council meeting, on November 23. Council decided to go ahead with the planning for Phase 2 renovations, and heard a presentation regarding protection of the hot springs source.

Walter Schredl of Yoneda & Associates submitted a proposal for Phase 2 of the mechanical system upgrade. The work described mainly involves upgrading the heating and ventilation systems, and making them more energy efficient.

Council agreed to hire the company to do up the drawings and specifications for the work, and to prepare the tendering package. The estimate for this preliminary part of the proposal as submitted by Schredl is $14,600. The mayor asked Treasurer Richard Mahoney if funds were available for this. He answered that the funds would have to be raised through community bonds or borrowed from reserve funds as done for previous hot springs renovation expenditures.

CAO Bob Lafleur said he thought it was necessary to move forward with this work. He pointed out that it was clear from the beginning that there would be two phases of renovations. Also, the facility had to be closed from November 18 to 23 because of a boiler pump failure, resulting in no hot water for showers or for the in-floor heating system, and these are the types of issues that would be addressed in Phase 2. "We can't stop now," he said.

Councillor Heppner agreed, saying "We can't have the $700,000 we've already spent down the tubes for nothing."

Paul Blackett from Kala Groundwater Consulting Ltd. attended the council meeting as a delegation to speak about a source protection program for the hot springs.

He spoke about protecting the source from vandalism, but also from changes in temperature and flow of the spring water that can be caused by Mother Nature and by human activities such as logging and agriculture.

Blackett explained that he was working with former hot springs manager Gary Assel on source enhancement and protection back in 2004, and the fact that still nothing had been done to protect the collection box was a "bugbear" for him. He urged council to protect the source from vandalism, pointing out that a pop bottle stuffed into one of the pipes recently brought the operation of the springs to a halt. "Where the collection is now needs to be bullet proof," he said.

With winter coming on, he suggested a short-term solution, i.e. secure metal lids for the collection box and for the central primary spring source. He also recommended that council do some educating on this issue – the public owns this facility, so why vandalize it?

Blackett also recommended that the Village apply for tenure over the land to the south and east of the source. He says there is a large gulley separating logging activities from the source area, but it is only a matter of time before the proximity of cutblocks to the source becomes an issue. CAO Bob Lafleur, in a follow-up telephone interview, said Blackett had been authorized to look into options available for extending the southern and eastern property boundaries to protect the springs from broadcast forms of pollution, like logging and agriculture. Blackett will also measure the flow rate and temperature of the water entering the collection box from each of the three pipes, and will calculate the desired flow rate and temperature.

Lafleur said other things being considered to protect the facility from vandalism are a video monitoring system and a gate to keep people out after hours.

Christmas Hamper project seeks toys, donations

submitted

Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services (ACLCS) are once again recruiting volunteers for the annual Christmas Hamper Project. Last December, 110 hampers were distributed to families in need and it is expected the number will increase this year.

The Christmas hamper is designed to provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner to people in the region. There is also a toy for each child in the household. The community has been very generous in the past with donations of cash and toys for the hampers. A gift is provided for every child up to the age of 18 years in the communities of Nakusp, Burton, Fauquier, Edgewood and Trout Lake. Gifts are not provided for visiting relatives.

Donation boxes have been placed in several locations around town for non-perishable items as well as new unwrapped toys. Please do not send used items. No stuffed toys are needed because each year the liquor store donates a new bear for every child. Gifts for older children and teens are often overlooked so please think of them too.

If you're unsure what to buy, there are cans at many locations for cash donations, with a tax receipt issued. One hundred percent of these monies go toward hampers. Gifts and food are starting to pour in on a daily basis. Community Services has already been presented with a $1000 cheque from the West Kootenay Toy Run Association.

Wylie's Pub will be supporting the hamper project his year by holding a Lunch for Toys event on Wednesday, December 6 from 11:30 am to 2:30 pm. Bring a brand new toy to donate and get your soup and sandwich free.

Volunteers are needed to sort groceries, wrap gifts, pick up donation boxes and deliver some of the hampers. If you would like to volunteer for this worthwhile project or need to request a hamper for yourself or someone in need, contact Colleen at 265-3674. The deadline for hamper forms is December 18 and the hampers will be distributed on the 21st of December from 10 am to 1 pm.

George Kolatschek's Beadloft Antiques & Collectibles on Nakusp's main street is well worth a browse.

Something for everyone at Beadloft

by Jan McMurray

If you're a treasure hunter, you're going to want to check out Beadloft, a store that has recently hit street level on Broadway in Nakusp.

Formerly operating above Nakusp's Selkirk College, George Kolatschek took the first chance he could to move down to ground level and is now in the old Time Warp storefront. George has a super selection of antiques and collectibles, some dating back to 1790.

He has silver from King George III, pewter water pitchers and tin water pitchers from the 1790s. He's got string instruments, harmonicas, silver, crystal, glass, pottery, porcelain, cutlery, Royal Dalton figurines, Humble figurines, jewelry, paintings, sewing machines, furniture, trunks, old cameras, old maps, baskets, an old butter churn, dolls, stained glass windows – you name it!

The store is called Beadloft because there are also beads of every kind at the store, as well as beading books and tools. George used to bead himself until his eyes began failing him.

George says he buys most of the stock at auctions from Ottawa to Vancouver.

Beadloft's hours are 10 am - 5 pm Wednesday to Sunday. After January 1, the store will close at 4 pm.

Job placement program for people with disabilities

by Jan McMurray

Arrow and Slocan Lake Community Services will soon be looking for employers who would like some extra help.

ASLCS has a contract with Service Canada to place up to 18 people with disabilities in the workplace. It is a 21-week program.

"We'll be looking for both paid and unpaid work for people, and training resources for them," explained Doug Switzer, ASLCS Administrator.

He says the Outreach office will handle the intake, and Margaret Driscoll has been hired to facilitate the program. "It will probably be January before we approach employers," he said. "We're hoping to get these people some valuable experience."

Edgewood is prepared for emergency

by Jan McMurray

In the event of a widespread power blackout, Edgewood is prepared.

The community has purchased two portable 35,000-watt generators that are capable of providing emergency power to the Legion Hall, the general store and the water supply.

During the 2003 fire season, an emergency planning committee formed and made a plan for Edgewood. Robert Murray is on the committee.

"The plan analyzes the different types of emergencies – floods, wildfires – and we wanted to do something precautionary. In any of these emergencies, one probable risk is a power blackout," he said.

The committee identified the sites of importance in the community: the Legion Hall, as it would be the Emergency Operations Centre and place for people to stay in case of an emergency; the general store, as it has fuel and refrigeration; and the water supply. The hall and the store have been fitted out with transfer switches. Murray says that because BC Hydro has not yet made a decision about its involvement in Edgewood's water system, outfitting the water supply with a transfer switch is still in progress.

"The Columbia Basin Trust, provincial and federal governments, the RDCK and the community have all kicked into this," said Murray. "Terry Warren [Emergency Co-ordinator for the region] and the RDCK have been great. Over a period of just over two years, we're just about there."

Live ammunition found at Nakusp schools

Nakusp RCMP report that live ammunition has been found at both the elementary and secondary schools in Nakusp four times since the summer.

School maintenance crews found live 12-gauge rounds while mowing the schools' yards on two occasions this past summer. Luckily, they made the discoveries before mowing over them. RCMP Constable Kristian Thomsen says the two incidents were then believed to be random acts.

Then on October 23, a teacher at NSS found another live 12-gauge round next to one of the school doors during school hours. The round was similar to the two found previously.

On November 20, school maintenance crews discovered 14 live 12-gauge rounds on the roof of NSS. These had weathered, so had been there for quite some time. Thomsen says it appears these were thrown onto the roof for some reason.

"It goes without saying how dangerous leaving live ammunition out in the open can be, especially when this is an area where many young children play. Ammunition can become volatile when left outside, as the casings break down and the gun powder inside becomes unstable due to heat, cold, rain and snow," said Thomsen.

Nakusp RCMP officers advise all parents to tell their children not to touch or play with any ammunition, and to notify a teacher or parent if they find any. RCMP is investigating. Any information about this can be reported to the Nakusp detachment at 265-3678.

Part-time VETERINARY ASSISTANT

Position requires compassion and good people skills as well as attention to detail and ability to multi-task. Computer skills essential. Only animal-lovers need apply. Send or deliver resume to **Nakusp Veterinary Clinic,**
RR #1, Site 5, C-45, Nakusp, BC V0G 1R0.
Deadline: December 11, noon.

ARROW ARTS COLLECTIVE HOLDS A PRE-CHRISTMAS CLOSEOUT "WAKE-WEEK" SALE

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WATCH FOR US AT OUR VARIOUS 2007 SUMMER VENUES

RDCK, November 25: Wright nominated for another term as chair

by Jan McMurray

•Gary Wright was nominated as RDCK board chair for a third one-year term by both Director Carol Bell and Director John Kettle. Josh Smienk was nominated as Chair of the Central Kootenay Regional Hospital District (CKRHD) board by RDCK board Vice Chair Al Dawson. The chair of the CKRHD board automatically becomes RDCK board vice chair. Nominations can be made at the December 9 meeting, when the election will take place.

•The recently announced change in the funding formula for grants-in-lieu of taxes related to BC Hydro and Columbia Power Corporation's power generating facilities has raised some questions among RDCK board members. Staff was authorized to make the necessary arrangements for a meeting with the Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance to be held in Nelson on or about December 7 to discuss the perceived anomalies associated with the additional grants-in-lieu of taxes.

Also, Director Dooley (Mayor of Nelson) wishes to meet with Areas E, F and H directors to review all documentation pertinent to Nelson boundary expansion in light of the recent changes.

The board also received an Information Bulletin from the Ministry of Labour & Citizens' Services announcing municipalities will receive $17.1 million from the Province as grants-in-lieu of property taxes for 2006, based on the assessed value of provincially-owned office buildings and other property in each municipality. The board decided to write to the Minister noting the oversight regarding the lack of funding for provincial infrastructure located in rural areas and requesting her ministry address this issue. Copies of the letter will be forwarded to all other Regional Districts in the Province.

•Staff will send an urgent request to the UBCM President to support the establishment of a rural task force to review the current provincial sewerage and small water system regulations. The correspondence will suggest that the task force be chaired by the UBCM Rural Director and that RDCK Director John Kettle (Area B) be appointed to the task force.

Area H: Advisory Planning Commissions appointed

•The Advisory Planning Commissions Bylaw was amended to allow for two commissions of a maximum of seven members each for Area H. Appointments were made to the two advisory planning commissions for the Area H planning process.

Appointed to the Slocan Valley North Advisory Planning Commission were: Liza Ireland (Hills), Carol Gordon (Hwy. 31A), Gloria Lisgo (Denver Siding), Maggie Bajer (Summit Lake), Wendy Harlock (rural Silverton). Gerry Toop (Rosebery) and Catherine Allaway (Sandon) are expected to be appointed at the next RDCK board meeting.

Appointed to the Slocan Valley South Advisory Planning Commission were: April Anderson (Slocan Park), Gerry Shaw (Passmore), Greg Bachelder (Winlaw), Frank Nixon (Winlaw), Bonnie Baker (Winlaw), Derek Murphy (Slocan Park), Walter Swetlishoff (Crescent Valley).

•The Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission (SVEDC) asked for support of the RDCK for an application under the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund for construction of infrastructure for high-speed internet service to the portion of Area H just north of Crescent Valley to the south end of Slocan Lake and from Hills to rural New Denver.

The board authorized staff to make the funding application for the Slocan Valley broadband project in the total amount of $700,000 with 1/3 of the funding to come from a new service. Staff was also instructed to work with the SVEDC in defining a service area and determining costs related to operation and ownership of a broadband network in the Slocan Valley. The service will be established with appropriate voter consent.

•The Crescent Valley Volunteer Fire Department was authorized to provide First responder Service within the Crescent Valley Fire Department service area.

Area D: Shadrack working on reservoir issues

•Area D Director Andy Shadrack reported on his work to improve communications between the US Army Corps of Engineers, which operates the dams on the Columbia River system in the US, and officials on the Canadian side. He has been working on this because in late April this year, the Corps decided not to spill any water out of Libby Dam in order to protect people in Portland from flooding, and this resulted in higher levels upstream on Kootenay Lake. There were a number of properties in Area D where the ability to operate marinas was compromised, with one property owner suffering $25,000 worth of damage.

"If someone is making a decision to increase the risk in my area of the Regional District, I want to know about it," said Shadrack in a telephone interview. He added, "It may be that this year they didn't understand the full import of the risk when they made the decision not to spill the water."

He attended a meeting in the fall in Bonners Ferry of the International Kootenay Lake Board of Control, where he raised this issue. At the RDCK board meeting, Shadrack said Canadian municipal officials received a public acknowledgement from the Corps that communications with them needed to be improved. He would like to return for the next meeting in February, where the Corps will outline management plans for 2007. The RDCK covers Shadrack's travel costs for this.

•Marianne Crowe, the RDCK's Manager of Engineering and Environmental Services, reported that she had arranged a meeting with a BC Hydro environmental staffperson in following up on a concern of Director Shadrack's that Duncan Dam operations affect the mosquito situation in the Lardeau. The goal of the meeting will be to set up a protocol so the Duncan Dam operator and the mosquito control contractor can work together. Shadrack put forward a motion at the September board meeting that a letter be sent to BC Hydro asking them to discuss paying for an appropriate portion of the Lardeau Valley Mosquito Abatement program. Discussions about Hydro paying for a portion of the costs are ongoing.

•The Kaslo InfoNet Society wrote in to request the support of the RDCK in its application for $32,900 under the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund for extension of high-speed internet service to Shutty Bench, Schroeder Creek, Johnson's Landing, Fletcher Creek, Mirror Lake, Woodbury and Ainsworth. The board voted to support the application, provided there is no cost to the RDCK.

•A grant application will be submitted to the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund and two other funding programs for the design, construction and monitoring of a pilot septic treatment system at the Central landfill near Salmo.

Area K: bylaw to allow subdivision given third reading

•A bylaw which will amend the zoning of a 32.28 hectare parcel of land in Edgewood, at the intersection of Calder Road and Highway 6, from agricultural to rural residential, was given third reading. If adopted, property owners Bill McKenzie and Jan Toothill plan to subdivide the parcel into 14 residential lots of approximately two hectares each. The adoption of the bylaw will be withheld for one year or until the RDCK has received confirmation of a preliminary Layout Approval from the Ministry of Transportation with respect to the proposed subdivision.

New Denver council, November 28: OCP public meeting scheduled for December 18

by Jan McMurray

•Mayor Wright and CAO Carol Gordon met with Ramona Mattix, Manager of Development Services, RDCK planning department, to discuss New Denver's Official Community Plan (OCP) process. Gordon reported that Mattix was willing to offer her services and some of her staff time to New Denver's OCP review. Gordon said she told Mattix she did not foresee huge changes in zoning. Mattix would sit in on the public consultation meetings and prepare drafts for presentation to the public. Village staff will update the zoning bylaws and the RDCK will provide the mapping services. Council voted to allocate up to $10,000 for the RDCK to prepare the update to the OCP, and to have Village staff prepare the update to the zoning bylaw with the RDCK providing the mapping services. Council decided to have a pre-OCP process discussion with Mattix on December 11 if possible, and to schedule a public meeting on December 18 at 7 pm at Knox Hall.

•CAO Gordon brought forward information on the recently announced Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF). The Village can submit four applications under this program, which will fund up to 2/3 of the total cost of the projects. Each community is allowed to submit two "green" applications; 60% of the fund is for green projects and 40% is for other projects. Council had a preliminary discussion on possible projects for the program. It was generally agreed that the Centennial Park / boat launch and floats / playground upgrades could be one project. Another project was to pave and create gutters on Sixth Ave. and Slocan Ave. Mayor Wright suggested that this could be a "green" project, as there were ways the gutters could be done that would probably qualify. Councillor Bunka suggested that because the needed new roofs for the Silvery Slocan Museum and Nikkei Centre were eligible for funding under the Heritage Legacy Fund of BC, and that there was $28,000 in the reserve fund for this type of capital project, perhaps this project should be struck from the list of possible projects for MRIF funding. At the next meeting, council will decide on the projects and direct staff to apply for MRIF funding for them.

•Councillor Bunka reported on the Building Sustainable Communities workshop she attended in Kelowna November 22 and 23. She said the workshop was excellent and that she received "a ton of information." She said the best quote was: "Better to mess with society than with nature." There was information on how to promote walking and cycling, and recycling. She also learned of interesting alternatives to septic systems. Councillor Greensword asked if the workshop touched on the issue of non-resident homeowners. Bunka said the only information in that regard had to do with imposing penalties, which she knew council would not be interested in.

•Councillor Bunka reported that the Heritage Advisory Committee met on November 16, with Bob Dubreuil of the Silvery Slocan Historical Society and Gail Swanson of the Kyowakai Society present. Both facilities need a roof replaced. Also, there seems to be a small ant problem in the museum. This will be followed up in the spring.

•Council set the next public meeting date for the Centennial Park Plan for December 14 at 7 pm at Knox Hall.

•Mayor Wright reported on the November 25 RDCK board meeting. The Area H advisory planning commission for the northern valley has been appointed, with CAO Carol Gordon as one of its members. Also, Wright was nominated for a third one-year term as Chair of the board; the vote will occur at the December 9 RDCK board meeting.

Help wanted for Silverton arena renovations

Work is underway at the Silverton curling rink to replace the roof, increase the ice surface and replace the sand floor with cement.

For the project to be a success, the Slocan Lake Arena Society needs help from businesses and residents. The society is asking for donations of cash, labour, or food for the volunteer workers. "Invest in your community!" is the call.

"We'd like to thank all the businesses and volunteers who have helped us and continue to support us," said Barb Mark of the society. "Your time and generosity is greatly appreciated."

Society members are anxious to get the facility re-opened and to have skating, curling, hockey, broomball and figure skating back.

To help out, call Rhonda at 358-7261 or Barb at 358-2266.

The New Denver area Pathfinders recently helped out with the Silverton arena renovation project.

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VILLAGE OF NEW DENVER

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING – CENTENNIAL PARK PLAN

The residents of the Village of New Denver are requested to take notice that a second Public Meeting will be held in Knox Hall on Thursday, December 14, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss revisions to the draft Centennial Park Plan. Please come and talk about our park plan.

Carol Gordon, CMC
Administrator

Kaslo council, November 28: New offer proposed for provincial building

by Jill Braley

•After council members met with the Minister at the UBCM convention about purchasing the provincial building, Accommodation & Real Estate Services (ARES) sent the Village a new proposal. The correspondence states that the new proposal "will accomplish the Village of Kaslo's goal to acquire the 'old' courthouse and satisfy our mandate to dispose of property at fair market value."

The Province's lowest justifiable price for the building is $225,000. The Village originally offered $120,000, subject to a referendum. Under the new proposal, the Village would pay $120,000 cash. The Government Agent, which leases a space in the building, would pay its rent directly to ARES over the next 10 years, totalling $105,000. This makes up the $225,000.

Councillors Vass and Hewat made and seconded a motion that the Village of Kaslo conduct a referendum on loan authorization to purchase the building. The motion was opposed by Mayor Holland and Councillor Jones, and was defeated. Councillor Leathwood was absent. A discussion regarding the purchase of the building was tabled until the next regular meeting of Council on December 14.

•Christa Sheldrick wrote to council stating she had recently purchased the former Crooked Cafe building and was planning to open a restaurant and coffee house there called Bluebelle Bistro & Beanery. She is applying for a food primary liquor license, along with a patron participation entertainment endorsement (any form of entertainment that encourages patrons to participate, such as sing-songs, dancing and karaoke, or perform stand-up comedy routines). Her hours of operation would be seven days per week opening at 10 am, closing at 11 pm, except for Thursday to Saturday closing at 1 am. Council will review the application at the next Planning & Development Committee meeting, which takes place on Wednesday, December 6 at 4 pm at the Village Hall.

During Q&A council was asked if the former or current owner of this building has been asked to connect to the Village sewer as required by Bylaw 973 – Sewer Regulation. Mayor Holland said he would check with the CAO and advise.

•CAO Rae Sawyer advised council she had met with Ramona Mattix, Director of Planning Services for the Regional District of Central Kootenay on November 23 and provided Mattix with a copy of Kaslo's Official Community Plan. Areas discussed were: removing the present campground location in view of Kootenay Lake levels changing; heritage planning; energy efficiency; firesmart planning and rural-urban fire interface; water conservation; liquid waste management planning; boundary expansion; best use of Village-owned lands; need for proactive economic development; growing need for affordable housing; and SmartGrowth BC. Mattix will be invited to attend a single purpose special meeting of council, to be held at a mutually convenient time.

•Council is in the midst of reviewing a draft operational and maintenance service agreement between the Village and the Regional District for the McDonald Creek water service area, which is part of Area D. The draft agreement will be discussed at the next Administration & Finance Committee meeting on December 13.

•The Village will approve an application for funding to the Conservation Feasibility Planning Program for an engineering study of the City Hall building for a maximum expenditure of $2,000.

•Councillor Jones reported that he had met with the Trailblazers and youth in regards to the paintball area near the Kaslo River Trail. In a memo to council, he says the paintball area has been marked to the satisfaction of both groups and that the concerns around the compatibility of the two groups have been addressed. He also said he would follow up in the future to make sure the groups are looking after the area.

•Gillian Sanders, Bear Smart Co-ordinator, wrote to council to request a $2,500 contribution to the program in 2007 as in the past. She also asked for updates to bylaws and provided a 2006 summary of the program. This was referred to both the 2007 budget deliberations and the Administration & Finance committee for recommendation to council.

•Council received four letters from members of the community (Keleegh Sinclaire, Mardy Grainger, Helen Woolgar and Jill Braley), all expressing concern over the amount of the 2005 audit bill (approximately $21,000). All letters were referred to the December 13 Administration & Finance committee meeting for recommendation to council. Jill Braley also asked for clarification regarding a financial report covering the first 10 months of 2006, presented at the November 14 council meeting. Braley stated this statement appears to have a negative balance of $67,467.66 and asked if the Village was over budget or if this was an accounting error. Council responded that programmers were addressing this issue, and feel it is a programming error. CAO Rae Sawyer said she hoped the matter would be resolved within days.

Rosewood Cafe owner takes Light Up concerns to council

by Jill Braley

Grant McKenzie, owner and chef, Rosewood Cafe, attended the most recent council meeting as a delegation to speak to issues around this year's Christmas Light Up event.

In the past, Light Up has been scheduled on the first Friday of December, and most of the activities have taken place at the Rosewood. The Chamber has decided to schedule the event for the second Friday of December this year, and to have activities along the length of Front Street.

McKenzie said he was very disappointed about the lack of communication between the Chamber and the cafe about the change of location. He voiced his displeasure with Councillor Hewat, the Village representative on the Chamber, for not calling him to tell him about the change. He also reminded Mayor Holland of his election commitment to visit every business on Front Street, and pointed out that the mayor had not come to the Rosewood. McKenzie stated the businesses all work hard to survive in this town and all of them need help. "It's about time we all start working together."

McKenzie said he did not have a problem with the changes around the Light Up event, but "to browbeat us and everything else that has gone on is disgraceful. I am a professional chef, working all over the world and for you people to do what you have done to the Rosewood is disgraceful and I feel disheartened. I have 500 kids looking for hot dogs at the Rosewood on December 1st. Whether it's hot dogs, hot chocolate or other items that are given out – that's what it's all about – for the kids!"

Councillor Hewat stated that she sits at the Chamber as an observer, not to direct the Chamber's actions. She said she does not attend the meetings to express the will of council, but rather to report back to council on Chamber activities. Councillor Jones felt council should now become involved to discuss this "time sensitive" issue with the Chamber of Commerce to work things out to the satisfaction of all. Mayor Holland stated he felt the issue was solely with the Chamber. Councillor Vass expressed concern that citizens from Meadow Creek and areas would come into Kaslo on December 1st expecting to see Christmas Light Up. Councillor Hewat stated the event had been advertised with the December 8 date. McKenzie was thanked for appearing before council.

During Q&A council members were asked if they were aware of a petition to have the Christmas Light Up venue moved from the Rosewood Cafe to the centre of Front Street. Councillor Jones responded that Jim Archer from the Clothes Hanger had given him a copy of a letter with 13 signatures of people from the business community who were in favour of changing the format to create a Front Street Christmas Festival, with other activities planned along Front Street.

Kaslo residents can apply for energy efficiency grants

submitted

In the midst of federal cutbacks to energy efficiency programs, the Village of Kaslo has been chosen by the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources to participate in the Community Action on Energy Efficiency pilot program. Funding for this $2.1 million program has been confirmed to March 2007, offering energy efficiency grants on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Energy Savings Plan is a part of this pilot program. Up to $2,500 per household in ESP incentives and utility rebates are available to pay for windows, insulation, heating systems, doors and air sealing. Eligibility includes homeowners of pre-1990 single-family, row and townhomes. Early registration is encouraged, to allow time to have your home's energy efficiency evaluated, complete upgrades and be re-evaluated to determine your ESP grant before the program expires. Final assessments will be accepted until February 28, 2007 or as funding lasts. The ESP is administered by a three-way partnership comprised of City Green Solutions, Light House Sustainable Building Centre, and Homeworks Services.

The pilot program provides direct policy and technical support to local governments through a partnership with the Fraser Basin Council and the Community Energy Association. The Village of Kaslo will be working with the Fraser Basin Council to develop a Community Energy Plan to address the current and future energy needs of Kaslo residents. To register and find out more about eligibility and Energy Savings Plan benefits please visit www.saveenergynow.ca or call 1-877-727-2830. For more information please contact Village of Kaslo CAO Rae Sawyer at 250-353-2311.

BC Hydro study includes Kaslo resident on panel

by Art Joyce

Conservation will be a vital key to our energy future. At least, that's what Kaslo resident Don Scarlett hopes. Scarlett was recently chosen to participate in BC Hydro's latest Conservation Potential Review (CPR) study as a member of a citizen-based External Review Panel (ERP).

"The old saying was, 'conservation works like a dam', but actually it works better than a dam, because you don't have to build new infrastructure," says Scarlett. "Conservation is still one of the best environmental measures we can adopt."

The study will explore the potential energy savings available by employing current and emerging technologies, as well as changes in consumers' habits and lifestyles. A smaller component of the study will explore alternative energies and fuel substitutions. Scarlett says a staple of his business, micro hydro systems, are still too small a market and so will likely be little more than a "footnote" in the review. Both residential and industrial sectors will be studied, with factors considered for urban versus rural usage and variations in climate zones.

Ottawa-based Marbek Resource Consultants was hired to carry out the study, in consultation with BC firms. Marbek did the original CPR in 1991 that led to BC Hydro's well-known PowerSmart program. That study determined that 25-30% of energy use could be reduced through conservation. Scarlett was on the original citizen advisory panel, which was given decision-making power as well as managing conservation programs. The current ERP panel will be limited mostly to providing input based on member experience.

"We're reviewing rather than managing, but it's still powerful," says Scarlett. "This is not a window dressing exercise."

The panel will have representatives from UBC and several BC colleges, Mansell Griffin of the Nisga'a First Nation, the Independent Power Producers Association, BC Sustainable Energy Association, BC Sierra Club, David Suzuki Foundation, and several industry stakeholders.

Scarlett says the CPR studies are generally done by BC Hydro in advance of preparing an Integrated Energy Plan (IEP), to determine future energy and infrastructure needs. The current study will project energy needs 20 years into the future, and is expected to be done by April, 2007 in order to dovetail with the next IEP.

"What I would like to see—what I'll be advocating for—is a PowerSmart program that subsidizes homeowners' energy retrofits. It's money well spent by BC Hydro—it saves them money in the long run."

The most recent CPR study, completed in 2002, concluded that BC Hydro customers could reduce consumption by 5800 gigawatt-hours per year, equivalent to the electricity generated by a power plant with a capacity of 840 megawatts. In financial terms, that's a savings of $255 million per year, broken down as $80 million from residential and $175 million from industrial and commercial conservation measures.

"I want the numbers we come up with to be as big as possible, as long as they can be justified by the facts," says Scarlett. "Our future's at stake here."

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Get Outta Town!

with Peter Roulston

Startin' to feel like Christmas

What a difference two weeks can make, what with wind and cold, then snow and wind, then snow and cold! Fresh, deep, beautiful snow is now the dominant feature and people are out everywhere plowing, pushing and piling up snow as best they can. After working with snow for long enough, the next logical thing to do is go play in it...

I've been out to several of my favourite local haunts in the last couple weeks and it seems like a good time for a little progress report to inspire people to lay down their shovels at last and to dig out their ski gear for a whole new season. Suggesting where the good skiing is can be inherently risky of course, because a round of mild wet weather can make even the best ski locations way less fun.

Starting right here in urban New Denver, the favourite kid hangout is now on 8th Avenue across from the school grounds where the Village has wisely closed off Steenoff's hill for the winter and left it unplowed for tobogganing, sledding and crazy carpeting. In no time at all the hill has become a polished luge run and hordes of kids little and large are swarming all over it. Street lighting allows for fine evening use and it's still comfortably close to home for most little ones to run home for supper. Or homework, darn.

New Denver's golf course is only two kilometres north of town on the bench by Maxinuk's farm, which has excellent snow, rolling terrain and good access into the parking lot off Highway 6. When snow depth is sufficient to protect the grass, and if skiers avoid the greens (or is it the tees?) and don't ski where they stick the flags, then the golf club will tolerate sensible use of the fairways (or are those the greens?). There's a couple dozen local skiers who keep a nice ski track set around the course and the deer generally seem okay with it as well...

I haven't tried it yet this season but the famous Galena Trail up to the cable car from Denver Siding can be very fine going and the 2% grade makes a great return leg. Mild wet weather can bend over a lot of brush and drop debris but it'll be good as long as this colder snow remains. The trail section out to Rosebery can be good, but has less snow and has more sun and wind exposure to degrade the snowpack.

My favourite local ski place is Sandon. There's plenty of mellow terrain along the K&S rail grade and the related Cody Spur. Some of the roads there are easy as well if not plowed although all roads eventually steepen as they approach the mining claims. The new operation at Sandon, the Klondike Silver Corporation, is working the Wonderful claim just above Sandon and Springer Creek has three blocks to log right in the Sandon/Cody vicinity, so some industrial traffic is rumbling around up there lately. Idaho Lookout road is plowed for several kilometres, as may be the Cody road, so you really oughta ask around before causing traffic jams.

Further outta town, up at the Fish and Bear Lake summits, you can do easy ski tours on the lakes and around behind Bear Lake on the old wagon road. This is signed as avalanche area and for sure there's a huge runout zone onto the west end of the lake. The ice should be strong enough if you can see fat people ice fishing whiteout busting through. This area can be windy and gets shady much of the time.

Just a bit farther east at Retallack there's some great higher up touring to be sampled with more stamina and skills with heavier touring gear. I like to stick on the climbing skins to tour up into either Whitewater or Lyle Creek drainages, and the views open up continually as you ascend. If the day is clear, you get solid sunshine here and the road networks get you into the beginning of some grand ski tour area. The new road and logged blocks up Murray Creek can be linked into a steep loop tour off Whitewater Road.

From the Retallack Lodge itself there's a sweet novice level ski trail that leads back down to a reclaimed segment of the K&S rail grade. The snowcat trail initially goes back in from the lodge and down past a beaver pond to an open flat, then you can ski along the rail grade east to where the Kaslo Trailblazers built a footbridge to the edge of the highway. From this end you can either hike back to the lodge along the highway or ski back along the way you came. Either way this is a small but pleasing ski jaunt.

Returning to civilization in the main valley, I'd lastly like to suggest the route up Silverton Creek from within the village. Park the car by the back of Fingland Cabin then walk or ski a block to where the streets give way to the pretty road going up the south side of Silverton Creek. Folks walk dogs up here and sledders head off farther up the valley, and skiing to the bridge at 2 km. or the Wakefield turnoff at 5 km. is fine for any level of skier. Currently the snow there is somewhat lacking.

Hopefully these ideas will get you started for the season, and as access and time permits, I'll try to cook up some suggestions for the other nearby places. So get out the gear, try it out, start small and think big!

Peter Roulston owns the Bicycle Hospital in New Denver (358-2133) and mostly enjoys winter.

Financial Forum

with Collin Ludwar

Have your Cake and Eat it too!

Ask any investor approaching retirement or in retirement what they would like their money to do and you'll find a very common response. They want good returns, their principle to be guaranteed, they want to pay less tax and have their money last their lifetime. While every investor wishes for all these things, they recognize that they can't have it all – until now! Yes, some exciting and innovative products have come into the market place – now you can have your cake and eat it too!

Compromise seems to be part of life and until recently was a rule of thumb for investors. If you wanted your principle guaranteed your only option was a GIC, which forces you to except low returns. If you wanted your income guaranteed you would have to buy an annuity. Unfortunately, you would give up control and flexibility by never having access to the principle. If you wanted tax efficiencies or higher returns you had to be willing to accept some risk and volatility by purchasing equity type investments.

Manulife Financial has recently created a product called Income Plus. Manulife is the first insurance company to offer this product that provides you with guaranteed income and a full 100% guarantee of your invested money. You are able to choose from various investment funds and regardless of their returns your income is fully guaranteed!

If you have positive returns the product will lock in those returns every three years. This lock-in provision will increase your guaranteed income, lengthen your guarantee period and increase the principle that is guaranteed to pay out. If you have a need for the money in a lump sum you will be able to access your full investments adjusting for investment returns and withdrawals.

This product was created for an income stream however; there are advantages if you don't need an income flow immediately. Every year that you leave your money invested and do not withdraw anything, your deposited amount will grow by 5% per year for a maximum of 10 years. As an added bonus, every three years if the investment grows there is a provision that allows that growth to be locked in and added to the guarantees.

For example, if you invest $100,000 into the fund and don't start drawing on it for 10 years the guaranteed withdrawal amount will be based on $150,000, even if the investments had negative returns. If your investments returned a higher amount then your guaranteed withdrawal amount would be based on the higher amount.

In additional to all this, the product can be used as a valuable estate planning tool. Due to its design you are able to name a beneficiary. If you pass away, any funds remaining will be paid out to your beneficiary directly and thus you avoid probate. Further estate planning benefits involve the privacy created by directly flowing to a beneficiary and the inability for it to be contested.

Yes, for once in your life you can have your cake and eat it too! While retired you can rest assured that you will receive the income you need while still being able to have your money grow. You keep control of your financial situation and effectively pass your unused investments to children, grandchildren or charity. There are complexities involved in this product which are not fully discussed in this article and I urge you to meet with your financial planner to discuss the pertinent details to your situation.

Collin Ludwar B. Comm. is an associate advisor with The Affolter Financial Group Inc. specializing in risk management and estate planning.

Cool Eateries of the West Kootenays

with Andrew Rhodes

Wild coffee, fat cats, and currying favour

Hello out there all you fabulous fantastic food fanatics fondly filling yourselves full. Warning: Xmas is coming soon. On with the show.

After narrowly escaping flying portions of "Lard Light" at Farb's joint in the Burton Tunnel, it is good to be back in New Denver, land of milk and honey and butter. Here's something: my friend Fay tells me she has a quantity of powdered Belgian Chocolate with cayenne pepper and cinnamon mixed in. She says she puts it in her coffee and it has a kick that makes you believe you're throwing back some kind of strong liqueur. How 'bout a double?

There are rampant rumours that Fat Kat's, New Denver's newest noshery, will one day soon have a fancy "high tea" and that I'll be invited to write something tannic and hot for them. In the meantime they're open late three or four times a week and sell sweety sweet sweets and Sappho's bread and pizza. DJ is there taking care of everyone, but this isn't a review so I won't say much more except that it's a great place for great food. I'm told I'll be reviewing Fat Kat's soon and can hardly wait to tell you all about it.

Anybody made Dorothy's Cranberry Orange Walnut Bread lately? I made a quadruple batch last week. Oh so good toasted for those cold mornings.

Someone gave me a recipe for Carrot Cashew Curry Soup, and I can't remember who it was, but the soup is fantastic. Here's the recipe: It's really easy.

Carrot Cashew Curry Soup

1/4 cup butter
5 or 6 carrots, sliced
1 onion, halved-sliced
1 green pepper, chopped
4 or more cloves garlic, crushed
1 cup cashews
4 cups of soup stock, preferably home-made
2 tsp. curry (your choice)
1 bay leaf
S&P
Serves 4

Melt butter and saute carrots, onions, green pepper, garlic, and cashews 'til onion is transparent. Add remaining ingredients and simmer 'til carrots are tender but not mushy – 30 min. Remove bay leaf before serving. Serves 4. Do try it!!!

This soup is great! I added half a can of coconut milk last time I made it and zowie! Many thanks and compliments to whoever gave me the recipe. Who was that???

By the way – anyone driving to Vancouver and back in December or January? I am looking for a ride and can pay for half the gas – or whatever. Contact me through the Valley Voice or at 358-7985.

Talk to you all later.

Carry on!!!

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CARD OF THANKS

SLOCAN VALLEY SENIORS CHRISTMAS TEA THANKS - Thanks to all the following for supporting our 24th Annual Tea held December 2nd. BC Hydro, Heritage Credit Union, Kootenay/ Slocan Lions Club, Evergreen Natural Foods, The Gift Box, Jennie's Garden & Books, Kootenay Coop, Lemon Creek Lodge, Kal Tire, Pharmasave, Maple Leaf Store, Mountain Sky Soaps, Slocan Park Service, Four Season's Greenhouse, Shoppers Drugstore, Extra Foods-Nelson, Slocan Valley Coop, Winlaw Mini-Mart, Little House Collectibles, Ellison's Enterprises, Fomi's Bakery, Georama Flowers. Thanks also to Grade 4 class of Brent Kennedy School, Mt. Sentinel School grads and all the "Friends of Recreation." SVRC 226-0008

IN MEMORIAM

In Loving Memory

Matthew George,
August 20th, 1969 -
December 7th, 2003
Moon Child – Spirit Son

Oh let the sun beat down upon my face, stars to fill my dream
I am a traveler of both time and space, to be where I have been
To sit with elders of the gentle race, this world has seldom seen
They talk of days for which they sit and wait and all will be revealed

Talk and song from tongues of lilting grace, whose sounds caress my ear
But not a word I heard could I relate, the story was quite clear
Oh, oh.

Oh, I been flying ... mama, there ain't no denyin'
I've been flying, ain't no denyin', no denyin'...

Oh, pilot of the storm who leaves no trace, like thoughts inside a dream
Heed the path that led me to that place, yellow desert stream
My Shangri-La beneath the summer moon, I will return again
Sure as the dust that floats high in June, when movin' through Kashmir.

-Led Zeppelin

COMING EVENTS

WINLAW HALL X-MAS CRAFT FAIR Dec. 9/06 9:00am-3:00pm. Table rentals call Ruth 359-7884.

SILVERTON CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION - Friday, December 8th, 5-8 pm. All are invited to join the fun & festivities in Silverton! See you there!

SOCIAL BALLROOM DANCE December 9, 2006. Playmor Hall. Mini lesson 7:30 (waltz); dancing 8 pm to 11 pm. Singles welcome. $8 non-members. www.dancingbeat.org.

DRAWING/SCULPTURE classes (8x) at Silverton Gallery starting Tuesday, January 9 with Boukje Elzinga and Elly Scheepens. For registration / information, call 358-2689.

COMMUNITY SERVICES GARAGE SALE - Saturday, December 9, 10:00 am, old Glenbank School, Nakusp.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE of Lessons & Carols: St. Matthew's Church, 3370 South Slocan Village Road. Sunday, December 24th, 7:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Refreshments afterwards.

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For all who are wondering what former New Denver resident Mary O'Shea is up to these days, we hear she is garnering much fame from her talents as a musician. She was one of the acts at the Dancing Bear Coffee House in Chemainus on October 7, and got a standing ovation. Here she is with her back-up band, which includes her guitar teacher.

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We miss your laughter & gentle way,
We miss you walkin' in saying "Hey!"

Not only did we lose you on this dreadful day,
We lost a big part of our hearts & so I say:
So many words unspoken, so many things undone.
Did you really know how much our Daddy loved you, his son?

He sits alone almost every night
& lights your candle & holds on tight,
To all the memories of a son, whose love was so true,
Something he only shared with you.

So now we look up to the sky,
Searching for answers or maybe a sign.
Then, before we know it, an eagle soars by -
Just as it did when we gathered to say goodbye.

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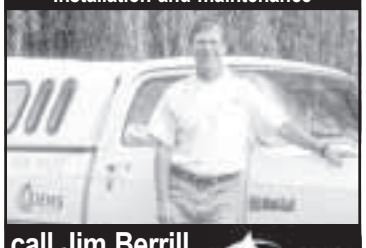

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Jumbo update

submitted by Rowena Eloise for the West Kootenay Coalition for Jumbo Wild

Psyche Brown, Manager of Major Resort Developments for government, has reported that approval of the proposed Jumbo Glacier Resort Master Plan (RMP) is still being considered by agencies working to satisfy the 99 conditions required by the conditional approval of the Environmental Assessment Certificate. Consultations with First Nations is ongoing as the Ktunaxa (Kootenay) Tribal Council has consistently expressed opposition to the resort proposal. The Shuswap at Invermere support the resort as they want to take advantage of job offers.

The Grizzly Bear Strategy experts representing both western scientific and traditional knowledge continue to meet regarding the anticipated cumulative impacts the development will have on this species at risk. Because of overwhelming public opposition to drainage closures as a mitigation measure, other options are being considered, including partial closures.

Brown targets January 2007 to have the RMP approved. After that the resort proponent will likely apply to have zoning changed to resort municipality.

On September 23, there was a byelection in Area F of the Regional District of East Kootenay, where the Jumbo development is proposed to be located. Lillian Rose, who belongs to the Akisqnuk Band, a member of the Ktunaxa Tribal Council, won the byelection.

Resort proponent Oberto Oberti was on the agenda for the Regional District of Central Kootenay board meeting in Nelson October 21. He was invited to make a presentation about the project after the June RDCK board meeting, when the West Kootenay Coalition for Jumbo Wild attended to propose a regional recreation area in the part of Jumbo wilderness that falls within RDCK boundaries, just west of the proposed Jumbo Resort area.

The West Kootenay Coalition for Jumbo Wild had planned a peaceful protest outside the RDCK building the morning of the meeting. Oberti sent the RDCK an email to cancel, saying there is extensive information about the project on the website, and that he would be happy to answer any written questions.

Police tax to begin in 2007

by Jan McMurray

Taxpayers in our coverage area will begin paying for local police services in 2007. Taxation for the service on an average value single family dwelling in the West Kootenay area has been estimated at ranging between $28 and $47 per year.

Currently, property taxpayers in municipalities with a population over 5,000 pay 70-100% of their policing costs. Those in municipalities with under 5,000 population pay nothing and those in rural areas pay very little. Starting in 2007, small communities and rural areas will pay a little less than 50% of the Province's cost to police these areas.

Overall, policing costs for small communities and rural areas are about $60-65 million annually. The new formula, to be brought in with an amendment to the Police Act in early 2007, recovers about $25 million of that total.

The Province is helping to offset the costs by sharing traffic fine revenue with small municipalities and rural areas, and by increasing the small community and regional district grant allocations. These grant programs will provide twice as much funding by 2009.

This past spring, the Slocan Valley painters set out for a day of painting Frog Peak, and put it all together in a calendar. A fundraiser for the Sinixt Nation, the calendar features the creation story about Frog Peak as well as the paintings by the local artists. The calendar was completed in time for the Slocan Valley Artisans Christmas Salon on November 25 at Winlaw Hall.

Premier presents Kaslo with historical treasure

by Jan McMurray

Much to the surprise of Kaslo Mayor Jim Holland and Councillors Leathwood and Hewat, during the closing ceremonies at the recent Union of BC Municipalities convention, Premier Gordon Campbell announced that he had a piece of Kaslo's heritage to give back to the community. The Kaslo delegation was presented with the hand-written log book of Kaslo's senior constable, Arthur Sharewood, from 1893-1898. The Premier told them that someone walked into his office one day to give him the book.

"It's a great read," said Mayor Holland in a telephone interview. "It's full of stories about prostitutes, drunks and disorderlies – all the people getting into trouble in the middle of the night. Kaslo must have been a rip-roaring place at the turn of the century."

On the inside front cover of the book, there is a Wanted – $500 Reward poster for a man who broke out of the Spokane jail in 1894.

Holland says there are a lot of names in the book that are still around today. In fact, he said there was a J. Holland back in 1893/94, who owned the Comique theatre, and who was fined $50 for presenting an unlicensed theatrical performance.

In his reading, Holland found out that Kaslo had an excellent baseball team back in 1897/98 that soundly beat the Spokane and Rossland teams. Also, the book names some sternwheelers that he has never heard of, and talks about the first business bylaw, stipulating how much opium could be sold for.

The book currently resides at the Kaslo Village office.

Are these two wanted for murder? Oh, no, of course not, they're two of our area's elected officials! Kaslo Mayor Jim Holland and Area E Director Josh Smienk are happy to pose with the WANTED FOR MURDER poster glued into the inside front cover of this Constable's log book dating back to 1893. The historical book was given to Kaslo's delegation to the recent UBCM convention by Premier Campbell.

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