The Valley VOICE
Free!
Volume 16, Number 5 March 14, 2007 **Delivered to every home between Edgewood, Kaslo & South Slocan. Published bi-weekly.**
"Your independently-owned regional community newspaper serving the Arrow Lakes, Slocan & North Kootenay Lake Valleys."

Musical politics and political music heard at the Silverton Gallery March 10

by Jan McMurray

About 50 people came out to an event that dared to mix politics with music at the Silverton Gallery on March 10. This was another of MP Alex Atamanenko's forums, but it was different from all the others in two respects. First, it had a theme – the environment. Second, it was followed by a jam featuring two 'closet politician musicians' and the 'former rock star' Randy Speers and his friends.

During the first part of the evening, moderated by Bill Roberts, local politicans each made introductory remarks and then took questions from the floor.

MLA Corky Evans opened by saying the political climate was ideal for the land use planning underway in the valley. He said with planning, we could "design the kind of community that could stop Victoria and Ottawa from dismantling it."

RDCK Chair and New Denver Mayor Gary Wright spoke about two big RDCK issues: waste management and drinking water. He said mixed plastics recycling was being negotiated now, but to keep in mind that recycling was "still just a way to manage waste. Reducing waste is harder." On water, he had just attended a meeting and saw a video showing 12 incidents where drinking water caused an outbreak of disease. To avoid these outbreaks, Wright said that water treatment and other protocols are being promoted. He noted that 11 of the outbreaks were caused by source contamination, so he asked why source protection was not being promoted. The answer was that nobody makes money on source protection. "Perhaps we should look at zoning for source protection," he suggested.

Area H Director Don Munro said we were in a position to benefit from the current political trend that puts the environment on top of the public agenda and has seen both the Premier and Prime Minister become "born again environmentalists." He suggested that we think about how we can support the environment in the OCP. He also made several suggestions about the gas tax money, earmarked for upgrading water systems, decreasing greenhouse gases and transportation. Area H has been allocated $5,000, and it is a five-year funding commitment. He proposed that we set up an advisory committee to consider how we should spend the money. He then suggested that we spend it on the RDCK-owned water systems that are on boil water advisory – two of these are in the Slocan Valley (Denver Siding and South Slocan), and on extending the regional transit system into the northern valley.

Silverton Councillor Carol Bell reported that the Memorial Hall renovations were progressing nicely and that Silverton was in the beginning stages of its OCP review.

MP Alex Atamanenko said the Clean Air Act would probably be in committee for about six more weeks, so the NDP was using this time to try to put some teeth into it.

Questions from the public were about logging, mountain caribou, chip trucks, the lake, electoral reform, sustainable agriculture and microhydro projects.

One member of the public picked up on Wright's remarks about drinking water source protection. "Source protection means no logging in our watersheds. Will you provide protection from logging in our watershed?" she asked. Evans answered, "no," and stated the NDP position was that source protection should be under local control. He said "source protection means no logging in watersheds" was a blanket statement that he was not prepared to support. She replied that his party "should study the science that shows indisputedly that logging damages water and watersheds."

A question about banning logging in old growth forests led to a discussion about mountain caribou, which depend on old growth for their survival. Evans said the caribou issue was difficult, because "at least two local mills will shut down if we stop logging spruce." However, he was optimistic that "society will decide to save the caribou." Munro said the RDCK board was asked to provide a letter of support for "a particular approach to saving caribou" [protection of habitat]. Because there was a difference of opinion among the directors, the board as a whole did not grant the request. However, he said it is up to individual directors to represent their constituents' feelings on the issue. Wright said the RDCK has heard from many, many people on this, and most are concerned about the "economic fall-out" of habitat protection. "The good news is we listen to you and the bad news is we listen to you, so make sure we hear what you want us to hear," he said.

Chip trucks were discussed at length. Evans set up the historical context. When the wood chips were taken off the railroads and barges, and put onto the highways, he said much of the cost was shifted to the taxpayer. "I want you to know that even if a barge were provided for free today, they won't use it because it can't compete with the highway and free ferry." Atamanenko gave a perspective on the future. "Probably in our lifetime we will not have as much oil, so transportation is going to have to be looked at. The public sector will have to invest in more railroads. We need to get big trucks off the road and invest in more infrastructure." He urged people to push the government to do this. Munro said a meeting had been set up with Ministry of Transportation officials on March 19 and he would raise this issue. Another resident asked that Munro take the request for shoulders on Highway 6 to the meeting as well, to encourage cycling and walking.

On private land logging, Evans informed that MLAs from this area advocate for controls, but they are opposed by MLAs everywhere else. He said this was because of the lay of the land – it is steep here and flat elsewhere. "We need a regulatory regime, but how do we spread that interest to other areas of BC?" He said most western democracies have a punitive or reward system for private land logging, so BC is the odd man out on this one, with its "cowboy attitude" about "doing whatever I want on my own land." Munro said that he, Evans and Wright met with the Premier after the Enterprise Creek private logging, and "the Premier was not ready to jump on it."

How much control do we have locally over the lake? The need for controls over seadoos in particular was mentioned. Munro reported that the answer to this question will be sought at a meeting on March 23 with the OCP Advisory Planning Committee, Lake Slocan foreshore planning committee and several provincial and federal agencies. He said other areas of the province have involved lakes in their planning. Wright added that the New Denver OCP could address working with Area H, Silverton and Slocan on a management plan for Slocan Lake.

Would the NDP support a referendum for electoral reform? Atamanenko reported that a private member's bill for proportional representation will be introduced in the house, and the NDP will apply pressure if there is enough support for it. Evans reminded us that the last provincial referendum gained 57% support, just 3% away from going through, and that there will be another referendum. However, he feels it will not get enough support this time either. He figures 5-10% voted last time because they were very angry with the government. This time, he thinks there is more balance, and the 5-10% will not vote. "Rather than put all our eggs in one basket, I think we should think up another way [to get electoral reform]."

Another local resident raised the issue of sustainable agriculture. "The traditional village had common land that sustained the village, but this died during the industrial revolution when land became privatized. Agriculture today uses one hundred times more greenhouse gases than traditional agriculture." Atamanenko spoke about the Cuba experience. "They had no choice but to go organic because they had no more energy, so now they are almost self-sufficient in food," he said, suggesting that a similar day may come for us. Evans encouraged everyone to support their governments to hold the Agricultural Land Reserve in place, "so the land is still here when we need it." He also encouraged New Denver and Silverton "to come together and take the mountain behind them for a collective way to create community well being."

The last question was about microhydro projects on our small creeks. Evans confirmed that we will be seeing more of these. "Public ownership is no longer 'cool,' and they are asking for private development of hydroelectric activity," he said. "We need to throw out a few governments before they stop selling our assets." Atamanenko gave the example of Christina Lake, where a microhydro project is going in despite overwhelming local opposition.

Entertainment following the community forum in Silverton on March 10 featured 'closet politician musicians' Alex Atamanenko and Gary Wright. Wright opened the show with a song he wrote entitled Cocooning, and Atamanenko followed with A Couple More Years by Willie Nelson and Abalene by George Hamilton IV. After that, Lilliana Wright stole the show with her gorgeous singing voice and songs with strong political messages, backed up by 'former rock star' Randy Speers and his friends Tom Padfield and Jeremy Down. Ava Wright, DJ Wright and Jake Butt also made special appearances.

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Preliminary results of New Denver's land use planning survey released

by Jan McMurray

Preliminary results of New Denver's land use planning survey are in. Complete results will be presented the March 13 council meeting. These results will be considered during the writing of the first draft of the amended Official Community Plan (OCP).

There were 129 responses: 70% from New Denver, 6% from surrounding areas and 25% from distant places.

87% were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of life in the Village. 51 ranked "retaining the small town character of New Denver" as the most important issue facing the Village over the next five to ten years, with "encouraging economic development" and "providing and improving service such as roads, sidewalks and sanitary services" in second and third place for the most important issue.

32% were in favour of increasing the level of services and increasing the level of taxes; 65% were in favour of maintaining the current level of services and current level of taxes.

The top reason why most chose to move here or continue to live here was "small town/rural character," followed closely by "outdoor activities" and "enjoy the people who live here."

The most important housing issues in the Village were shortage of housing for the elderly, price of housing, and shortage of low income housing. 93% of respondents own their home; 6% rent. 14% of homeowners rent out their residence; 81% of homeowners do not.

59% indicated they were in favour of allowing vacation rentals of private homes in a residential area, while 38% were not in favour. Village staff who compiled the results of this survey added a note here, stating that 12% of respondents added additional comments to qualify their answer. "Most comments indicated a desire for limitations or controls on residential rentals through a permitting process or other regulatory measures," it says.

73% said the Village should consider adopting policies to encourage full-time residency. 20% said it should not; 7% had no opinion.

Types of economic development the Village should encourage came out with 76% for home based business; 65% for professional services; 57% for non-motorized commercial recreational use of the lake; 54% for tourist oriented activities; 49% for commercial activities; 40% for tourist accommodation; 33% for more residential building activity; 28% for industrial activities; 14% for motorized commercial recreational use of the lake.

Several features of the village were rated as very good, good, fair, poor, or very poor. Here are the results for some of those features. Education: 9% very good, 41% good, 17% fair, 6% poor, 0 very poor. Recreational facilities/parks/trails: 30% very good, 44% good, 18% fair, 3% poor, 0 very poor. Tourist accommodation: 9% very good, 37% good, 33% fair, 7% poor, 1% very poor. Health services: 14% very good, 50% good, 24% fair, 6% poor, 1% very poor. Community/social services: 54% very good, 32% good, 24% fair, 5% poor, 1% very poor. Police protection: 40% very good, 50% good, 0 fair, 0 poor, 0 very poor. Fire protection: 40% very good, 50% good, 0 fair, 0 poor, 0 very poor. Water services; 54% very good, 38% good, 2% fair, 1% poor, 0 very poor. Sewage disposal: 5% very good, 26% good, 16% fair, 18% poor, 12% very poor. Garbage disposal: 29% very good, 52% good, 9% fair, 2% poor, 1% very poor.

47% said they felt the appearance of downtown needs to be improved, while 42% said it did not. 11% had no opinion.

29% of respondents gave high priority to "provide more public amenities (benches, garbage cans)" and "improve appearance of vacant lots." 26% gave high priority to "plant more trees," "remove overhead power lines," and "make the area more pedestrian friendly." 24% gave high priority to "improve downtown facades." 17% said they'd be willing to have no tax increase to see some of the above improvements made; 42% said they'd go for a 5% increase; 32% for a 10% increase; 3% for a 25% increase; 2% for a 30% increase or more; and 4% had no opinion.

80% were in favour of the Village promoting a co-ordinated lakeshore development policy for Slocan Lake with other local governments.

How large would respondents wish to see the Village at the end of the next 10 years? 9% said less than 600; 26% said 600-670; 24% said 670-800; 22% said 800-1000; 8% said 1200+; and 1% had no opinion.

Former Rosebery boy makes history in world championships

by Art Joyce

Paralympic athlete Brian McKeever has just made history at World Championships ski competitions in Sapporo, Japan. McKeever became the first Canadian athlete with a disability to ski in an able-bodied competition, finishing 39th. This is McKeever's first major step towards competing in both the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in 2010. If successful, he'll become just the second Paralympian to compete at an Olympics, and the first winter Paralympian to accomplish the feat.

The 27-year-old McKeever lives in Canmore, Alberta, but has family roots in the Slocan Valley. His mother Jean Yokohama grew up in Rosebery and the family has a cabin there where Brian and his brother Robin enjoyed summer holidays during their childhood.

Legally blind as a result of Stargardt's disease, a form of macular degeneration that affects central vision, McKeever has won nearly every major award in the ParaNordic ski world, with the help of his brother Robin, who often skis with Brian in the races as his guide.

Familiar face on CBC TV's *Canada's Next Great Prime Minister*

by Jan McMurray

Watch our local 'golden girl' vie for the title of Canada's Next Great Prime Minister on CBC television on March 18 at 7 pm.

Alysia Garmulewicz, Lucerne grad from Hills, decided to take the challenge as advertised by Rick Mercer, and wrote an essay about why she wanted to become the country's PM. She was shortlisted, and then had to endure a gruelling telephone interview – and she made the final cut. On Sunday evening, she and three others will be grilled by former Prime Ministers Paul Martin, Kim Campbell, Joe Clark and Brian Mulroney. Then the studio audience will decide who wins the debate.

"I learned an immense amount about myself and how to effectively convey my message," she said. During the four days before the debate, all four contestants were given training on public speaking with a professional coach. She also wanted us to know that she mentioned New Denver in her opening statement.

The winner will receive $50,000 and a six-month internship with the show's sponsors: Magna International, Fulbright Institute and Dominion Institute. The three runners-up will receive $5,000 and a three-month internship with the three sponsors.

Garmulewicz graduated at the top of her class and is currently in an interdisciplinary Honours BA program at Carleton University. She was chosen to be on the Canadian youth delegation to the UN Climate Change conference in December 2005. In July that year, she was the key organizer of a very successful youth conference on climate change held in Victoria. This was inspired by her trip to the Antarctica in 2003, sponsored by the Canadian Geographic Society. She is also an accomplished cross country skier.

Rob Zandee chosen as Conservative candidate for Southern Interior

submitted

Southern Interior Conservatives have chosen Rob Zandee of Oliver, BC as their candidate for the next federal election. After a gruelling nine meeting schedule starting February 24 in Princeton, travelling through to Kaslo and culminating with the final meeting March 4 in Castlegar, Zandee won with 352-151 votes over Mischa Popoff of Keremeos. "I intend to continue to meet with residents of the riding and listen to their concerns and their advice," says Zandee.

IYC youth group presents declaration to MP Alex Atamanenko

submitted

Inspiring Youth for Change, a local group of young people whose goal it is to inspire youth to make a difference in our future, presented a declaration to BC Southern Interior MP Alex Atamanenko on March 12.

"Our declaration is our vision and our voice for our sustainable future and the future of this planet," said Katelyn Jmaeff, IYC co-ordinator.

MP Alex Atamanenko was honoured to attend the official launch of the declaration. "This group is an inspiration to me and I hope they will be an inspiration to all of us," he said.

The group wrote the declaration after hosting a conference for peace, social justice and the environment last year at the Brilliant Cultural Centre in Castlegar. The conference brought together 800 youth from all over the Columbia Basin and featured speakers such as Simon 'Spirit Bear' Jackson and Dev Aujla from Dream Now.

"This declaration represents many youth from Columbia Basin region. We feel strongly that our governments, leaders and CEOs need to hear our voices of concern for our future and the planet we are inheriting," said Katelyn Jmaeff, IYC co-ordinator.

Jmaeff explained that a delegation of youth was to travel to Ottawa to present the declaration and meet with government officials. However, because of the possibility of an upcoming election and IYC's budgetary constraints, the group has decided to postpone its trip to Ottawa and in the meantime to present the declaration to MP Atamanenko. "Once we have a secure date. we will continue with our plans to deliver the IYC Declaration and voice of the youth to Ottawa," stated Jmaeff.

The declaration begins by describing the "problem" and ends with over 60 actions the government could take. The problem is described thus in the declaration:

"We are concerned about the state of our world. Our generation is inheriting a sick planet. We have reached a crisis with issues such as: poverty, starvation, war, child exploitation, nuclear threat, and global pandemics such as AIDS. Much of the world today experiences water shortages and contamination, as well as pollution, animal species extinction and climate change. These are issues that impact us all."

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

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

Applications can be picked up at your local high school or downloaded from theCBT website at www.cbt.org. If you have questions about selection and eligibility or to find detailed information about the award contact your local high school, visit the CBT website, or call 1-800-505-8998.

Completed applications must be dropped off or mailed to your local secondary school. Applications must be postmarked no later than **April 13, 2007** to be considered.

Arrow & Slocan Lakes Community Services

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Arrow & Slocan Lakes Community Services is seeking a qualified consultant(s) to assist in the management and support of Information Technology services.

The consultant will ensure that operational information technology support needs are met for 25 workstations at locations in Nakusp and New Denver. The consultant will also work in concert with the ASLCS management team to ensure that information systems are current and will advise on long term technology planning.

Closing date for proposals is 4 pm, Apr 20th 2007. For proposal packages contact Farhana Alam, Manager of Operations, at falam@aslcs.com.

School District No. 10 Arrow Lakes talks to public about declining enrollment

by Jan McMurray

Declining enrollment in our schools is not new, but school boards holding public meetings to talk about it is.

Last week, the school board for School District #10 (Arrow Lakes) conducted a series of public consultation meetings in each of the four communities where it has schools. The idea for the meetings comes from the message the board received when it was considering closing Burton Elementary last year. That message was that the district, in consultation with its constituents, should develop a vision and long-term plan.

The power point presentation shown in Burton, Edgewood, Nakusp and New Denver gave a lot of information about enrollment, strengths of the district, funding and budgets, past changes in the district, and potential future changes in the district in response to continuing declining enrollment and its corresponding declining revenues.

The bottom line is that School District #10 will have to cut either $66,625 or $250,000 from its budget next year.

The difference is in the government's 'funding protection.' which ensured a cut of no more than 1% to school districts' operating grants last year. Until the budget announcement is made on or about March 15, it is not known if there will be funding protection again this year.

Superintendent Walter Posnikoff said that if there is funding protection, the board will have to find about $66,000 in the budget and called this "a challenge," but said that without funding protection, finding $250,000 would be "far more drastic." The district's budget for this year was $6.8 million.

Changes the board has talked about to rise to budgetary challenges include school closures and reconfigurations, and a four-day week. It will come as no surprise that school closures and reconfigurations did not gain much support at the public meetings.

The board has discussed closing Burton, reconfiguring Edgewood to a K-3, and having all those kids bussed to Nakusp Elementary. It has also talked about a common K-12 administration model for the two Nakusp schools, and building a common timetable at Nakusp Secondary (NSS) with the notion of providing and accessing courses amongst other high schools in the province. For Lucerne, the board has discussed a K-9 school and has come up with different options for the grades 10-12 students: bussing them to NSS for the full program; bussing them to NSS for math, sciences and shop while they remain at Lucerne for Humanities and Arts programs; more eLearner programs and correspondence courses at Lucerne.

The big objections to closures and reconfigurations are around bussing and the unique culture of each school. Opposition to bussing was quite strong in Edgewood, where high school students already spend a total of three hours per day on the bus to NSS.

Lucerne principal Trish Hawkins spoke up at the Nakusp meeting, saying that when bussing the high school students is discussed, people from New Denver "fear losing the culture and unique characteristics of their school." She asked about bussing kids both ways between New Denver and Nakusp. "If bussing is OK one way, then it's OK the other way," she said.

These sentiments were heard again in New Denver. Posnikoff and board members made it clear that their objectives were cost savings and quality of education. Posnikoff said that the board had heard from Lucerne parents over the years that they would like a wider range of opportunity and choice for the grades 10-12s, and that this could be achieved by combining the two high schools.

Lucerne teacher Terry Tayor said, "I think a culture exists here that you can't put on the bus and transport. If the decision was made to bus some of our students to Nakusp, I honestly believe it would be the death of this school and community, and very bad in the long-term for the district." This point was illustrated at the Nakusp meeting by a parent who said she would consider moving if her kids had to be bussed, and that the board should make decisions "that will make the people who are here happy."

Arrow Lakes Teachers' Association President Henning von Krogh pointed out that bussing is not such a problem if it is a choice, as it is currently for Nakusp kids who choose to attend the outdoor education class at Burton. He said the possibility of losing kids over mandatory bussing was "the scary thing." Taylor agreed that bussing could work if the vision was to enhance the educational experiences of the students at both schools. The board indicated that linking the two buses at the Summit Lake turnaround could be done fairly easily, allowing for bussing between the two high schools and more options for students from both schools.

Taylor also advocated for eLearning, distance education and other creative solutions, ideas that were also discussed at length at the Burton meeting. Board Chair Patti Adam agreed that the district should take a good look at this. "Our district has been used as a pilot for the eLearner program and it has its glitches, but we should look at this more carefully," she said. Posnikoff said that what he knew about electronic learning was that teacher contact with the kids was key to the success of such programs.

The four-day school week gained some support at the meetings. "Given the choices, people tended to prefer the four-day week," commented Posnikoff in an interview after the meetings. At the meetings, Adam explained that "CUPE takes a big hit here," as savings are realized by reducing bussing and custodial hours by one day per week. In gathering information from other districts that have implemented the four-day week, the board has learned that substantial savings are also made by employees making their medical and dental appointments on the non-instructional day, cutting down on the costs of substitute teachers. Posnikoff said he estimated a savings of roughly $60,000-$80,000 per year with a four-day week district-wide.

At the meetings in Burton, Edgewood and Nakusp, the four-day week was discussed quite positively. The grades 5/6 outdoor education class is on a four-day week this year, and one staffperson said she was very pleased at how well it was working, and that she had heard many positive comments about it.

At the New Denver meeting, it was pointed out that the Kootenay-Columbia school district was not able to participate in school sports because it was on the four-day week. Posnikoff acknowledged this was true, and said Midway has become a hockey town as a result. "Kids that normally would be playing school basketball or soccer have joined hockey instead," he said. At the Nakusp meeting, someone pointed out that a four-day week may put pressures on the eroding childcare sector.

Another point of discussion at all the meetings was how to attract families to our communities.

A New Denver parent pointed out that the "core problem" is the lack of families, and challenged politicians and other community leaders to solve that one. "Once that is resolved, everything will be fine," he said. He also pointed out that although funding protection is helpful, a loss of about $60,000 every year will result in a school closure someday. Adam agreed that politicians and all community groups should be talking about how to attract families to our area, and what can be done about the ever growing second homeowner population in our communities.

The Edgewood meeting also entertained quite a discussion on improving the economy and encouraging young families to move there.

At the Nakusp meeting, a Nakusp Secondary teacher suggested that a French immersion program would draw more families to the community.

In New Denver, Terry Taylor said that families have come "shopping around for schools" and some have moved here as a result. "We won't see tons of kids but we can get a few, and how we communicate it to the outside world via websites, etc. is a part of making ourselves known."

Lucerne PAC Chair Elly Scheepens agreed that a good website for the school district was very important. Adam added that a brochure would be helpful as well.

A parent who moved to New Denver from Canmore almost three years ago said the school played a big part in the family's decision. She assured that other families like hers would be moving here – nine families in her daughter's class in Canmore have moved to rural BC because the lifestyle in Canmore has changed so much. She pointed to the "tiny development" that was picking up here as further hope that families would come.

Another issue raised was around advocacy. At Lucerne, someone asked if the 40 out of 60 districts in the province with declining enrollment could get together and influence government decisions. Adam said that the BC School Trustees' Association is the group that does that. "We really are a strong voice, but to be honest, parents' voices are stronger," she said.

Adam said that she would be taking this presentation to our local governments, and also mentioned the meetings the board held recently with local governments to look at ways to gain efficiencies together.

One Nakusp staffperson summed things up nicely when she said, "Clearly, we are going to have to be flexible. We are going to have to learn to like one another, or to deliver eLearning effectively, or something. We are going to have to move a little bit from the specialness of each community."

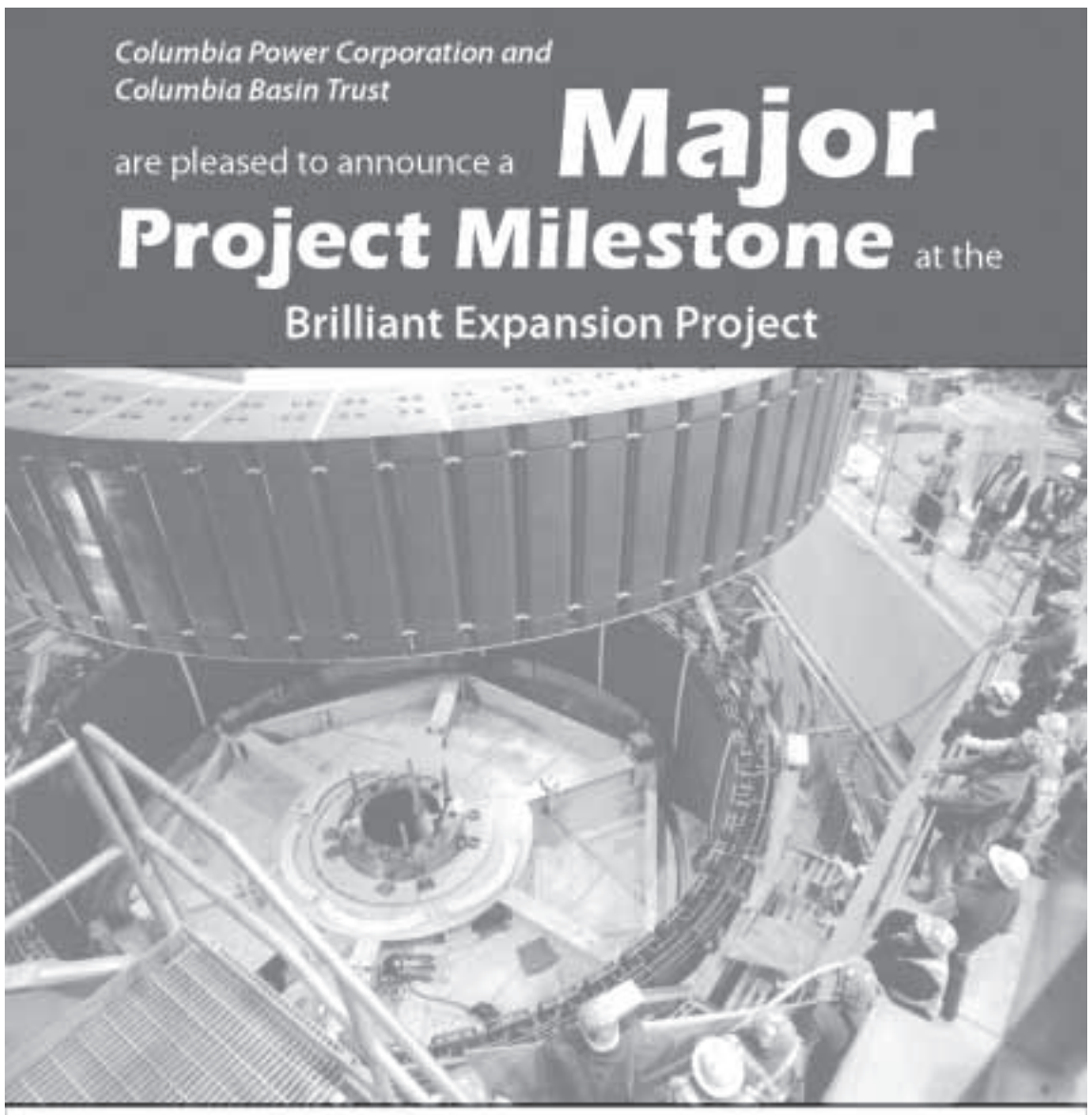
The presentation is posted at www.sd10.bc.ca, and the handout can be obtained by calling the board office at 265-3638. Send comments, suggestions, questions to: sdchanges@sd10.bc.ca or SD#10 Changes, Box 340, Nakusp V0G 1R0.

Notice

The Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust released its 3 Year Strategic Plan on February 27, 2007.

The Trust was created by an Act of the British Columbia Legislature to support economic development initiatives that strengthen and diversify the economy of the Southern Interior of BC.

To obtain an electronic copy of the Strategic Plan, please email ceo@sidit-bc.ca or, to request a hard copy, write to:
SIDIT, 103-2903 35th Avenue, Vernon, BC, V1T 2S7



Voices from the Valleys

The proposed Nakusp Community Park

I've only been into the North end of Nakusp's Public Park once, and that was during Music Fest last year. At that time, it was overflow camping and rather dense brush. Normally, it's just a bit of wild space, inside a small community, surrounded by a lot of wild space. I must confess that I never gave it much thought until the good folks down at the Roots Music Society came up with their community park proposal.

As Laurie Page put it at the public meeting, "This part of the park has been waiting to grow up." I couldn't agree more. A recreational park has to grow and evolve in order to continue to serve its community. Over the years, the Nakusp Park has come to encompass a campground, ball fields, a playground, the skatepark, a gazebo and the arena. Each generation of residents has made a contribution to this important public space.

An urban park is about more than trees and flowers and monuments. It's about people and the way that they make their lives together. It's about communities and how their members interact. Ideally, they are places where people can gather in small groups or great multitudes.

That's why I'm so excited about the proposed park project. Not only would it give Music Fest a much better venue for their annual Rock Festival, but it would put in place some valuable assets for the community. A lot of thought has gone into these proposals, and the society is committed to working with the public to enhance the space for everyone. The list of improvements proposed for the park is impressive – a permanent stage with amphitheatre-style seating, 40 serviced campsites, two new washrooms and a village square.

It's an ambitious undertaking, and one that will benefit the Roots Music Society almost as much as the public at large. A separate performance area for children's entertainers and an improved area for vendors to work out of will enhance the Music Fest experience for everyone. The festival needs the space, not in order to attract bigger crowds, but just to deliver the kind of experience that people want for themselves and their families.

At the same time, the village will get 40 fully serviced campsites and an outdoor stage that anyone can use when Music Fest isn't happening. I can't imagine that it will get much use in January and February, but during the summer months it could be used for theatre, a variety of musical performances, public lectures, poetry readings and dance.

The village square area that is proposed as part of the park enhancement project is a grand idea as well. Communities need informal gathering areas where people can meet, play games, exchange ideas and argue about politics.

Of course, all of this costs money, and it remains to be seen if the Society can raise the necessary funds to carry out the work. None of the capital costs are to be carried by the ratepayers of Nakusp and none of the work is to affect the existing uses of the park. A tall order? Sure, but I think that it can be done.

The Society has a committed and hard-working board that is trying to do something really cool for their community. They have energetic, capable and smart staff in the office. Most of the community seems enthusiastic about the project. Village Council has twice endorsed the proposed community park plan in principle. There's a growing consensus that the park would benefit from this kind of limited development.

Village Council is sending out a questionnaire this week to ask some questions about the park development. This is your chance to have some input into the park project. Maybe you have some great idea that will tie all the elements of the park together, or you might see some detail that the proponents have forgotten, or missed altogether.

Dan Nicholson, publisher

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*.

Rip-off

Today's headline "80% of Canadian families working longer, making less." Since the advent of cybernetics and automation, our work force productivity has increased by a factor of 10. What "trickled down" to you was CUTBACKS. The gap between rich and poor increases daily. I am not enjoying watching you people getting ground down. There's an old saying: "If you let the pigs decide it, they will put you in the sty." Right, so vote Lib/Con, eh? They all sat on their hands when the banks grabbed $28 billion in tax cuts.

g.turner
Edgewood

Unpleasant dog deposits left behind

Now that the snow is melting, a disturbing scene is unfolding along the Kaslo River Trail and on our public beach...

Dog droppings are appearing quite regularly, making it quite unpleasant to enjoy a beautiful river walk or stroll on the beach.

Dog owners, please be considerate of others and pick up after your dogs. It is as simple as carrying a bag along with you, or, use one of the doggie bags, courtesy of The Kaslo Trailblazer Society. Dispensers are located at the Kaslo River trailhead (off Railway) and the Logger Sports Area and 2nd Street/ E Avenue locations.

It only takes but a moment to clean up after your pet – so everyone may enjoy a pleasant walk!

Jill Braley
Kaslo

Big buses, little girls

This letter is for the bus driver of the Greyhound-sized charter bus who stopped on February 16th just outside of New Denver and offered two young girls a ride.

You may have been thinking that this dangerous curvy highway was no place for two girls, and were only trying to get them out of harms way, but I hardly think you are insulated enough in your life to think that warning bells would not sound for their parents and the rest of the community. I also believe due to liability, your bus company probably has (and should if they don't) certain rules about picking up any non commissioned passengers. And you sir, should have enough brains to figure out that a middle aged man driving a big empty bus should not stop on a winding curvy dangerous highway and offer two underage girls a ride. It's creepy. It could cost you your job, and the police have been informed.

Parents, talk to your kids about creepy strangers. Bus company owners, talk to your drivers about appropriate behaviour. Our kids should be able to go for a walk without being scared.

Rory Pownall
New Denver

Rural fire departments

In his letter of 28 February, Ed Nixon asserts that rural fire departments are of little use because they rarely arrive at the scene of a fire in time to save the building that is burning. He's quite right. Of course, the same thing can be said of urban fires. What the flames don't destroy, the water from the attack hoses certainly will.

The main job of any fire department is to bring a fire under control as quickly as possible, regardless of whether or not the structure burning can be saved, and thus prevent it from spreading to other buildings or, in the case of rural areas, to the surrounding fields and forests. It is this potential spread of fire that represents the truly catastrophic threat and is the circumstance in which the absence of a properly trained and equipped firefighting team will be most keenly felt. The pioneer days are rife with examples of relatively minor fires which, because there was no effective way to fight them, quickly turned into conflagrations that consumed whole communities.

Establishing and maintaining a fire department is not cheap, or at least it shouldn't be, and perhaps the Slocan Valley is somewhat overprotected. But the salient question stands - would you rather have it and not need it or need it and not have it?

John Banta, Fire Chief
Fauquier

Cola anyone?

Every problem has a solution. Finding the solution to difficult problems requires information and in depth analysis.

Since quite a while ago, as humans, we began to use tools and live in community for protection and advancement of common goals.

This community (Kaslo) has a very unique tool: a Forest license. But, like the coke-bottle that fell from the sky, in *The Gods Must Be Crazy*, we see its usefulness but argue about what to do with it or who should control it and since there are many of us and only one coke bottle we run around trying to throw it off the edge of the world! To anyone watching this, from the outside, it must be hysterically funny or pathetic.

To us it's becoming ruinous.

If you want to find out about this community's Forest License and participate in finding alternatives to throwing the damn thing off the edge of the world, go to: http://ourforestlicense.blog.com/

To tell you the truth, folks, it's not that complicated. It's only a coke bottle. By the way, a blog is like a little newspaper. I started it but it belongs to you, feel free to participate.

Gary Cockrell
Kaslo

Obituary for Halcyon Intermediate Care Home

1981-2007

Built on the grounds of the old Arrow Lakes Hospital, Halcyon Intermediate Care Home opened October 18, 1981 with 20 beds which expanded to 27 beds with a further building expansion. Pronounced terminally ill by the Liberal Government in the spring of 2003 she finally passed away at midnight February 28, 2007.

May Lady Halcyon be remembered for the residents and families she served with skill, love and compassion for 26 years. May she be remembered for the vibrant community she enjoyed and nourished within her walls. May she be remembered for the founders' dreams and the 10 years of volunteer work that birthed her.

During these past five years of her decline and final surgeries, she remained courageous, competent and dignified – care and affection for her residents never dimmed. May her reincarnation as an Assisted Living facility be inspired by her example. While the community is now 10 beds poorer for her demise, we are grateful to have known her.

We are particularly thankful to the staff for their compassionate care and comfort measures. Some of the staff have served with Lady Halcyon for all of her 26 years. We wish you all well.

Memorial services will occur with spontaneous meetings of friends and family. May she rest in peace knowing she served us well while she was able.

O. Irving, family member
Nakusp

Simple ways to save on carbon dioxide

Governments which procrastinate about reducing carbon emission by thirty percent in two or three decades are avoiding facts. The Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research Institute stated bluntly that a 90 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) is needed by 2050 and says that we need worldwide to decrease emissions by "an unprecedented nine percent a year for up to 20 years." To delay is to create havoc, or perhaps worse.

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Publisher - Dan Nicholson • Editor - Jan McMurray • Food Editor - Andrew Rhodes
Contributing Writers - Art Joyce, Don Currie, Jill Braley
Published and printed in British Columbia, Canada

The Valley Voice is distributed throughout the Slocan and Arrow Lake Valleys from South Slocan/Playmor Junction to Edgewood and Kaslo on Kootenay Lake.
Circulation is 7,200 papers, providing the most complete news and advertising coverage of any single newspaper serving this area.
SUBSCRIPTIONS: CANADA $55.12, USA $84.80, OVERSEAS $127.20. (Prices include GST)
Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement #40021191

Voices from the Valleys

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The ace in the hole for solving the global warming problem is ordinary people – people not blinded by illusions of power. Fields appear green in spring only because millions of blades of grass turn green before the results show. If people reduce 'consumption,' warming will be reduced.

Stop flying until you grow your own wings. A round-trip from London to New York for example can produce 3.8 tons of CO_2 per passenger. The world can't afford it.

Take public transport whenever possible. The average car produces 7.3 tons of carbon dioxide annually, about half of an individual's yearly carbon output. Check your odometer, calculate your yearly mileage if possible, and try to reduce it as much as you can. Car sharing will help.

Hang your wash out to dry in preference to using a dryer. Carbon dioxide savings will be about 656 kilograms per year. Indoor racks can be used in bad weather.

Turn down your furnace setting. Carbon dioxide savings will be approximately 286 kg per year for each degree dropped between 21 and 16 degrees C. (or 315 pounds between 70 and 60 degrees Fahrenheit.)

Replace or adjust the temperature of your refrigerator. Refrigerators made before 2000 produce between 425 - 756 kg of carbon dioxide each year. Fridges produced in the USA in 2001 emitted 344 kg of carbon dioxide annually. By 2006, fridge emissions had been reduced to 301 kg. Additional savings of up to 189 kg may be made by checking door seals, utilizing power-save mode, or raising the thermostat from 2.7 degrees Celsius to 4.4 degrees C (37 to 40 degrees F).

Lower hot water heater temperature to 49 degrees C (120 degrees Fahrenheit). Save about 113 kg of carbon dioxide output per year. Also, washing clothes in cold water using cold-water detergents amounts to a yearly savings of 73 kg of carbon dioxide.

By using a compact 20 watt fluorescent in place of a 75 watt incandescent bulb, you will save about 334 kg of carbon dioxide over the bulb's lifetime.

Make shaggy lawns stylish or plant flowering shrubs or ground cover. Using a power mower for one hour releases as much carbon dioxide as driving for several hundred kilometers. In California it is estimated that pollution from gas-mowers is equivalent to 3.5 million cars driving 26,000 km each. For a good workout use a reel mower.

Once in a while, a corporation does something remarkable. Take the furniture manufacturer, Ikea, in Sweden, which recently gave a fold up bicycle to everyone of its 9,000 employees; or Calgary's Citizen's Bank, which donated a brand new Prius to Calgary's Car Sharing Co-op.

Bob Harrington
Galena Bay

Good OCP needed in Slocan Valley

Response to Ed Nixon's letter of February 28

Speaking also as a "long time resident" of the valley (although by no means as long as Mr. Nixon) I have a good deal of empathy for the position he expressed regarding land use planning and zoning. But I also appreciate the realities of a growing population, not all of which comes to us from cities afar and includes those born here, those from foreign countries, and refugees from failed prairie farms and ranches east of the Rockies.

The need of land use planning isn't brought to us by escapees from city life so much as it is driven into existence by the rising numbers of a growing population and the need of land upon which to build homes or small holdings or to establish businesses.

With no land use planning, every land owner is free to do what they will on or with their land, a situation in which activities that aren't conducive to pleasant living can arise willy nilly throughout the community – a pig farm here, a loud auto or heavy duty repair or welding shop there, a manufacturing enterprise across the road, a bustling fast food or latte shop down the street, a string of condos on a field, an apartment complex next door.

It is precisely this kind of willy nilly development that good land use planning seeks to guide, so that all or most residents don't end up being thrown into conflict with their neighbours or suffering neighborhood activities which are inconsistent or may interfere with our rural life ways.

Land use planning and OCPs can be difficult to develop. They always involve some degree of trade-off, which makes it hard to get a consensus. There can even be political interference. But as problematic as they may be, OCPs and land use planning can play a valuable role in maintaining the values we enjoy, peace and quiet, dark nights, low traffic flows, comfortable densities, and adequate supplies of clean water.

Making land use planning work to the benefit of all requires that we participate, voice our concerns and wishes, make our voices heard, and to work cooperatively with our friends and neighbours to get something done. And, to ensure that our elected representative does his job skillfully and fairly and without bias.

Otherwise, we'll end up living in a hodge-podge scene, with rural residential, small holding, farms, shops, and businesses of all sort and manner scattered willy nilly throughout the valley. I might end up with a welding shop across the road and have to endure loud banging and clanging all day; Mr. Nixon might end up with a motorcycle/skidoo repair shop near his home and be forced to endure the high whine of two-stroke engines day in and day out. I wouldn't be happy, nor would he.

We need an OCP or, better said, we need a good OCP, one that reflects a cogent consensus of public wishes while taking full account of the lifestyle we wish to protect and preserve.

Sean Rooney
Vallican

Tax cut gives MLAs a raise

Remember just over a year ago when our MLAs attempted to give themselves a pay hike, and the provincial NDP went along with it until public opinion forced them to go back to the house and reject it! Well, they finally got their raise, and no one is saying a word about it! How'd they do it?

Remember when the BC Liberals tabled their budget and everyone earning over $25,000 annually received a ten per cent tax cut!

BC MLAs earn upwards of $70,000 a year. The tax cut provides people in the MLAs' tax bracket between $60 and $100 extra a month. It's not quite what they were asking for when they tried to give themselves a raise, but it's a step towards it!

When the MLAs tried to give themselves the raise the opposition battle cry was that giving themselves a raise while so many were homeless and in poverty was unconscionable. Odd isn't it, that when those same MLAs decided to okay a tax cut, there was no similar hue and cry.

It's bad enough the Campbell government would try to pass themselves off as "compassionate" by increasing the provincial welfare shelter rates as somehow benefiting those on relief, when it was really just a raise for slum lords. It was worse when they tried to appear like they were addressing the issue of homelessness, not by building houses, but by increasing the number of emergency shelter beds. But to disguise lining their own pockets as a tax cut is the ultimate in cynicism.

And even worse is the NDP's silence on the issue.

When this tax cut, or MLA raise, was introduced, I wrote to every member of the opposition and suggested they send back their share of the tax cut and demand it be used to address homelessness and poverty in the province. Do you know how many of those MLAs I heard back from?

Not a single one!

Many in the middle class argue that the relief was needed, but ignore the fact that whatever relief was contained in the package will be eaten up by rising housing costs, increased government service fees, daycare costs and the like. They also seem to be ignoring the fact that failing to deal with homelessness and poverty will eventually lead to rising costs for justice and emergency services. In the end game, the tax cut will cost much more than it relieves.

Then there is the little matter of whether we should be giving out tax cuts while so many are falling through the cracks. If the middle class need tax relief, imagine how it must be for those who don't have enough to feed and house themselves.

No, the recent tax cuts were not designed to help people up. They were designed to give the MLAs what they wanted to give themselves before but were denied.

Remember Liberal MLA Mayencourt's tearful rail against the NDP for stopping the MLA raise? Methinks he has stopped crying now.

Meanwhile, the NDP, who just love to give lip service to the plight of the poor, are quietly taking their raise to the bank. Sure they will rant about how tax cuts to the rich are abominable, but they are not going to do anything to keep that money from reaching their wallets.

Next time you hear any MLA in BC, oppositon or government, talking about the pleasure of serving, remember, they are only serving themselves.

Will Webster
Kaslo

Supports Nakusp Park proposal

On the night of Thurs. March 8th, I attended the Nakusp Roots Music Society Open House where they explained their proposal for the Community Park Expansion Project that would benefit the community year round.

It was gratifying to see so many people present and I got the feeling that most of them were very positive about the proposed expansion project.

Nakusp is a community made up of structures and programs that have been developed by organizations and volunteers. A few of these are the Rotary Villa, Arena, Curling Rink, Health Center, Ski Hill, Summit Lake Park, Childrens' Centre, Halcyon Home, Seniors' Clubhouse, Rotary Play Park, Skateboard Park, Museum, Archives, Library, Ball Fields and many more.

Organizations have put in countless hours of volunteer time to help make Nakusp a better place to live, work and play.

Now, we have an opportunity to have our park developed to a first class site by another organization and I say we should get behind them 100%. Let's do it.

Doreen Desrochers
Nakusp, BC

Great turnout for Park Meeting

It was great to see so many people turn out to the public meeting regarding future plans for our downtown park.

I personally was worried that developing the park might mean an even bigger crowd to the Music Fest, which might be difficult for Nakusp to cope with. I was relieved that Mr. Jahnke made it clear right at the beginning that park development would not increase the number of people at the Music Fest.

As for changing things in the park, we should remember that change is a constant: Pine trees, for example, are going to die. We have an opportunity now to think about what we really want there. I was proud of the thoughtful input people gave as they were crowded around the display model.

An issue that came up at the meeting was the underlying fear that someone is making money. We should set this aside as an irrational fear. The way a non-profit society works is that it has a board of directors elected from its members. The board of directors are volunteers: They are not paid. It is up to them to hire the professional and administrative expertise they require, and negotiate a price that the society can manage. We saw the board members who were at the meeting: I believe that they are competent, responsible, honest people, and I trust them to oversee the finances of their organization. If they don't, the society will not survive.

I have never volunteered for the festival or been on the board. I am a little embarrassed to say that I haven't even been to Music Fest, preferring to avoid large crowds. However, I am wholeheartedly in support of the work of Nakusp Roots Music Society. I appreciate the community spirit, the opportunities for non-profit groups, the excitement and enthusiasm it creates among all ages, and, yes, the money it brings into our town. I like the energy and the hard work that those volunteers put in to do something really cool for our town. And I really really like the way they are taking all feedback in trying to do the best job that they can.

We are a better place for allowing diversity. None of us would want to live here if it was full of only one kind of person, or allowed only one kind of recreation opportunity. Let's build on the success of our local people – they have built something from scratch, out of a dream and a lot of hard work. That's something to not only support, but celebrate.

Laurie Page
Nakusp, BC

Don't condemn park proposal without examining it

At the presentation of the Park Expansion plan that was held on March 8th – it was interesting to note how many were not knowledgeable of society status information. Of course, if you do not work within a society, it would be hard for you to know the bylaws and constitution that must be adhered to. You are welcome to come to the Arrow Lakes Historical Society office and I can show you a copy of our Society Act. It explains it all.

It always amazes us how many think that Milton and I receive a wage or benefit from the books Milton writes at his cost. For twelve years before we came here, he interviewed the pioneers with his tape recorders, bought tapes, bought gas to drive to their homes and then used his camera, bought special attachments to copy old photos, bought dark room supplies, and looseleafs to hold them and so on. No one paid us for all of this work, no one pays us now either. If we were paid a wage, then we could not work as directors of the Society and would have to work under contract. We are not looking for a wage – this is our contribution to our community.

For the first two years Willi was not paid for all his work needed to bring forth two successful Music Fests. He then resigned as president and was hired by us – the board – to do the work he needed to do for the next festival. It was ridiculous to expect him to put in the long hours that he does without pay. He would need to have a job outside of the Music Fest and he would not have time then for the work to produce the festivals. His pay was minimal for the many hours he put in last year. We could not have a Music Fest without Willi – he is the only one who has the expertise in dealing with bands and so on. It is phenomenal how he can predict how much everything will cost and how much we will bring in. We are only just a few thousand over the costs in the black each year – therefore he must be very cautious on what we do. Bands have to have accommodation, and food as well as what they are paid to perform. We have to have paid security, fencing and so on – all of it costs a tremendous amount of money.

Regarding the community park project, the Music Fest Society is listening to suggestions from people who want walking paths and bike paths, better acoustics can happen if we plant more trees in strategic positions and so on. It also cleans up the dust pit; the Forestry has already been advised to remove some of the pine trees there that are infected with the pine beetle. They will be replaced with trees of good quality wherever possible. This permanent extra camping will bring in revenue for the village, which they need as well to help keep the site maintained.

A band shell for the art groups, drama groups, musical events will be wonderful and another asset to town.

Do you not remember all the negativity when the council at the time was going ahead with the great waterfront walkway that we have? Those same people that complained are the ones that brag about it now!! Change can be good and should be examined thoroughly before you condemn what is proposed.

Rosemarie Parent
Nakusp, BC

Local politicians and community leaders hold forum in Kaslo

by Jill Braley

On March 5, Alex Atamanenko, MP, BC Southern Interior, hosted a Community Forum at JV Humphries School. Panelists included Jim Holland, Mayor of Kaslo; Andy Shadrack, RDCK Area D Director; Pat Cattermole, Trustee, School District #8; Amy Watson, Co-ordinator, Kaslo Food Security. Randy Morse of Kaslo and Area Residents Association was the moderator for the evening.

Each panelist gave brief introductory remarks. Mayor Holland spoke about his idea of a grant rebate program that would allow local governments to provide tax relief to permanent residents. He has taken this idea to the board of the Regional District of Central Kootenay and to Kaslo council. Council recently passed a resolution requesting that the executive of the Association of Kootenay Boundary Local Governments confer with the executive of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities regarding the benefits and implications of such a program.

Pat Cattermole spoke about declining enrollment in School District #8 and province-wide, saying that fewer students mean fewer opportunities. No teacher lay-offs are expected, though, because of numerous retirements.

Alex Atamanenko touched on many issues. He said obtaining passports in a timely manner has become a major problem all over the country, with his office receiving 30-40 calls per day on this issue. He believes that regional offices are needed, as people are having to drive to Vancouver in efforts to speed up the process. He also mentioned that mills are shutting down, and the problem of how to attract people to our communities. He said families are facing difficulties regarding licensed daycare. "Major federal cuts are unacceptable," he said. "The gap is widening. People in the middle are getting squeezed and our seniors are suffering." Atamanenko stated he would be bringing all these issues forward in parliament. He also spoke of the need to legislate the act for greenhouse gas emissions, and the war in Afghanistan.

Andy Shadrack said governments keep on downloading responsibilities to communities, making it very difficult to make improvements or get ahead. An example of this is the new police tax for communities under 5,000, including Kaslo and Area D. The tax will be collected via property tax notices as a separate line item. He mentioned the federally owned Ainsworth wharf, which needs about $100,000 worth of repairs but only $54,000 has been allocated. He also said that a public meeting would be called to discuss the options for the possible expansion of fire service into the areas from Coffee Creek to Schroeder Creek.

Amy Watson said our food system is dependent on large corporations which only care about profits and are not concerned about the quality of food. She said her project was working towards building a community kitchen to enable residents to make food and preserves together. She is currently working on public awareness about the quality of food we eat and invites members of the community to provide input on the kitchen project.

Members of the public had numerous questions for the panelists. One of the biggest issues was affordable housing. It was also mentioned that people with disabilities cannot find appropriate housing. People felt there was no help coming from government. A suggestion was that the Village sell some of its property to build affordable housing. The lack of jobs was also discussed, with someone noting that it is not uncommon for people to have several jobs to survive in the Kaslo area. It was also noted that families are moving away because of the poor economic climate.

Everyone was encouraged to participate in the upcoming Official Community Plan meetings, which will be scheduled in the near future.

Southern Interior Trust funds to be available in August

submitted

The Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust (SIDIT), with a mission to support investments in economic development projects that will have long lasting and measurable benefits for the Southern Interior, has released its first three-year strategic plan.

SIDIT was established by the Province in February last year and was launched with a one-time $50-million grant to be managed by an independent board of directors.

Jim Thomson, SIDIT chairman, believes that completion of the strategic plan represents a critical milestone in the Trust's evolution into a fully functioning funding agency.

"We are now turning our attention to creating the website, application forms, guidelines, evaluation mechanism and approval process that will enable proponents to access the Trust's funds," said Thomson "We are targeting August as the start for project funding."

The Trust expects to invest $30 million over the next four years, based on annual disbursements of $7.5 million a year. At the end of that period, based on anticipated investment returns, the Trust expects to have $30 million remaining in the fund, which will serve as an endowment and ensure that the Trust has the resources to respond to future opportunities as they arise.

Thomson believes that with the leveraging that will be achieved with other funding partners, the economic impact will be significant across the Southern Interior. "We plan to deliver on the Trust's key objective – the sustainability of our regional economies as measured by incremental job creation, an increased tax base, new revenue generation and economic diversification."

The following areas have been determined as the primary targets for SIDIT funding support: agriculture, economic development, energy, forestry, mining, Olympic opportunities, pine beetle recovery, small business, tourism, and transportation.

The board is comprised of eight local government officials and five members-at-large appointed by the provincial government. Members are: Jim Thomson, Kamloops; Mayor Ross Priest, Cranbrook; Mayor Sharon Shepherd, Kelowna; Mayor John Dooley, Nelson; Mayor Jake Kimberley, Penticton; Mayor Greg Deck, Radium Hot Springs; Mayor Marty Bootsma, Salmon Arm; Mayor Wayne Lippert, Vernon; Director Josh Smienk, RDCK Area E; Cindy Popescul, Cranbrook; Chief Shane Gottfriedson, Kamloops Indian Band; Chief Clarence Louie, Osoyoos Indian Band; Christa-Lee McWatters Bond, Summerland.

In addition to the board of directors, two Regional Advisory Committees (RAC) have been formed to provide advice to the board on projects suitable for Trust funding. These are the Thompson-Okanagan committee and the Columbia-Kootenay committee. Nelson Mayor John Dooley is the Columbia-Kootenay RAC chair.

SIDIT covers the area bounded by the US border to the south, the Alberta border to the east, Hope to the West and Blue River to the north.

Kaslo Chamber elects new board

by Jan McMurray

The Kaslo and District Chamber of Commerce held its AGM on February 28 at the Seniors Hall.

A new board of directors was elected, with Jim Archer as president, Robert Abbey as vice president, Bev Jackson as treasurer and Suzanne Thompson as member at large. Suzan Hewat remains as Village of Kaslo representative. The board still needs a secretary, and would also welcome more directors.

"We're looking forward to a new year," said Archer. One of his goals for the year will be to contact other chambers in the West Kootenay and get some dialogue going. "I'm sure we all have common ideas and problems," he said.

The Chamber will continue to organize May Days festivities and will continue with its marketing efforts.

New Denver Mayor's message: Wright's urgent call for paramedics

The community needs your help! We only have two ambulance attendants for our local service. Karen Forsyth and Joe Matthews have lately been making themselves available for up to 84 hours each (!) every week to respond to ambulance calls. While their actual callout volume is low, no one can carry that much of a load for very long. Expect our local service to be down for varying periods in the near future... unless you or someone you know will consider joining this public-spirited crew.

Right now training for basic certification is free, thanks to a program that has been put together by Nakusp Mayor Karen Hamling, the BC Ambulance Service, the Columbia Basin Trust, and the Arrow Lakes Hospital Foundation.

Ours is not the only area community to be in this predicament, but I have to say that ours is the only one that so far has had nobody step forward to help out and to take advantage of this training opportunity. If you have the time, and are considering paramedicine as a career or simply want to be there for your neighbours, call Karen Forsyth at 358-2507 for more information.

The results of our Land Use Planning Survey have been tabulated. Nearly 150 residents and property owners responded to the 17 questions which will help shape our new Official Community Plan. Among respondents, 92% rated our water services as "good" or "very good" and 90% rated our volunteer fire service as "good" or "very good".

The Village's provision of community services and garbage disposal/recycling services both scored over 80% in the same categories. A number of you said you would rate our recycling program higher if we could include a mixed plastics recycling opportunity. We are hoping (and working) to do so this year.

The full survey results will be presented at a public meeting scheduled for late April to discuss the first draft of our updated OCP.

Winlaw artists host workshops in dance, drawing and painting

submitted

A full day of art and dance programming begins at at Winlaw Hall on Wednesday, March 7, continuing every Wednesday through to April 25. Artists Barb Wilson and Evelyn Kirkaldy will informally coach beginners for an open studio morning of painting, 9 am to noon, followed by an afternoon of beginners life drawing from 1 pm to 4 pm. Please note the change of scheduling from the spring Slocan Valley Recreation flyer.

The morning studio will encourage original painting from still life groupings, or artists may choose to work from their existing landscape sketches. Photos may be adapted provided they demonstrate good composition.

Life drawing for beginners will be based on the Nicolais classic *The Natural Way to Draw*, with emphasis on the importance of gesture. Weekly homework assignments will acquaint beginners with human surface anatomy. A medical skeleton will be used as the basis for understanding basic human movement and proportion.

Painting for 8 classes costs $64 or $10 drop-in. The cost for life drawing is $120 or $15 drop-in. Live models will be used for part of the session. Participants must supply their own painting and drawing materials. Recommended supply lists will be provided.

The hall program shifts to dance in the late afternoon. Beth Campbell and Barb Wilson will hold a new session of creative dance for children ages 2-6, starting at 4:45 pm. Campbell will teach African Dance with live drumming at 5:30. At 7 pm Wilson will facilitate an open dance improvisation with a new group of dancers. This dance session is open to both men and women who wish to explore movement to a wide range of music.

Cost for the childrens' creative dance is $3 drop-in, no pre-registration required. African dance is $64 for 8 classes paid in advance and $12 drop-in Dance improvisation is $40 for 8 sessions paid in advance or $6 drop-in.

A minimum of six committed registrants is required for each program. Drop-ins may be permitted but classes will run only if pre-registration warrants. For those wishing to try out the first day only (March 7), drop-ins are welcome with the amount paid applied to the whole term fee if the artist chooses to continue.

The classes are a joint effort of the Slocan Valley Recreation Department and Selkirk College, Castlegar, and Art and Adventure. Depending on community interest, the programs at Winlaw Hall may be expanded in the fall season.

For information contact Barb Wilson at 226 0021, Beth Campbell at 226 7127, or Slocan Valley Recreation at 226-0008.

Joe Doucet of Silverton was the winner of Silverton Bigway's February 26 two-minute Shopping Spree. Monday March 5 saw Joe racing through the store filling his basket with all kinds of items. L to R: Joe Doucet, Thomas Ryu (Bigway owner) and Bev McKee (clerk).

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Virtual book club helps Lucerne students with independent reading

by Art Joyce

Literary education just took a giant leap into the 21st century at New Denver's Lucerne school. Teacher Terry Taylor has created an independent reading program with an online component that is generating excitement among teachers and students alike.

Starting last fall, Taylor designed a literature course for students in her English 10, 11 and 12 classes that paired them with students of teacher Shelly Little at David Thompson secondary in Invermere. The reading list includes such classics as George Orwell's *1984* and JD Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*, along with newer works such as Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*, and others.

"Reading independently is like driving a standard vehicle," wrote one student of the course. "You decide how fast you go."

Students choose just one novel but are free to read and comment on as many as they wish, depending on individual reading level. Using Moodle software, Taylor created an interactive website where students could then read her assignment questions and respond to posts by other students. The site also allows Taylor to mark assignments and post grades. Students could also post discussion topics or questions. The course spans a six week timeframe.

"The kids' discussions are at an amazing level," says Taylor. "By them making their own connections with a book, they own it more."

She explained that while the more eager or academically advanced students do well in traditional classroom discussions, it tends to leave others behind. Besides responding to the content of the novels, students were asked to discuss their response to the online forum. Although agreement wasn't unanimous, most seemed to prefer it.

"For me it really helped to read the other students' posts," wrote one. "In a lot of cases it just made me look at the book in a whole different way."

"Issues which I thought only had one meaning turn out to potentially have several different meanings," wrote another.

The course is attracting the attention of leading educational experts. Literacy expert Faye Brownlie regularly checks in on the Moodle site and is referring other school districts to the course. Taylor and Little made a power point presentation to the second annual Interactive Innovations conference held in five BC communities February 28-March 2. The 200 Nelson delegates gained the benefit of experts such as Dr. Michael Fullan and Dr. Richard Allington via teleconferencing from Kelowna, Prince George, Vancouver, three Alberta communities and Whitehorse.

Taylor says this is not a case of 'dumbing down' education to ride current trends. One of the questions she posted asked students to discuss the critical differences between 'MSN-speak' and written language. She said the peer interaction of the kids actually makes them conscious of more carefully crafting their essays.

"I'm always passionate about finding more interesting ways for our kids to learn. We were afraid the internet was going to be the end of literacy, but with programs like this, that's not turning out to be so."

Small local press garners more award nominations

submitted

If it weren't so exciting, it might be getting boring! It seems that every time the phone rings Sono Nis learns of yet another award nomination. The latest additions to the growing collection of accolades for the small but mighty press are two nominated titles for this year's prestigious BC Book Prizes. In fact, every author or book in the press's 2006 list has been nominated for at least one award somewhere in Canada this year.

It's no wonder that Sono Nis Press is one of Canada's most highly respected publishing companies. Now in its 39th year, Sono Nis Press publishes an average of four to six books a year from its office in Winlaw, British Columbia.

Katherine Gordon's *Made to Measure: A History of Land Surveying in British Columbia* is a nominee for the Roderick Haig-Brown Regional Prize. This engaging and vivid portrait of surveyors and their influence on British Columbia examines the surveyors' links with both the past and future settlement of this remarkable province. Gordon's popular history *The Slocan: Portrait of a Valley* was nominated for both the Hubert Evans non-fiction prize in 2005 and the Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing.

Sylvia Olsen is no stranger to the BC Book Prizes either. Her teen fiction book *White Girl* was a contender for the Sheila A. Egoff Children's Literature Award in 2005. This year, *Yetsa's Sweater*, Olsen's first picture book, is in the running for the BC Booksellers' Choice Award. This tender and joyful story (with stunning illustrations by Joan Larson) celebrates the close relationship between generations when a grandchild helps her grandmother create a traditional Cowichan sweater. The Bookseller's Choice Award honours the author, illustrator, and publisher, making Sono Nis Press an official finalist, too!

"We have a wonderful team working at Sono Nis," says publisher Diane Morriss, owner of the company. "Whether it's a children's book, a history title or a railway book, we are all committed to publishing the highest quality books possible."

Other recent Sono Nis award nominations include three Willow Award nominations (*Trouble on Tarragon Island, Tabasco the Saucy Raccoon,* and *Yetsa's Sweater*), Chocolate Lily Award nominations (*Trouble on Tarragon Island* and *Second Watch*), and a sweep of the Victoria M Awards Favourite Children's Author Award (Winner, Nikki Tate and both runners up, Penny Chamberlain and Sylvia Olsen, all Sono Nis authors).

Winners of the BC Book Prizes will be announced at the Lieutenant Governor's BC Book Prizes Gala on Saturday, April 28t at Government House in Victoria. The host for the evening will be William Deverell.

Local Destination Imagination teams advance to provincials

by Jan McMurray

Destination Imagination (DI) teams from Slocan Valley schools did exceptionally well at the Kootenay Zone tournament and four of them plan to attend the provincials April 14 in Vancouver. The zone tournament – the 19th annual – was held March 3 at Rosemont Elementary in Nelson, with 16 teams participating.

The Lucerne Crumpets took first place and honours with its 'CSI' solution, and received a renaissance award for creativity and performance. "CSI' is a scientific challenge on the properties of light to solve a case, and involves theatre.

The Mt. Sentinel Stewardesses also got first place and honours with its 'Direct Flight' solution. The team built an airplane out of a coat hanger, styrofoam insulation, batteries, motors and miscellaneous parts. It had to be launched from an elevator, and had to stop in designated landing zones.

Brent Kennedy's three teams each won an award. The BK Bad Boys and the Black Masked Badgers each won first place and honours, while the Fruity Tooties won second place.

All of the teams from these schools except the Fruity Tooties are going on to the provincials in Vancouver on April 14, and all are fundraising to pay their way. Donations are gratefully accepted at all three schools – please make it clear that your donation is for the DI teams. Also, keep an eye out for notices of the teams' fundraising events.

Destination Imagination is a worldwide organization that challenges students to be creative and original. Students choose a problem to solve, create a play or build a device, and then have eight minutes to present thier solution. They are also given an instant challenge that they must solve in a few minutes without preparation. "It pushes all the boundaries of thinking," says Marion Hunter, co-director of Kootenay DI.

Margaret Stegman, Brent Kennedy's DI co-ordiantor, says, "The challenges are so open-ended that any child can succeed."

The Mt. Sentinel Stewardesses are having a bottle drive on the afternoon of Sunday, March 18 in the Voykin Subdivision, Shoreacres and highway side of the Glade area up to Loff Road. If anyone would like to support the team with a financial donation, cheques should be mailed to Gail Maki Richards, 1010 Doukhobour Road, Castlegar, V1N 4P2 or call Gail at 399-4718 for pickup of bottles. Team members are: Javan Johnson, Blake Veerman, Chris Laramee, Bryden Chernoff and Rylan Horwood.

The Lucerne Crumpets DI team is: Kyla Smutny, Hazen Donnet, Tisha Becker, Ben Reitmeier, Yuki Miwa, Darnell Stephens and Kyla Dreidger (missing). Their coach is Hank Hastings. The team did well at the regionals and is going on to the provincials in April.

Silverton council, February 27: byelection delayed pending bylaw update

by Art Joyce

•In preparation for a byelection to replace outgoing Councillor Stephanie Masun, council discovered the Village's elections bylaw was outdated. This required them to rescind the appointment of Junko Ida as chief elections officer, pending adoption of an updated bylaw. The new Elections Procedures bylaw 446-2007 was given its first three readings at the February 27 meeting, and will be on the agenda of the next meeting for adoption. Current legislation requires the new bylaw to be on the books for six weeks before a byelection can be held. An election officer will be re-appointed at that time.

•Councillor Bell reported that the RDCK board passed a motion to include rigid plastics in its recycling for the West Waste area at its February 24 meeting. This will begin once the contract is negotiated. Bell also attended a meeting at Selkirk College in Castlegar where Regional Innovations Chair George Penfold gave a report of his activities to date. Penfold has established connections with government, social and educational agencies in the region and has passed along research data.

•Councillor Laktin expressed concern over the condition of the highway's road surface due to heavy truck traffic. Bell noted a meeting has been set for March 19 with Corky Evans and the RDCK to analyze the quality of highway maintenance since the service was privatized by the BC government.

•Mayor Everett said there are still cross-contamination problems with the recycling bins. He also reported that the OCP meeting was well attended and that the feedback on hiring facilitator Tom Lancaster has been positive so far.

•During public time following the meeting, Ty and Cynthia Capelle addressed council regarding concerns over recreational boating. Ty Capelle presented information he had researched online on current and pending legislation under the Canada Shipping Act. Since 2002, all operators of noncommercial motorized small craft (anything under four metres in length) are required to have a license ('pleasure craft operator card') and must be at least 16 years of age to obtain one. This includes jet-skis. Capelle said he has often seen youth below that age operating boats on the lake. By September 15, 2009, all operators of powered craft will be required to carry a license, regardless of the size of their boat. The Capelles would like to see the boating regulations posted publicly in Silverton and at the marina. Mayor Everett said he felt the Village should take responsibility for doing so. He added that council has a "good working relationship with the RCMP" and felt that this would be easily accomplished.

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Wanted: sightings of active bald eagle nests in the Columbia Basin

submitted

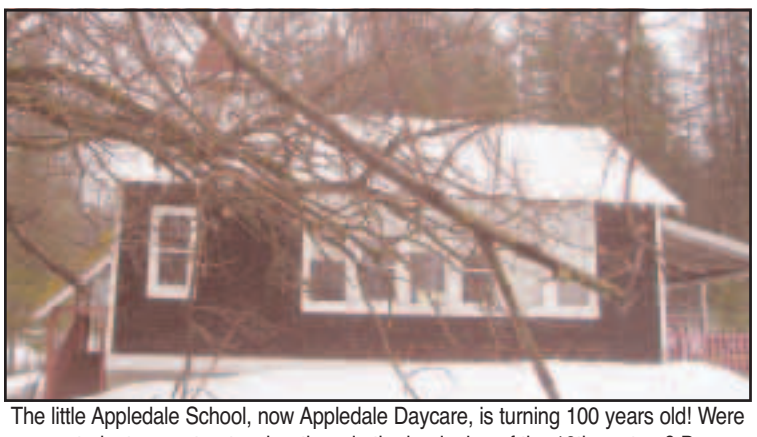
Since 2002, the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) has been funding a Great Blue Heron Breeding Inventory and Stewardship Project in the Columbia Basin, as part of its mandate to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife populations impacted by the construction of BC Hydro dams. The project is sponsored by the West Kootenay Naturalists and is being conducted by Pandion Ecological Research Ltd., with help from volunteers across the Basin.

Project objectives include collecting data on the population size and distribution of blue-listed herons, identifying critical breeding and wintering sites for habitat protection, and implementing stewardship plans.

The work so far confirms a 25% decline in the number of heron breeding sites in the Basin from 2002 to 2006. Although the number of active nests appears stable and may have grown slightly, the rate of breeding nest failures has increased substantially. In 2006, 43% of all active nests failed to produce young. Of more concern is that 62% of all active nests in the East Kootenay failed last year. Most of these nest failures occurred during the early nestling and late incubation phase. Failure rates are high and appear to be related to a combination of human factors (e.g., road-building, forest harvesting and wetland drainage associated with various forms of development) and/or harassment and predation by bald eagles. Failure rates in the Basin are comparable to the highest rates reported for coastal heron populations which have been attributed mainly to disturbance by increasing populations of bald eagles.

In an effort to better understand the relationship between heron nest failure rates and bald eagle population size and distribution in the Basin, the FWCP is conducting eagle nest surveys in 2007. "We are hoping to draw on the knowledge of local residents to help develop this inventory by asking them to report sightings of active eagle nests," says project leader Marlene Machmer. "Sightings will be added to a database and followed up to confirm and map precise nest locations and determine eagle productivity."

Residents are asked to telephone Marlene at (250) 354-0150.



The little Appledale School, now Appledale Daycare, is turning 100 years old! Were you a student, parent or teacher there in the beginning of the 19th century? Do you know somebody who has some pictures and stories? Would you like to share them? Please help us recover our heritage; contact Huguette at 355-2468 or 226-7844.

Bodywork by Jude re-opens practice after long hiatus

by Art Joyce

No, it's not a place you go to get your car repaired. It is a place to take your tired muscles and bones. Jude Thomas is a name familiar to many locals who sought her services as a massage practitioner in the early 1990s. Thomas moved to New Denver in 1989, and did rebalancing for five years. She has worked at various other businesses over the years since then but has now re-opened her practice in the Hidden Garden Gallery.

Thomas says stress or injury can set up "holding patterns" in the body that create misalignment in neck, shoulders and spine. Rebalancing uses acupressure points to release the tension. She offers a broad range of modalities that include deep tissue massage and joint release – all done with careful attention to patient sensitivities. Her new studio offers a quiet, uninterrupted space for clients to focus on relaxation and healing – a brief escape from stress and responsibilities.

Thomas is a certified rebalancer from the Kootenay School of Rebalancing in Nelson and completed two Relaxation Massage courses from Mount Royal College in Calgary.

"I am very happy to be going back to doing work I truly enjoy," she says. "I welcome all my previous clients and look forward to working with new friends."

Sessions of one to one-and-a-half hours are available, as well as an intensive 10 session series. Call 358-2539 to book an appointment.

Jude Thomas is a certified rebalancer from the Kootenay School of Rebalancing in Nelson. She's recently re-opened her practice in New Denver's Hidden Garden Gallery.

JVH's *Fiddler on the Roof* an exceptional production

submitted by Christine Boyes

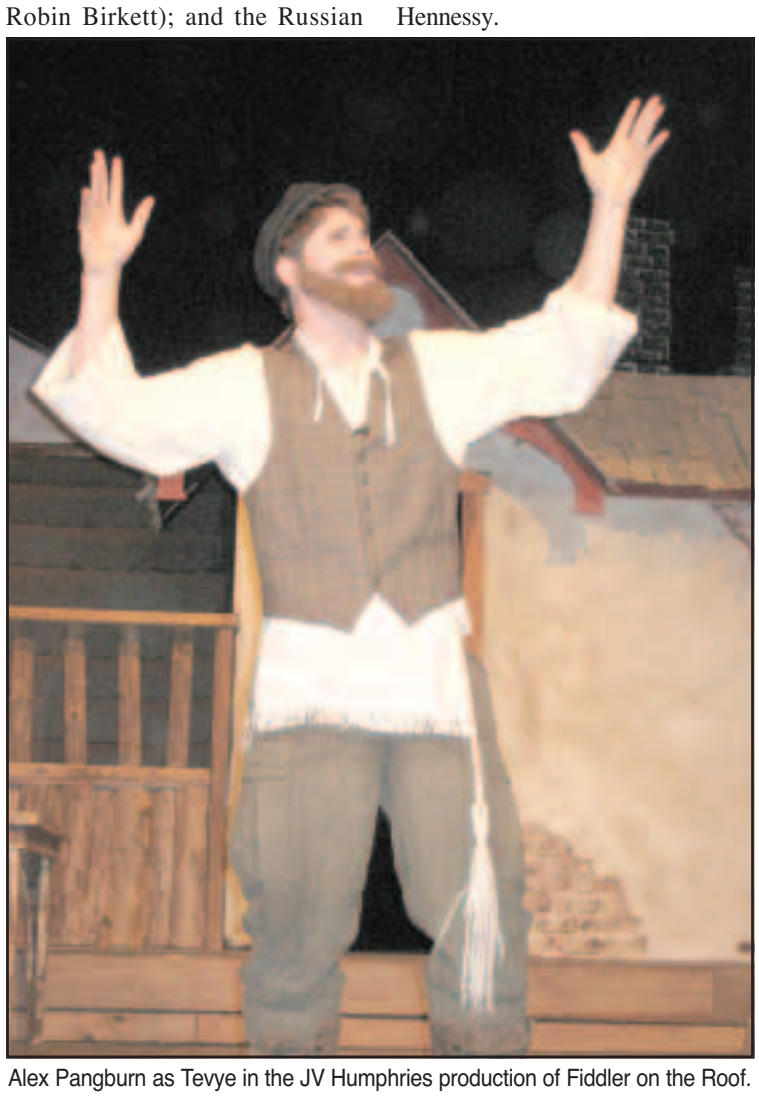
Kaslo's JV Humphries School recently closed a spectacular run of the Broadway musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*.

At all four shows March 1-3, the audience showed their appreciation with standing ovations. Under the direction of the fabulous drama teacher, Jill Holland, and with the help of many, many staff and community members, this professionally done musical was a feast for the eyes, ears, and heart.

Set in a Jewish village of 1904 Russia, a devout and deeply traditional Tevye, played both masterfully and convincingly by actor Alex Pangburn, deals with his five beautiful daughters with love and humour as they struggle to find mates. While "tradition!" is very important to Tevye and wife Golda, played by the talented Jodie Carpenter, for the daughters, "times are changing." Despite the best intentions of the Matchmaker [Diana Weber], daughters Tzeitel [Lila Taylor], Hodel [Margie Smith], and then Chava [Leone Stanway] all marry for love, often sending father Tevye into fits.

Some of the most hilarious and touching scenes involve Tevye seeking God's guidance with everything from his lame horse to angry wife, while the most incredible moments were in the frighteningly funny 'Dream' scene where Fruma-Sarah (played superbly by Kelley Humphries), Lazar Wolfe's (Tomas Pelletier) dead wife appears in the middle of the night to terrorize Golda into accepting her daughter Tzeitel's choice of men. Other shining moments were the opening scene 'Tradition' with the fiddler (Vida Ross-Herbison) perched high above the fabulous set; Tzeitel and Motel's wedding, marked by the shaming of Lazar Wolfe; the famous perilous 'bottle dance' (Kevynn John-Watt, Steven Lee, Derek van Deursen and Robin Birkett); and the Russian 'pogrom,' led by the Constable (Vice-Principal Mike Hurley). As well, all three suitors were played convincingly. Motel, the nervous and skiddish tailor, (Peter Fox), Perchik, 'the Revolutionary' (Thomas Van Deursen), and Fyedka, a Russian (Jeremy Mercy-Ross) all find a way into the hearts of Tevye and Golda showing that, yes indeed, times are changing.

Kudos to the talented cast of over 40, including students from grades 6-12, vice-principal Mike Hurley, teacher Steve Anderson and some other adult community members. Also to the Fiddler Pit Orchestra: Eric Moon, Tommy 'T' Thomson, Jerry Hamilton, Lena Ross, Vida Ross-Herbison, Pat Feeney and Sean Hennessy.



Alex Pangburn as Tevye in the JV Humphries production of Fiddler on the Roof.

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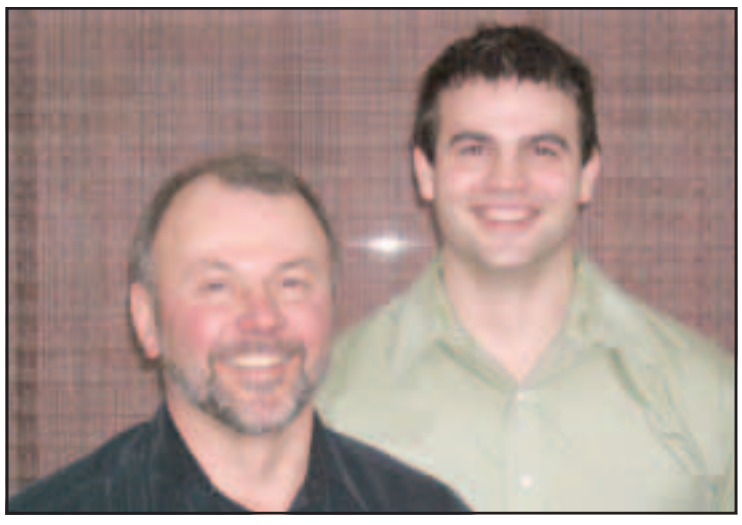

MOVING FORWARD

I am pleased to announce that my son Lev has joined Valhalla Path Realty as a licensed sales associate and will be working as my partner. Lev is 27 years old. He has been raised in the Slocan Valley and he currently lives in Nelson. As a native of our area he is familiar with the different communities and understands the diversity of the people who make the West Kootenays their home. He brings to our office a fresh perspective and a link to an exciting upcoming generation. It is our hope that my 30 years of experience combined with his youthful exuberance will make your real estate experiences with us enjoyable and rewarding. I invite all my valued clients and Lev's friends to contact us for all of your real estate needs.

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Well-attended public meeting discusses Nakusp Community Park Proposals

by Dan Nicholson

Almost 100 people attended a public meeting March 8, to discuss a public park proposal initiated by the Nakusp Music Festival.

The proposed plan would expand the village campground by 40 fully-serviced sites, add two washroom/shower buildings and construct a permanent stage. A community meeting area, or 'village square' will be incorporated into the design.

Proponents hope to accomplish this without increasing the tax burden to residents.

During Music Fest weekend, the new campground area would be home to the Vendor Village and the permanent stage would be used as a venue for children's and family entertainment.

During the rest of the year, the village would rent the new campsites to visiting tourists, and the stage would be used by a variety of community groups for different purposes. The village square would be a place for villagers to gather or to celebrate.

Speaking on behalf of the Nakusp Roots Music Society, General Manager Willi Jahnke said, "Of course this proposal will benefit the Music Society. We want to add family-oriented show elements and certain dramatic visual effects to the mix of entertainment that we offer at Music Fest. By expanding the site, we can create a show here in Nakusp that would have no equal anywhere in Western Canada. But we hope that it will benefit the village as well. We see this as an opportunity to give back to the community for all that they've given us over the years."

The proposed development would occur within the boundaries of the existing Community Park, on its Northern side, within the overflow campground and in an area affectionately known to locals as 'the dust pit.'

Says Michele Williams, Music Fest Production Assistant, "It's an exciting proposal. The model-making was very interesting. I'd never done anything like that before. The most exciting thing about working on this project, though, is that everyone wants to share their ideas. We've had lawn bowling greens brought up, a chess centre and even a waterpark feature. Of course, we'll be preserving the ballfields, and doing what we can to minimize the loss of trees. I expect that we'll be planting quite a few trees as well. There's a lot of pine trees that need replacing."

Adds Jahnke, "We're really at the beginning of this whole process. We're just starting the long period of seeking input from the community. We really need to know what the community wants in this park and how you want it developed. We hope that we can work together."

Michele Williams shows some of the possible locations for a permanent stage in Nakusp Community Park.

Kaslo Freemasons host visiting Grand Master

submitted

The Kaslo fraternal organization of Masons, and District 6, DDGM Charlie Stickel, hosted the official visit of the Lodge's Grand Master, Isaac Brower-Berkhoven, from New Westminster, at a banquet and meeting on Friday, March 2 in Kaslo. During the program following the banquet, Jim Lamont of Castlegar was presented with his 50 year pin by the Grand Master.

The banquet was held at the Royal Canadian Legion, with the ladies joining the evening event. While the gentlemen retired to their meeting at the Lodge, a 'Kaslo After Dark' program was presented to the ladies. This consisted of a hands-on quilting presentation given by Linda Cole of The Last Stitch, a spinning and weaving presentation given by Mrs Mary Johnson, and to complete the program, Maryann Johnson displayed her Back Dirt Road line of botanical soaps and lotions. The gentlemen regrouped with the ladies at the Legion for coffee and sweets following their meeting.

It was a very well attended and enjoyable evening, with guests from several distant lodges joining with the Kaslo group, to welcome the Grand Master, his wife Deidre, and those who accompanied him from the coast.

Jim Lamont (at right) was presented with his 50-year pin by visiting Grand Master, Isaac Brower-Berkhoven (centre).

Slocan Valley Recreation initiates Easter events for kids

submitted

If you're looking for the Easter bunny or wanting to find some children's toys or games, then circle the last weekend in March and plan to be in the Slocan Valley.

On Saturday, March 31 the Kids' Zone Buy and Sell returns to the Slocan Park Hall from 10 am to 12 noon. It's a garage sale featuring nothing but kids' stuff (games, books, toys, clothes, etc.). Kids run the tables and make the sales (parents can assist). All ages are invited to come and shop for great deals. Book table space early as this event always fills up. Now is the time to start cleaning out that closet!

Sunday, April 1, the annual Easter Bunny Hop takes place at the Passmore Lodge from 1-3 pm. The afternoon features Easter crafts, games, snacks, music and culminates with an Easter Egg hunt. What makes this event special is that it is hosted by members of this year's graduating class from Mt. Sentinel Secondary School. Kids of all ages are welcome to come join in the fun, so bring the parents and grandparents! Admission for the event is $3 per child with proceeds going to Grade 12 grad class. The Passmore Lodge is located on the Old Passmore Road which runs parallel to Highway 6 about 12 kilometres north of the Hwy 6 junction.

For information contact Slocan Valley Recreation at 226-0008.

No snowmobiling in provincial parks unless posted

submitted

The Ministry of Environment's Nelson branch would like to remind winter recreation enthusiasts that the use of snowmobiles in provincial parks is prohibited, except in designated areas. This regulation is in place to reduce wildlife disturbance and potential conflicts with other users.

Snowmobiling opportunities exist in many areas outside of provincial parks, and those interested in snowmobiling are encouraged to contact local snowmobile clubs or dealerships for information about where to go in your region.

The public is encouraged to report any snowmobile entry into a provincial park to BC Parks staff. To learn more about BC Parks, please visit www.bcparks.ca.

Meadow Creek Cedar update

by Jan McMurray

The mill at Meadow Creek Cedar is only running a half shift now, but plans are to run a full shift after spring break-up, according to Rowland McCulloch, Operations Manager.

McCulloch reported that they are working on a re-fit of the mill, which will improve production. The half-shift will run for the next three weeks, and then the mill will shut down until the company gets out logging again. At that point, he says that plans are to run both the planer and sawmill for a full day shift.

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Nakusp Rod and Gun Club hosts presentation on fisheries in Arrow Lakes

by Jan McMurray

To get answers to their questions about fisheries in the Arrow Lakes, members of the Nakusp Rod and Gun Club invited fisheries biologist Steve Arndt from the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) to its February 28 meeting. The club's questions were prompted by the poor catch for Nakusp area fishing enthusiasts in the last couple of years.

The FWCP is a joint initiative between BC Hydro, the Ministry of the Environment, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, set up to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife populations affected by the construction of BC Hydro dams. BC Hydro funds FWCP as part of its obligation under its water licence.

Arndt's powerpoint "was a great presentation, with good information," commented Rod and Gun Club director Hank Scown in a telephone interview. He indicated he was quite satisfied that Arndt addressed most of the club's questions, although he did not directly answer them all. Scown also said he has some big concerns around the Dam Impact Study, which Arndt mentioned a few times in his presentation.

Arndt explained that the study is an attempt to determine pre-dam conditions. He said the FWCP's mandate is to compensate for fish and wildlife impacts of BC Hydro dams, but the impacts of the dams are not clear because there is not much information about the Arrow Lakes and its ecosystems before the dams. Scown says he is afraid the study results will allow BC Hydro to say it has met its obligations and "cut and run," abandoning the compensation programs in the Arrow Lakes.

The study is currently being done by a team of independent consultants, funded by FWCP, and is to be completed by March 2008.

One of the questions the club asked Arndt in the letter sent to invite him to the meeting was about sturgeon. "Have we spent enough resources on sturgeon yet? Any chance those funds could be redirected to a more sustainable resource like rainbow trout, kokanee, or bull trout?" This is the question Scown feels was not directly answered.

Arndt's presentation showed that ever since the dams were built, sturgeon have not had an easy time of it. Research has not yet provided any answers as to why sturgeon are not surviving the stage from the egg to the end of the first year. He said that one-year-old juveniles are being stocked, mostly below Keenleyside dam at Castlegar, "and that's working." He said the FWCP had a fisheries budget of $1.7 million per year, and about $200,000 of it goes toward sturgeon recovery.

Club member Hoss Cann suggested that there could be more focus on rainbow trout. "We feel we are having problems with rainbow, dolly and kokanee – and the money is being spent below Keenleyside," he pointed out.

Scown said in the interview that since we can't fish for sturgeon, it's not hard to see why anglers are unhappy with the expenditure of $200,000 or about 12% of the FWCP budget on sturgeon, especially when they are being released so far south down the system.

The club also asked about the Hill Creek Spawning Channel near Beaton, and about the poor returns on kokanee at the facility. Arndt's presentation showed that the spawning channel has an average survival rate of 35% for kokanee fry. However, in 2004 and 2005, survival rates were only 1% and 3% respectively. Arndt said the FWCP consulted with a lot of people to determine what happened during these years, and have found the most likely explanation to be that they were heavy rainfall years – the creek discharge for October 2003 and September 2004 were the highest ever recorded. Heavy rainfall creates turbidity and suspended sediment, which settles in the channel gravels and results in the loss of water flow and oxygen to eggs and alevins. Arndt's presentation listed the things the FWCP were doing to ensure that this does not happen again, including more gravel cleaning, reducing sediment by increasing site visits during rainfall events and over the winter, looking at options for settling out sediment, more monitoring, etc. He explained that there are two water sources to the spawning channel, and when one is turbid, it can be closed off so the channel can be run on the less turbid water source.

Scown pointed out that weather can be very localized in these parts, and suggested that the technician should live on site or very closeby. Arndt agreed that the technician ideally would live there, and said this was the case when the Ministry was running the facility. He also mentioned that it is currently contracted out to someone who lives very close by, in Beaton Arm, but that the contract was going out for bid again. Arndt said there was a cabin on site and if renovations were put into the bid, "I think this would be favourable." He said he thinks the technician should live within at least one hour of the site.

Club member Hoss Cann said he had heard a rumour that the person working at the channel was unqualified and that tree planters were running it. Arndt replied that "we wouldn't hire someone we didn't think could do the job," and said the person had a fisheries background with three years of university. Furthermore, he took over the channel at the end of 2004, so the first failure occurred with the previous contract.

The low fry output in 2004 and 2005 will probably result in low returns of adults to spawn in the channel in 2007 and 2008. To counter this, Arndt said it may be necessary to capture adults downstream and move them into the channel or to transplant eggs from the Meadow Creek spawning channel.

Another question posed by the club in its letter of invitation to Arndt was concerning the Arrow Lakes fertilization program: "Would the whole system work a little better if the fertilizer were in the lake for longer periods of time? Might part of this be accomplished by introducing the fertilizer further upstream, like Revelstoke?"

Arndt gave an update on the Arrow Lakes fertilization program, which receives $700,000 of the FWCP's $1.7 million fisheries budget. He said that the purpose of the program was to replace nutrients to historic levels, but that historic levels are unknown. Again, the hope is that the Dam Impact Study will determine this. Arndt said the fertilization program will probably be looked at after the Dam Impact Study. "BC Hydro is living up to its obligations, but is it too much or not enough?" he said, indicating that the study would answer this question.

The program adds nitrogen and phosphorous to the lake, and in its first few years (1999-2003), the same levels of the two nutrients were added. Starting in 2004, the ratios of phosphorous and nitrogen have been experimented with. Cann pointed out that the best fishing years were 1999-2003, when levels were constant. Arndt said another change was that nutrients were being added on charter runs instead of on regular ferry runs, spreading nutrients out more to the south, because experts had said it was better to disperse it over a wider area. He explained that the nutrients are absorbed by algae within hours and it is the algae that moves the nutrients down the Columbia River system.

Arndt's presentation showed that there are more kokanee on average in the lake since the fertilization program started. The creel survey on the lake in 2006 shows that the kokanee catch is down, and that the catch for all three types of trout – bull trout (dolly), Gerrard trout and rainbow trout – is two times better since the fertilization program.

Arndt also shared some data suggesting that there is a reduction in food available for trout. Trout's main food is kokanee. Although there are more kokanee in the lake, Arndt believes that the trout need bigger kokanee to feed on. Cann asked if BC Hydro should put food into the lake for the trout. Arndt replied that the Dam Impact Study is looking at this.

Slocan Lake Boating Association

will hold the Annual General Meeting on Thursday, March 15th at 7:00 pm at the home of Amy and Dave Soltis in New Denver.

Info: 358-2133 or 7285

Columbia River Brigade set to retrace David Thompson's route

by Art Joyce

Imagine dipping your paddle in the Columbia River to follow the path of explorer David Thompson in a voyageur canoe. A group headed by Norman Crerar, a retired ski area operator from Vernon's Silver Star Mountain, hopes to do just that this summer. 2007 marks 200 years since Thompson first charted his route from East to West Kootenay, creating the first maps of the region.

Crerar and Tom Tischik, executive director of the Revelstoke Chamber of Commerce, have created the Columbia River Brigade, a project designed both to commemorate Thompson's achievement and be plenty of fun for participants. It was partly prompted by Golden's centennial celebrations this year. Andy Corso, an Edmonton-based cartographer, is another enthusiastic team member. Crerar was a member of the Manitoba voyageur canoe team formed for Canada's centennial in 1967. He was inspired not just by his love of canoeing but, in an offhanded way, by the CBC's *Greatest Canadians* TV program.

"We got talking and said, you know it's crazy, Canadians probably know more about American explorers Lewis and Clark than they do about David Thompson."

The land mass mapped by Thompson amounted to 3.9 million square kilometres of wilderness (one-fifth of the continent), and his maps were so accurate they were still referred to well into the 20th century. The Columbia River Brigade's 2007 route will start from Canal Flats, travelling to the Big Bend north of Golden, then south past Revelstoke, through Nakusp, finishing up at Trail. Host communities are asked to provide camping with shower and cooking facilities for canoe teams. The teams meet at Canal Flats on June 25, and will be arriving in Nakusp on July 5, Castlegar July 6, and Trail July 7.

Provided sufficient funding is raised, there will be a stage show at select locations chronicling Thompson's life, with live, original music. The show will also highlight the vital and often overlooked contribution of the explorer's Metis wife, Charlotte Small.

The 21st century 'voyageurs' will be volunteers whose families will be able to check the brigade's website and follow their progress via Google Earth. Crerar is still looking for teams of 8-10 members; six paddlers for the canoes plus support and relief crew. Interest has been expressed so far by groups from Christina Lake and Selkirk College.

"It keeps us old guys off the street," laughs Crerar. "Something magic happens when a group of canoes are together on the water."

Crerar is also still working on sponsorship for the event. So far he has attracted some support from BC Hydro and Fortis BC but still needs many more sponsors if the $200,000 budget is to be raised. The stage show alone will cost $65,000.

In 2008, the David Thompson Brigade will attempt a far more ambitious journey: retracing (in reverse) Thompson's route from Rocky Mountain House in Alberta to Thunder Bay, Ontario.

To register your interest as a sponsor, host community or voyageur team member, go to www.canadianvoyageur.com or e-mail nordnorm@telus.net.

Shadrack responds to McDonald Creek concerns

by Jill Braley

Council, at its February 27 meeting, received several pieces of correspondence about the expansion of the Village water treatment plant to service McDonald Creek water users.

Jane Lynch, Area D resident, wrote to council regarding Councillor Jones' concerns about expenses incurred by the Village during the expansion. Referring to correspondence from RDCK staff in response to Jones' concerns, Lynch stated she was sorry to see these concerns "have been treated in a dismissive, if not contemptuous, way." Lynch said she understood the operational and maintenance service agreement between the Village of Kaslo and the RDCK has not been finalized and that Councillor Jones has a right and responsibility to bring forward claims for the Village of Kaslo expenses before the agreement is finalized.

Councillor Jones said he will again be reviewing all Village incurred charges associated with the installation of the third cell at the water plant with current public works foreman, Glen Walker, during the upcoming Administration & Finance meeting scheduled for March 14.

Lynch also sent a copy of her letter to Andy Shadrack, Director of Area D. Council received a copy of his response, in which he said the first time he became aware that Councillor Jones and the Village of Kaslo had a problem with expenses for the water treatment building and the installation of the third cell was when RDCK staff were preparing to respond to Jones' concerns. Shadrack stated he is open to meeting with the Village to discuss this matter. "Beyond that, without knowing the full details of what was previously agreed to between the RDCK and the Village of Kaslo, I would have to know in exact written detail whether or not the current apportionment of costs is equal to the financial benefit that each jurisdiction will gain from the building of Cell 3. I trust that you are not suggesting that the RDCK should pay 100% of the costs of Cell 3, if they are not receiving 100% of the benefits." In conclusion, Shadrack said that until all of the costs are laid out on the table for all to see, he could not agree with Lynch's allegation that the RDCK has acted in either a dismissive or contemptuous way.

Council also received a letter in which Shadrack responds to Pat Mackle's concerns regarding the McDonald Creek Water Service Area. Shadrack stated it has taken far too long for the RDCK and the Village of Kaslo to finalize a written agreement concerning the supply of water to the McDonald Creek users, and said he feels the RDCK must bear a large portion of blame for the failure to do so. Shadrack stated the agreement has and will remain for a previously agreed to number of connections of 92 single family equivalents. "While the recently adopted RDCK bylaw allows the RDCK to expand the McDonald Creek Water Service Area, there will be no attempt to expand the number of connections and there is no wording in the near finalized agreement between the Village and the RDCK to allow for expansion of the number of connections."

Quilters of Kootenay Lake hold show

submitted

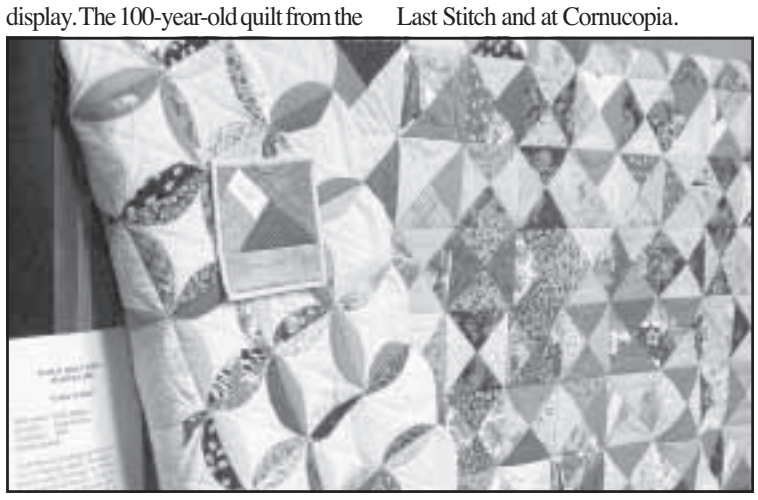
"A fantastic show," was often heard from the over 160 people who came to St Andrew's church in Kaslo on March 3 for the first quilt show of the local Kootenay Lake group.

Just under 40 different quilts were on display, showing the vast talent that there is here in this area. The viewers choice was 'New York Beauty,' created by Heather Gates.

Several historic quilts were also on display. The 100-year-old quilt from the Kaslo archives was loaned for the show, and there were several other quilts just under 100 years old, some well loved and well worn.

In the hall adjacent to the show, the quilters also showed their culinary talents.

The quilt, 'Linda's Choice,' a group effort spearheaded by Linda Portman, was displayed. This quilt is being raffled – the winning ticket will be drawn on July 31. Tickets are still available at The Last Stitch and at Cornucopia.



The quilt, 'Linda's Choice,' is being raffled – the winning ticket will be drawn on July 31. Tickets are still available at The Last Stitch and at Cornucopia.

Nakusp council, February 27: Library presents successes of 2006

by Jan McMurray

•Evelyn Goodell and Paula Rogers from the Nakusp Public Library attended to present the library's annual report. Highlights of 2006 include, of course, the expansion and renovation project. Also, the Kootenay Library Federation was formed, and Trustee Beth McLeod received the BC Library Trustees' Association Outstanding Trustee award. In 2007, goals include completing furnishing the new space and making progress with Phase Two of the expansion, which will provide access to the library to people of all ages and physical abilities.

•A request from the Arrow Lakes Queen's Committee for complimentary use of the arena auditorium on 28 evenings generated some discussion. Although council has always granted this before, the arena/parks manager is concerned about the amount of time the committee is using the space and the potential loss of paying customers. He is also concerned about the extra cost in staff time for clean-up and for hydro during the three to four months the committee uses the space. Council decided that the CAO and parks and recreation manager should meet with the committee to discuss concerns.

•CAO Bob Lafleur reported that he had sent BC Hydro photos of the wharf after a Pope & Talbot tug ran into it on the weekend of February 24-25. He said BC Hydro was interested in looking at the damage, but would wait until the access agreement with the Village was in place. The Village, owner of the wharf, and BC Hydro are in the process of drawing up an agreement that would allow BC Hydro to access the wharf for the purposes of repairing or replacing it.

•Staff had prepared a questionnaire on the Music Fest expansion/community park proposal with the idea of mailing it out to all residents to ensure wide public input on the project. Council asked staff to write a cover letter to accompany the survey with information such as: the proposed project would not involve a tax increase for villagers; the proceeds from the proposed campground would go to the Village; the project would result in a community park for the Village.

•Council received a letter from the local Protecting Animal Life Society (PALS). The group informed council that PALS spent $20,876 on caring for 70 animals in its assistance/adoption program, 22 animals in its spay/neuter program and 35 animals in its spay/neuter awareness campaign in 2006. The group is afraid it will have to drop its biggest fundraiser, the Mother's Day Yard Sale, this year due to a shortage of volunteers and rental space. They ask council for suggestions regarding funding. Council decided to send the group a letter of appreciation, and staff will keep an eye out for suitable grants.

•Council decided to commit $100,000 towards replacing the 20-year-old dump truck. The truck is scheduled to be replaced in 2008, but is in very poor shape. The Village hopes that if ordered now, the new one will be ready for next year's snow season.

•Council authorized up to $20,000 for repairs to the museum/library to address the drainage problems.

•A request for a motion to transfer the $10,000 CBT grant to support training for ambulance staff to the Nakusp and Area Development Board was referred to the next meeting. Mayor Hamling was absent, and the other councillors did not know the background information on this.

•The Nakusp Secondary Ski and Snowboard team sent council a letter, and several members attended council as a delegation, to request a donation towards the trip to Whistler for the provincials. Council thanked the group for coming, but had to inform them that Village policy is to contribute to community groups with in-kind rather than financial donations. CAO Bob Lafleur advised the group to come in advance next year and he would look for other sources of funding.

Summit Lake Racers make the most of winter's waning days

submitted by Elaine Tupper

Five centimeters of fresh snow over a deep compact base greeted the Summit Lake Racers at the Salmo Ski Hill on February 25. The high overcast cleared and skiers shed clothing as things warmed up. It was a definite sunscreen day on the slopes. Coach Brenda 'That's Why They Pay Me The Big Bucks' McQuair rounded up her younger charges to explore the new terrain. This was Jordan 'The Snow Is Good' Katchen's first time at a new hill, and Jerobi 'I Can Do It By Myself' Dahlberg's first experience on a t-bar without an adult.

Liva Niquidet of Burton had a fabulous time at Red Mountain on March 4.

Coach Doug McQuair encouraged his racers to pay attention to the lower two gates, which might result in applied brakes before the flats. They paid attention! Tyler Hascarl and Claire Jackson beat out the other 104 competitors, including some of the hottest young racers in BC. In team standings, bronze was taken by Summit Lake A, Summit Lake B, Salmo 1, and Salmo 2, silver by Red 1, Whitewater 'Water', and Red 2, and gold by Whitewater 'White', Salmo 3, and Red 3.

The following Sunday, March 4 found the E2 SLR Team racing at Red Mountain. The course was a nice rhythmic GS, with good AM conditions, which deteriorated by the second run. Once again, stellar skier Claire Jackson raced to win, finishing second in the E2 girls' category.

On the more relaxed side, the Summit Lake Spring Carnival is scheduled for Saturday, March 17. Skiers and boarders wearing costumes will pay a mere $5 for a lift pass. The fun will start at noon with relay races, a team Jell-O eating contest, a $2 'cake run' fundraiser, costume prizes (so don't forget to dress for the occasion!) and a $10 downhill dummy race, where the winner will take half the proceeds. A Summit Lake Racer recognition presentation will be made during the potluck dinner, followed by a torchlight parade. Although this will be the SLR season wind-up, all community members are welcome.

The Summit Lake Ski Hill will be open during regular hours over spring break as long as the snow holds out.

Solomon Tupper prepares to launch out of the gate in Salmo, February 25.

Sarah Cheevers and Tracey Saxby come to Carol's Garden Cafe in Edgewood on Kootenay tour

submitted

West coast singer/songwriters Tracey Saxby and Sarah Cheevers are partnering for an exclusive spring tour of southern BC. The tour will visit Edgewood on March 16 at Carol's Garden Cafe. The show starts at 8 pm.

Not your usual 'chicks with guitars' hook, the combination of Saxby's unique acoustic folk and Cheevers' soulful folk/blues create a one-of-a-kind intimate show. Saxby's acoustic sound evokes a '60s coffeehouse vibe, blending funk, soul, blues and rock. She is originally from Rossland.

Born and bred on the west coast, Cheevers seamlessy integrates songwriting and compelling storytelling. Sarah has just released her third CD, *Lost in Conversation*, and has been featured on the CBC as an artist to watch out for. Saxby has just released her debut CD. Concert-goers will get a sneak preview of unreleased material from both artists.

The tour itinerary includes dates at the Jazzbar in Rossland Wednesday, March 14, the Rezavoir in Nelson Thursday, March 15 and at Carol's Garden Cafe on Friday, March 16.

For more information on the artists, visit www.sarahcheevers.com and www.traceysaxby.com.

Singer/songwriter Tracey Saxby plays Carol's Garden Cafe in Edgewood, March 16.

Sarah Cheevers plays Carol's Garden Cafe in Edgewood, March 16.

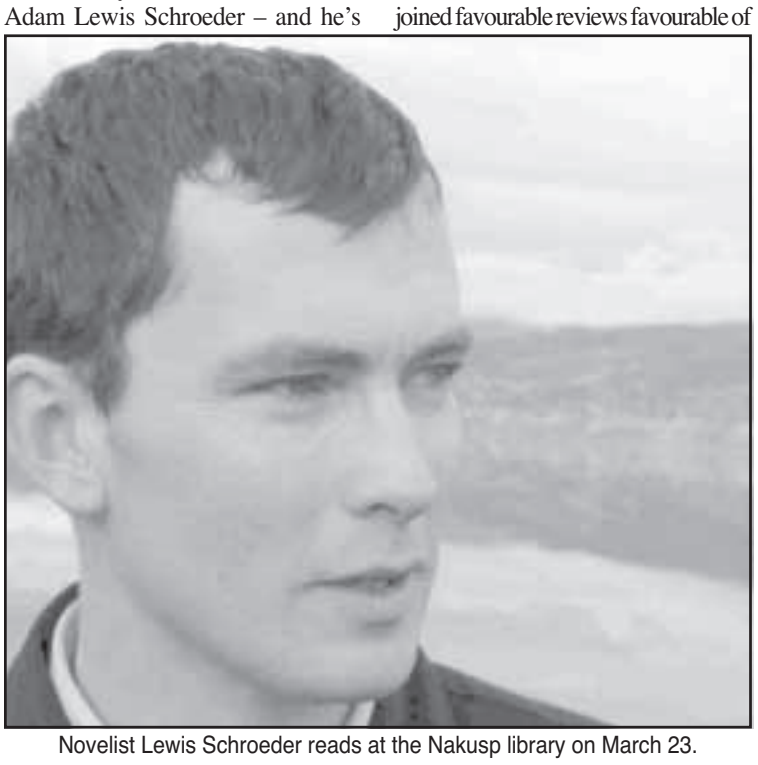
Novelist Adam Lewis Schroeder reads at Nakusp Library

submitted

A Canadian seaman, an exotic location, determined love, and the dramatic backdrop of World War II provides the framework for an engaging new novel by British Columbia author Adam Lewis Schroeder – and he's coming to Nakusp. Schroeder reads from *Empress of Asia* at Nakusp Public Library on Friday, March 23 at 7:30 pm.

Chosen for this year's Globe & Mail top 100 books list, *Empress of Asia* (Raincoast, 2006) wowed critics and joined favourable reviews favourable of Schroeder's book of short fiction, *Kingdom of Monkeys* (Raincoast, 2001). Says the Globe: "*Empress of Asia* is a compelling, heartbreaking, and witty book that will stay with you long after you've put it down."

PHOTO CREDIT: NICOLE HANDFORD



Novelist Lewis Schroeder reads at the Nakusp library on March 23.

Harry Winslow lands in war-ravaged Singapore when his ship, The Empress of Asia, is bombed by Japanese aircraft. He meets and falls in love with Lily, a Daughter of the Empire, and they marry, only to be separated through the circumstances of war. The spark of young love and the horrors of the Southeast Asian POW camps are richly drawn through Schroeder's gift of storytelling. Sarah has just released her third CD, *Lost in Conversation*, and has been featured on the CBC as an artist to watch out for. Saxby has just released her debut CD. Concert-goers will get a sneak preview of unreleased material from both artists.

Kingdom of Monkeys was shortlisted for the Danuta Gleed Award as the year's best first collection by an English Canadian. *Empress of Asia* was one of only 20 Canadian fiction titles to appear among the Globe's annual picks. Currently, Schroeder teaches writing at Okanagan College, and lives in Penticton with his wife and son.

Schroeder's tour is sponsored by Nakusp Public Library, Kootenay Library Federation, and the Province of British Columbia through the Writers in Libraries program.

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Kaslo community forest meeting sets moderate tone

by Art Joyce

"I perceive the purpose of this meeting to be the start of a process of rebuilding. If we don't communicate more openly we can't properly represent your interests." Those were the opening comments by Rob Mitchell, chair of the Kaslo and District Community Forest, the evening of March 8 at JV Humphries Secondary.

RDCK chair Gary Wright moderated the meeting. Before launching into the agenda Mitchell put out a call for volunteers, saying the need was especially great on the policy and disbursement committees. He also clarified some confusion over memberships, explaining that they expire on midnight the day of the AGM, regardless of when the membership is purchased.

First on the agenda was a briefing by secretary Don Scarlett regarding the situation of former operations manager Barry Rempel. Scarlett said that when Remple's contract was reviewed, it became apparent he had failed to take out the required $2M insurance policy and was therefore not covered by WCB. "You can't operate in the forest without coverage," Scarlett explained. Rempel was asked to remedy the situation but by December 6 had still not done so. The board decided his contract "hadn't been fulfilled from the start," and issued his dismissal. Regarding Rempel's legal action against the board, Scarlett said "the lawyers have decided it was more important right now to go on holidays."

The board has drafted new criteria for the operations manager, and sought more input from the 30 or so in the audience. Several expressed their desire to see a manager with experience in community rather than industrial forestry. "We are after all a community forest and it concerns me that we're logging watersheds," said Area D Director Andy Shadrack. Others were impatient to begin logging, citing the need for someone who can "get the job done."

Later in the meeting, board member Dave Russell said they have received eight applications for the position from both individuals and companies. The board decided not to advertise across the province, opting for a local hire instead. Russell said they hope to present their chosen candidate at the April board meeting, although he felt this "may be a little optimistic."

Mitchell briefed the audience on the status of the society's Probationary Community Forest Application (PCFA). He explained that the government is legally mandated to seek First Nations input before issuing any PCFA and is still receiving submissions. The existing volume based forest license expires in 2012. Mitchell said the PCFA "isn't the pot of gold, it's just the rainbow," a step toward the goal of a 25-year tenure. The advantage of an area-based PCFA, he said, is that it allows a community forest to determine a "truly sustainable" level of logging. The new board has created a 21-page summary of short-, medium- and long-term management objectives.

One audience member raised the issue of penalties for the two cutblocks near Shutty Bench and the airport, yet to be logged. She claimed the penalty could be as high as $33,000, a figure the board disputed. This is complicated somewhat by the fact that the Ministry of Forests and Range has replaced the old Forest Development Plan (FDP) with the Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP), effective March 31. Mitchell said the board has been advised by the ministry that the government is prepared to allow some overlap between the old FDP and the development of the new FSP. The community forest has up to December 31 this year to log the two cutblocks under the current FDP, and may also apply for a one-year extension on each. He said penalties are discretionary, and can be from 0-5% of the estimated cut, based on current log rates. However the board has had no indication from the ministry that it intends to fine the society.

Treasurer Steve Anderson presented the new board's budget for the year. He stressed that the figures are mostly based on projections and estimates, except where expenses were predictable, such as office administration, road building and permit fees. This includes the required silviculture contract of $53,200, which has already been let. A planned cut of 6,000 cubic metres is projected to bring in log sales of $1,590,650. After expenses, the society projects a discretionary fund of $28,920. Of this, only $1,600 is estimated for disbursements, left over from public outreach and special projects such as the PCFA application. A net balance of about $10,000 is expected. Don Scarlett pointed out that "this is the first budget presented by a board in three years." Concerns raised by audience members included wanting more money budgeted for fire interface and water monitoring.

Anderson also presented the board's guidelines for a new disbursement policy. Goals included: consistent objectives and regular application deadlines from year to year; distribution of funds to a broad spectrum of community interests; a clear criteria for decision-making; distribution that is transparent and fair and at arm's length from the board; and the establishment of a legacy fund. Anderson said once a legacy fund is sufficiently large, grants can be made from interest earnings rather than spending down disbursements to zero every year. The audience was asked for its input, and seemed to like the idea, pointing out that the $300,000 disbursed last year is now money gone. One person said he thought the board shouldn't be concerned with "trying to play Santa Claus" and concentrate instead on repairing damaged relations with contractors. Anderson said the board has also discussed the idea of pooling grant funds with the Community Fund of North Kootenay Lake Society, a semi-independent branch of the Osprey Foundation.

The AGM is scheduled for May 16, at which point three directors' terms will expire. Shadrack said he "doesn't want to see another battleground at the AGM," and that the terms of discussion should be established. Anderson said an ad has been prepared soliciting suggested resolutions for the board from society members. Several members of the audience left before the meeting concluded.

Kaslo council, February 27: Village not ready to sign provincial building Offer of Purchase

by Jill Braley

•Council received various pieces of correspondence relating to the purchase of the provincial building.

Charles Chan of ARES (BC government's Accommodation & Real Estate Services) asked whether the Village's building inspector had conducted a cursory viewing of the building and if the Village was ready to sign the Offer to Purchase document yet. Chan will be advised the municipality is not yet ready to sign the Offer to Purchase and there is no firm date for a building inspection. All quotes concerning the provincial building purchase were referred to the next Planning and Development meeting for recommendation to council. Mayor Holland said all costs and reports are available to the public in the Village Hall.

Council also received a 1990 inventory report of asbestos-containing materials in the Provincial building from ARES. Staff will contact ARES to ask about the probability of asbestos existing in the building. Mayor Holland said the report stated that asbestos was found around the electrical panel and that council needed to know if there was asbestos in the walls.

Golder Associates outlined the process and approximate costs to prepare an environmental Certificate of Compliance report and package for the provincial building. The report could cost between $18,000 and $43,000 and take one to two months to complete. The approximate timeline for a ministry review and processing would be two to four months. Mayor Holland said the report is needed if the Village intends to renovate the building or sell it in the future. The Village is running on a tight timeline since it has scheduled an April 21st public referendum on the purchase.

•Council received a detailed list of questions from Anne Malik regarding the purchase of the provincial building. She will be informed there will be a public meeting prior to the referendum scheduled for April 21. Mayor Holland stated the questions submitted were very good. Council also referred the correspondence to the next Planning and Development meeting. A copy of the letter was added to the provincial building file on the front counter of the Village office.

•Council decided to help advance Mayor Holland's idea of a Local Government Homeowners Grant. The Village will ask the AKBLG (Association of Kootenay-Boundary Local Governments) executive to confer with the UBCM (Union of British Columbia Municipalities) executive regarding the benefits and implications of local governments providing tax relief to permanent residents through a grant or rebate program. The Village will include as background a document prepared by Mayor Holland entitled, 'Regarding local government rebate/grant program to support permanent residents.'

•Council received a copy of a letter from the Liquor Control Board to the Bluebelle Bistro and Beanery (former Crooked Cafe) regarding its application for a new Food Primary Liquor Licence. The letter states that if the application is approved, the LCB will add the following conditions on it: no live or amplified music, and the patio must be closed no later than 10 pm every evening.

•The RDCK will be advised the municipality is interested in having a meeting in Kaslo on fire boundary extension and the Ainsworth wharf. Area D Director Andy Shadrack suggested that one meeting be held to cover the two issues, as they involve the same stakeholders.

•Jill Braley and Helen Woolgar wrote to council about accounting issues, asking why the Village's bank statements had not been reconciled in-house for 2006. Woolgar also mentioned staff evaluations in her letter. She will be advised that all employee evaluations, including that of the CAO, will now be done on an annual basis. Braley asked if the $67,000 variance, which appeared on the November 2006 financial statement, had been resolved to be an accounting error or a programming error. Braley will be advised the 2006 bank reconciliations are not done and the balancing is still in process.

Mayor Holland addressed the public, stating ongoing discussions within the Village office are taking place regarding this matter. During the February 20 special meeting, council approved a maximum expenditure of $2,250 to have the auditor reconcile the 2006 bank statements.

•Trish Bennett wrote to inform council that use of the Kaslo campground has risen considerably over the past couple of years. Campers have told her that part of the reason could be the closure of several campgrounds in the Okanagan and Sicamous areas. Campers say that the main attraction at the Kaslo campground is the location beside the lake, and near downtown and the Moyie. Mayor Holland requested the information be referred to Director Shadrack for information, as there are outlying campgrounds in Area D.

•At its meeting February 14, the Administration & Finance committee agreed to determine whether the following projects could qualify for Community Works funding: reservoir liner replacement; waterworks leak detection program; backflow prevention values; water metering; taking golf course off treated water; geothermal heating for city hall; Water Street development and energy efficient streetlighting. The committee decided to ask the Kaslo Area Youth Council to return to a committee meeting to further discuss their intentions regarding the possible lease of the Kaslo Community Hall.

•At the public works committee meeting February 19, it was decided that Foreman Walker and Councillor Jones would walk the waterfront area to determine the best location for a waterfront pedestrian walkway around the skatepark. The committee discussed the borrow pit reclamation area and the trail elevation around the skatepark. The trail will be two feet higher than last year's high water mark. Benches will be located on the high side of the trail, with a few evergreen trees planted around the picnic tables.

He also reported that the public works crew has been removing dead boulevard trees and that a water tank has been built, using a donated tank, for wetting roads when needed. He said the Washington Street stairs need to be rebuilt as they are too steep.

•Bylaw 1042, Solid Waste Management was given three readings and is expected to be adopted at the next council meeting. Plastic bags of garbage are no longer acceptable to be left at the curb for pick-up, to avoid attracting wildlife. All garbage must be secured inside sufficient containers, with a $2 bag tag, and securely covered and placed for collection before 7 am on collection day, but not more than two hours in advance of that time. It is no longer acceptable to leave garbage out the night before collection.

•Greg Mintz wrote to council with a complaint regarding parking on Oak Avenue, stating his driveway was being blocked by patrons visiting the establishment next door to his residence. Mintz will be asked to clearly sign his driveway where it enters the street. Councillor Vass was opposed, stating "putting a sign up will not solve the problem re: fire truck access etc." Councillor Leathwood said that a 'resident only' parking sign was posted on 7th Street across from the entrance to the hospital, and it has not solved the problem.

•The Village received municipal grant applications totalling $15,910, and council referred them to the next special budget meeting.

•Mayor Holland and Councillor Jones were authorized to attend the AKBLG Conference on April 26 - 28 in Golden.

•Mary-Allana Holmes has resigned as the Village liaison between the Kaslo and Area Health Advisory (KAHA) and Village council. Elaine Smith will assume this position for a term to expire December 31/08.

•Accounts payable of $35,168.37 were approved for payment, including $1,735.53 to Staples McDannold Stewart (Village lawyers) to review government agent / Village lease re: provincial building.

YACK sessions in Kaslo to encourage youth creative arts

submitted by Ramona Faust

Many Kaslo area parents have to drive their children to Nelson for creative activities. But not this year. The North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society is offering artists and craftspeople an opportunity to share their talents with children and youth through a series of 8-week sessions called Youth Art and Culture Kaslo (YACK).

Do you have an art form, craft or recipe that you would like to share with young people? Are you a natural teacher or mentor? Artists participating in YACK can enrich the cultural experience of local children and youth through courses in art, photography, pottery, fitness, drama, collage, cartooning, website development, drumming, singing, dance, painting, leatherwork, gymnastics, woodwork and cooking.

Sessions will run from mid April to the middle of June, with a reduced summer program, continuing in the fall. There will be a program focusing on children three to six years of age and a program for teens 12-17. Sessions can be one time only offerings or can run for 4 to 8 weeks. An hourly stipend will be provided to instructors as well as supplies and materials.

YACK is made possible with the assistance of the Vancouver Foundation and *The Vancouver Sun's* Children's Fund. Those interested in participating are asked to contact Suzanne Thompson at 353-7691 or suzanne@nklcss.org.

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Get Outta Town!

with Peter Roulston

Rolling into the new riding season

Finally we've been able to switch the clocks back to blessed daylight savings mode and now everyone can get some time in the evenings for tidying the yard, planning the garden layout and pulling out those summertime toys and tools...

Certainly one of the toys that is out and about are the dozens and soon hundreds of bicycles of the valley – big, small, slow, fast, brand new or beat-up. For the present time all riding is either in town or else out along the clear and open highways. Trails remain largely snowbound or icy, however a New Denver neighbour named Jody rode the Molly Hughes Trail from Bigalow Bay out to the Galena Trail connection and found the going not bad despite some ice and slush.

At this early stage of the season you may be an unexpected addition to the traffic flow after several months of drivers seeing virtually no riders. The road shoulders are still gravelly and dusty and odd puddles or fallen rocks may make you need to swerve but keep in mind that any overtaking vehicles can't swing past all that easily.

This column I won't suggest places to ride yet because you'll find your way along the roads just fine, but I do want to remind you of some concepts to consider to make your place on the road safe and unobtrusive. I tend to have lots of empathy for drivers who may be harried or tired or distracted as they come upon riders in unexpected instances. When I'm driving and am passing cyclists I try to see how it could be done quickly and safely without surprise or needless tension.

My feeling is that in town traffic and at speeds of up to maybe 20 kph, you're best to occupy the lane of traffic and go with the flow, signalling and stopping as all other traffic has to. Ride briskly and confidently and get clear of intersections quickly using the same left turn lanes and exits as do the cars. Riding along the edges and grazing past parked cars can get you 'doored' or forced out into traffic by errant pedestrians. Riding on the sidewalk is only okay for little kids or riders stopping to enter businesses.

Once you've got out of the congestion and up to higher speed flows, then I think it's best to get humble and assume a position to the right shoulder so that cars can slip past readily. Listen as you pedal along for traffic from behind and be super alert when cars encounter each other as they pass you. Brightly coloured clothing and helmets help make you visible and pedalling motion is far more apparent than only coasting along.

Oftentimes it seems that commercial truck drivers really know how wide they are and can pass without much problem if the cyclist keeps tight to the edge. If you look at the width of most trucks in relation to the width of the paved lane you're riding in you can see that in most cases there is indeed room for two during that moment of passing. Ironically, there are times when a tiny car will tailgate needlessly instead of blasting past, possibly because they think they take up more room than they really do.

Basically it all comes down to cooperation, consideration and even a bit of respect when you ride, whether it be on narrow highways, streets or trails. People tend to be propelled or constrained by their own life experiences and thus a variety of actions and responses come into play.

So this season let's all try to drive safe and ride smart, and vice versa. Taxes pay for the roads and some of the trails too. Private property is not always evident and some special places simply never should have to endure tire impact. After turning the clock, you might turn a page, turn your head to see, and roll on out into another spring season in the Kootenays.

Peter Roulston owns the Bicycle Hospital in New Denver and really prefers daylight savings time. 358-2133.

Financial forum

with Tim Affolter

Don't let the party go to your head

2006 was another great year for Canadian investors, as Toronto rose 17.26%. This racks up the fourth consecutive double-digit year for Canadian stocks since the end of the infamous 3-year bear market of 2000-2002. Canadian stocks are now showing 5-year average annual returns of 13.44% to the end of 2006. Wow! Contrast that with the 5-year return Canadian investors had at the end of 2002 – a meager 1.2% – and it's easy to see why Canadian equity mutual fund sales are hitting highs.

But is there a cloud inside this silver exterior? Well, at the risk of being called party-poopers, here at AFG we would like to offer a couple of bits of advice. And, with nearly 40 years combined experience in the financial markets between Debbie, Collin and myself, we think there's enough grey hair here for us to even call it sage advice. Here are two things everyone should keep in mind as they consider their investment options:

1. Remember the fundamentals

With these heady days in Canadian stocks, it's easy to forget one of the most important fundamentals of long-term investing: diversification. This time last year, people were saying they wanted only Canadian funds. Whenever you hear such lopsided comments you can expect a change. Sure enough, 2006 was the first year since 2001 that global stocks have outperformed Canadian. Though Canada was very respectable, the EAFE Index (Europe, Australia and Far East) clocked in at 26.79%! So check your mix this year to ensure that you aren't placing all your eggs in the Canadian basket.

Another form of diversification is investment style, such as growth and value. Every dog has its day, and the fact that value-style equity funds are currently reporting relatively low returns is no reason to exclude them from your portfolio – in fact, the opposite may be true: Now may be the time to overweight your portfolio in value and underweight growth.

Also, your portfolio should match your position in life and temperament. Most advisors will tell you that you should have more invested in equities (stocks and income trusts) than fixed income (bonds and GICs) when you are young, and switch them as you age. That might work, but factors such as the length of bond maturities can make even fixed income quite volatile if you don't pay attention. So, look at the volatility profile of your portfolio with your advisor before making final decisions. And remember: even the best returns aren't worth getting an ulcer or losing sleep over.

2. Don't get carried away with the euphoria

The 5-year returns we are reporting now are reasonable because they include 2002, a terrible year due to the accounting scandals in the US. But, unless we go into a recession by October, the reported returns at that time will be from the market bottom in 2002 to now – all positive years. The advertised returns will be huge – and hence the danger.

The party will end eventually, and markets will take a breather for a year or so. This will average your returns down, probably back to where the 5-year returns are now. So this isn't really the time to mortgage your home to invest in stocks (called leveraged investing). Better to wait with this aggressive technique until markets have had a really lousy year and everyone is all doom and gloom. Then you will likely be investing at the market bottom instead of the top. Doing this at the bottom will also test your mettle as an investor and make sure you actually have the stomach for leveraged investing. Many people don't.

Remember that, most of the time, it's time in the markets rather than timing the markets that makes the difference between success and failure. Just don't forget to stay balanced and within your risk tolerance.

Tim Affolter CFP CLU ChFC is a co-owner of The Affolter Financial Group Inc. specializing in financial, tax and estate planning.

Cool Eateries of the West Kootenays

with Andrew Rhodes

Year of the Pig and the Broadway Deli Bistro

Hello out there all you fabulous food fans. The vernal equinox, the official beginning of Spring, is a week away. Yay! Meanwhile, on Saturday I found myself once again driving to Nakusp. I didn't see any of Stan's cows on the highway. I wasn't even thinking about cows. I was thinking about pigs, because this is the Year of the Pig. In fact, I'm told it is actually the Year of the Golden Pig, but I was thinking of a pig of a different colour. I was thinking of a pink pig—specifically, the big pink pig in front of the Broadway Deli Bistro in downtown Nakusp where I was headed for lunch. The pink pig is the deli's mascot. I've been eating there for years, and I was looking forward to a tasty meal. The Broadway Deli has always had sure-fire sandwiches along with pizza, Mexican food, and a lot more.

Painted on the front window of the deli is a sign which proudly proclaims, in big red letters, "Pretty Good Food." That sign has always amused me. I parked in front of the pink pig, and was met at the door by Irene Beaupre-Martin who's owned the place for fourteen years. Also on hand were the smiling sisters Boon and La.

The place is comfortable and bright. It seats 34 inside and 15 on the patio. Inside there's a small pink pig at the counter urging you to "Please order here." Patrons bring in pink pigs, and Irene has them strategically placed. There are tons of heritage photos on the walls and display cases filled with postcards that patrons have sent from all over the world. There are three silent cuckoo clocks. The Broadway Deli is user-friendly and, by the way, is listed in *The Lonely Planet Guide*. Irene is very pleased about that.

The food? I thought you'd never ask. The Broadway Deli is well known for serving breakfast all day. In addition to the usual breakfasts you can have waffles, oh yes, and French toast too, and Tex Mex Huevos Rancheros. Don't forget fresh muffins. The coffee comes from a family business in Vernon: Voets Coffee. It is noteworthy that when the B.C. Forest Fire Control folks are in town they go to The Broadway Deli for breakfast. Irene even opens an hour early to accommodate them. What a gal!

Pizzas? There are twelve-inch pizzas, the famous ones being their Vegie Pizza and their Loaded Meat Pizza. Remember, the place is a DELI with a dozen kinds of salami to choose from. Sound good?

On to the sandwiches. The Classic Sub comes in 'regular' or 'loaded.'

If you want a custom sub, just tell 'em what you want. In fact you can build any sandwich you like—one to four deckers! Good golly! But for me, it was the Deli Clubhouse that won my heart: Black Forest Ham, lettuce, toms, mayo, cheese, turkey and sprouts. Triple decker. BINGO! All the bread, buns, and pizza crusts come from Ruth and Gill at the Nakusp Natural bakery.

Let's go to Mexico. Burritos, enchiladas, tacos nachos or a combo dinner are on offer. The sauces range from 'Not So Hot' up to 'Mui Blastido.' Salads: Chef, Taco, Shrimp, Pasta, Potato, or bean. Your choice. How 'bout homemade soup? There is also a big selection of chips and chocolate bars available. Some folks do their grocery shopping at this Deli. You can rent videos too. I mean REALLY! What a place! And Irene, Boon, and La take special care of everyone that walks in.

When I was there on Saturday, who walked in but the world-famous Dr. Dianna Kelland and her friend Sue Davis. I never miss an opportunity to joke around with the good doctor, so she and Sue and Irene and I all sat together and laughed between bites of our lunch.

I highly recommend The Broadway Deli And Bistro to everyone. They're open from 6:00 am to 4:00 pm Mon.-Sat. and 7 to 4 on Sundays—all year round.

(By the way, the Deli Club was to die for.)

The Broadway Deli is licensed, and wheelchair friendly.

Go there!

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Irene Beaupre-Martin, Andy Rhodes and Dr. Dianna Kelland prepare for a bite to eat at the Broadway Deli Bistro.

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BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

ATTENTION WEBMASTERS! Lucerne School PAC is calling for proposals to build and maintain a website for the school. The website is to be up and running by the end of May. Proposals must include design concept and budget. Much of the image content is already available, but the webmaster will be required to write some text, and possibly take some photographs for the site. Once hired, webmaster would work with a committee to finalize design and determine content. Please send proposals by March 31 to Terry Taylor at ttaylor@sd10.bc.ca

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS: 'To Serve & Protect –Wild, Zany, Strictly Functional or Industrial Strength Aprons from the Columbia Basin and Beyond' will be a travelling installation, a fashion event and perhaps a storytelling or two. Open to artists of all disciplines and ability. Multi-disciplinary project. Deadline December 31, 2007. Preliminary Show & Tell with Tea, September 23, 2007 at Hidden Garden Gallery, New Denver at 2 pm. Bring a dream to share. Contact gretchenperk@yahoo.ca or 250-358-2180 for info.

COMING EVENTS

YOGA AT THE DOMES - Monday, Thursday and Saturday 9 to 10:30 am. All levels, all ages. Affordable.

PARENT SUPPORT GROUP offered in New Denver. Those interested phone New Denver Nursery School 358-7768 or Andrea Wright 358-7995.

Come and experience a WEEKEND IN RETREAT with WILBERT ALIX (www.TranceDance.com). Unique insight into the relationships between traditional shamanic healing, western science and eastern mysticism April 13 to 15 2007 Winlaw BC (Hwy 6). Over 50 people attended a Soul Hunting Workshop held in March 2006 the North Shore Hall in Nelson. We are honoured that Wilbert is returning to the Kootenays this year to be with us in Winlaw. Accommodation list for all budgets, program schedule and costs: 250-226-0021 (be sure to leave a message).

SOCIAL/BALLROOM DANCE. Second Saturday of the month. Playmor Hall, 7:30pm - mini lesson; dancing - 8pm-11pm. Singles Welcome! $8 non members. Teens Free!! www.dancingbeat.org

PASSMORE HALL is having their annual **PIE/GIFT BINGO** March 17 at 6:30. Come out, have fun and support your community. Donations of Pies/Gifts welcome.

Take the TRASH ART Challenge! Create a work of art using RECYCLED MATERIALS. Enter by April 18. CASH PRIZES. Entry forms: slocanvalley.com/events.php, Valley businesses, or 226-7479. A Slocan Valley Arts Council event.

INFANT SIGNING CLASS FOR PARENTS, SIBLINGS AND CAREGIVERS. Explore the gift of communication and the joy of signing. Studies show that infants and parents alike experience less stress about daily routines, while empowering language skills and promoting self esteem through the infant having a direct effect on her environment even before she can speak. Wednesdays 9;30-10:30 am, March 7-April 25. Drop-ins welcome. Hand & Soul Healing Centre, Silverton. 358-2562. Suggested donation $10 per class.

The **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE KASLO HOUSING SOCIETY** will take place on April 30, 2007 at the Senior's Hall in Kaslo. (look for posters and notices closer to the date). Our society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the building of supportive housing for seniors in the North Kootenay Lake region.

We will be looking for a minimum of three new board members to replace those whose terms have expired and will be stepping down. If you feel this project is important to the North Kootenay Lake region as a whole, and would be prepared to contribute some time and effort into achieving this goal, perhaps you would let your name stand for nomination and election to the Board at the upcoming AGM. If you are interested in learning more, or require additional information, please phone Wendy at 353-7145.

BOTTLE DRIVE Saturday, March 31, 9 am to 3 pm. Crescent Valley to Slocan City. Money raised supports Valhalla Wilderness Program.

AUTHOR READING by Adam Schroeder at Nakusp Public Library on Friday, March 23rd at 7:30. Everyone invited. Refreshments. Free.

LEARN HOW TO SEE AND FEEL THE HUMAN AURA workshop at Hand & Soul Healing Centre, Silverton. Saturday, March 24th, 10 am - 4pm. $55. For booking, phone Jane, 365-2136.

LARRY ZALESKI, D.C. will offer an inspiring and entertaining lecture on new paradigm in health 'Healing vs.Curing' on Thurs-Mar 22 (7-9pm) at Hand & Soul Healing Centre in Silverton. 358-2177 Drop-in Donation.

SUE MISTRETTA is offering the following: 'Listen to Mind/Body Wisdom.' Befriend physical symptoms and pain. Thurs-Mar 15th $10 (7-8:30pm). 'Creative Dream Imagery' workshop - Sun Mar 17 (10-4) $55. 'The Creative Wellspring' Wed's (12-3pm). Series on creativity & authentic expression. Mar 14: Painting, Mar 21: Collage, Mar 28: Movement. $20 ea. 'TENDING THE GARDEN OF THE SOUL' 1 day expressive arts retreat. Sat- Mar 31st (9-5pm). During spring equinox - enjoy self nurturing, creative process & renewal. $70 All held at Hand & Soul Healing Centre, Silverton. For more information, a flyer, or to register, call 358-2177.

DANCE WEDNESDAYS AT WINLAW HALL (Hwy 6), starting March 7: Creative dance for kids ages 2 to 6 at 4:45 pm, African Dance for adults 5:30 pm followed by Open Dance Improvisation 7pm. In cooperation with Slocan Valley Recreation and Selkirk College. 226 0008 (Slocan Valley Rec).

WEDNESDAY ART AT WINLAW HALL (Hwy 6): Painting with instruction mornings 9:30 -1pm, Life drawing for beginners 1:30 – 4 pm. Experienced artists also welcome to have studio space for the day. In cooperation with Selkirk College and Slocan Valley Recreation. Barb Wilson, 226 0021 and Evelyn Kirkaldy, 359-6611.

COME ALL YE GRUBS, SLUGS, and fellow gardeners to a Community Seed Swap from 10am - 2pm at the Hidden Garden Gallery on March 31. Come with seeds or without and help bring on the gardening season! Contact: Julia 358-2745.

HILLS COMMUNITY DOUKHOBOR SOCIETY annual meeting, Sunday April 1, 1 pm, Hills Community Hall.

INTRODUCTION TO NATURAL HEALTH CARE, Q&A, some AV, dialogue / discussion on the principle of natural health delivery and practical application in our lives. Presented by Analisa Azzopardi, Natural Health Consultant, and guest lecturers TBA. 1st Tuesday evening and Thursday morning of every month 7:30-9:30 and 10 to noon, commencing March 6 & 8. Drop-ins welcome. Hand & Soul Healing Centre, Silverton. Suggested donation $10 per class.

BLOOD TYPE & DIET. What's all the hype? Come and find out why and what you might gain by putting your genetic information to bat for you. Genes determine many factors about your uniqueness and affinities. Find out how the food choices you make can influence your health & wellness. A series of five lectures to accommodate each blood group and the related research and theories will be offered every Tuesday and Thursday from March 13 & 15 to April 10 & 12. Drop-ins welcome. These are all offered through Hand & Soul Healing Centre, Silverton. Suggested donation $10 per class. 358-2562.

THE NELSON PEACE COALITION is holding a peace rally on Saturday, March 17, 11 am, at the Government Building on Ward Street to mark the 4th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. Please support this pan-Canadian Day of Action for Peace and our call for an end to the wars of occupation in Afghanistan and Iraq. For more information contact Grant Clubine at 505-9656, Sandra Nelken at 352-5274 or Don Currie at 355-2669.

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FOR SALE: FIDDLE WITH CASE, Bow & Rosen. $100. 358-7126.

MOUNTAIN SKY SOAPS CLEARANCE SALE! Last time to get soap at these low prices. Soap seconds, packaged soaps, gift sets and lip balms at fantastic prices. One Day Only! Saturday. March 31, 9-5 pm, 2276 HWY #6, Crescent Valley, 359-6850.

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COMMUNITY COUNSELLOR REQUIRED – Counsellor required to work as part of a community-based counselling team in Kaslo and Area & East Shore of Kootenay Lake. The position is for 5 days per week. Recent experience in Family Support & Children's Mental Health Counselling & Victims' Services is required. MSW or BSW required with 3-5 years relevant clinical practice or equivalent. Resumes including references to: Administrator, North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society, Box 546, Kaslo, BC, V0G1M0 or email office@nklcss.org or fax 250-353-7694. Position open until suitable candidate found. Only those short listed will be contacted. www.nklcss.org.

WANTED: COOKS & WAITRESS. Full time and part time positions available. Come join our fun team for the summer of 2007. Phone leave message after March 16. 250-358-7953. References required.

COOK F/T or P/T for Deli in Nakusp. Counter, breakfast, lunch. Pleasant, positive attitude, good customer service skills. Immediate opening. Fax resume 250-265-3103 / email minervia@columbiacable.net.

WAITRESSES, CHAMBERMAIDS. Apply at Silverton Lakeshore Inn.

YOUTH WORKERS REQUIRED. Crescent Valley Youth Centre is currently hiring youth workers evening/weekend shifts $12-$15/hr. Experience is preferred. Mail resumes to Box 13 Crescent Valley, BC V0G 1H0 or email cvyc@netidea.com. Deadline Friday March 30.

NOTICES

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

AGM - DUMONT CREEK BURIAL SOCIETY AGM 7 pm, Thursday, March 29 at Winlaw School.

ROTARY CLUB OF NAKUSP is looking for submissions to nominate the **2006 CITIZENS OF THE YEAR** in Nakusp and area. Nominations seek a person of any age who has made an outstanding contribution to the community. This may include our youth, couples or individuals. Please include in your nomination as much supporting data as possible. Deadline Friday, March 23, 2007. Please mail nominations to: Citizen of the Year Award Committee, Rotary Club of Nakusp and Area, PO Box 62, Nakusp, BC V0G 1R0. For more information, please call 265-3373.

ANY NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION wanting to apply for a Grant-in-Aid from Slocan Lake Recreation Commission #6 should submit the proper applications to Box 293, New Denver, B.C. V0G 1S0. Application forms are available at: Village of New Denver, Village of Silverton, Lucerne School and My Aunt's Place, New Denver. Please note that the appropriate application form must be used or the application will not be considered. The deadline for the applications is April 15th, 2007.

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EASTER BUNNY HOP - Sunday, April 1st, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Passmore Lodge. $3 per child. Must pre-register by March 27th.

TALKING BONSAI - With Gail Powell. Sun. April 15th. Noon to 2:00 p.m. Vallican Whole Community Centre.

P.A.L. (Possession& Acquistion License) - April 14th & 15th (Sat.Sun.) Winlaw School. Fee: $85. Reg. by April 5th.

BIKE SWAP - Sun. April 22nd. 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Slocan Park Hall.

CORE HUNTER TRAINING - April 28th & 29th (Sat./Sun.) Winlaw School. Fee: $135/2 sessions. Reg. by April 13th.

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Slocan council, March 7: Grant applications in for village office renos, storm sewers and abattoir

by Don Currie

•Administrator Ludlow in her regular report to Council reported that a grant application had been made to the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) for renovations to the Village office. Ludlow said repairs needed to remedy lack of insulation, unsealed doors and windows, and single paned windows. The report noted that inadequate toilet facilities and poor work stations could trigger WCB enforcement if not remedied. The administrator said the total project cost was $209,800 and the grant would cover 2/3 of the cost.

The Administrator said a second application had been made for $80,000 for storm sewers down Harold Street, Ward Street and part of Main Street to cope with spring run-off. Funding comes 80% from the provincial Towns for Tomorrow program and 20% from the Village of Slocan.

A third grant application had gone forward for $100,000 to establish an abattoir and to deal with waste products from the project. A $50,000 grant has already been approved for planning the abattoir.

•The meeting revealed an ongoing debate among councillors about an Official Community Plan (OCP) for Slocan. The February 14 minutes refer to a report to council by Administrator Eunice Ludlow that says questions from residents about the OCP that show that many villagers do not know what an OCP is. The report states the Village has an OCP and the Ministry has advised there should be no need for another OCP until it is no longer functional. The minutes state: "A new OCP would cost anywhere from $85,000 to $100,000 so we need to plan for it. Decide whether we want to expand our boundaries or not, so that we know what direction we are going in and what we are required to prepare." Councillors Madeleine Perriere and Joanne Ellis objected to the way the OCP issue was reported in the minutes and requested it be deleted. Councillors Gates and Septav said it should be left in for further discussion. The minutes were adopted as read with Councillors Perriere and Ellis opposed.

Later in the meeting Administrator Ludlow reported that Derek Trimmer from the Ministry responsible for boundary expansion would visit the Village on April 12 to advise Council on problems associated with boundary expansion and OCP.

•Tamara Matthews, owner of the Slocan Motel, appeared as a delegation complaining of poor signage on the highway and in the Village, and what she considered as weak promotion of Village businesses. Matthews pointed out that signage at the trailhead states there is no accommodation in the Village. The motel operator complained that signs are out of date and do not reflect the change of ownership of many local businesses. Council acknowledged there was a problem and instructed staff to proceed with new signage and to contact all local businesses to update information. Administrator Ludlow urged local businesses to take advantage of the Village website to advertise their businesses at no charge.

•During question period Terry Guerin wanted to know what council could do about the large increase in deer in the Village that were destroying pyramidal cedars. Resident Beatrice Anderson also wrote council complaining of deer being fed within Village limits. Councillor Perriere said she had contacted the Conservation Officer and was told there was no law against feeding deer. She was advised that a Conservation Officer would come to the Village if the deer population became too large and a cull would be considered. Resident John Sarjeant said he had obtained a deer repellent recipe that works well and was asked by Mayor Van Bynen to pass it on to council so it could be made available for use by residents.

•Gerry Simmons, Village Works Foreman, reported on the installation of a 24/7 4-way flashing light at the corner of Harold St. and Giffin Ave. at a cost of $1,100. He said Fortis would install but not supply the light. Councillors Perriere and Ellis questioned the need for a flashing light, pointing out that the 4-way stop at the school had curbed speeding through the school area. Councillor Septav said there had been requests for the light. Council decided to consult residents who might object to a 24-hour flashing light adjacent to their homes and to check minutes to establish which residents requested the light. The foreman also reported that a used 2005 Ford 550 4x4 Diesel had been leased for $1160.86 to replace the 1988 Ford F350.

•Mayor Van Bynen drew attention to defacing by vandals of the Rails to Trails sign near the gazebo. Councillor Gates reported that the RDCK had approved a grant of $14,619 to the Slocan Valley Heritage Trail Society for maintenance of the trail. Simmons said the damage could be repaired.

•Councillor Septav reported on the Community Forest Co-op. He said all applications were in to the Ministry but were on hold until the Ministry finalizes formulas on calculating stumpage, and determines how communities can contribute so as not to run afoul of the provisions of the newly negotiated softwood lumber treaty.

•Council considered ongoing discussions and applications between the Village and provincial authorities regarding crown lands affecting the water plant, the potential for hydroelectric development of Gwillim Creek and the appraised value of beach property on crown land. Councillor Septav considered the water plant and potential hydro developments as priorities. Administrator Ludlow pointed out that there were in fact three crown land issues: the water plant, the power plant and the beach. Council agreed to proceed with applications for all three areas, giving priority to the water plant and potential for hydro development on Gwillim Creek. Staff was instructed to check appraised value of affected beach property.

•Councillor Ellis reported on discussions with MLA Corky Evans and IHA representative Tina Colletti about the availability of a nurse practitioner from Castlegar to work at the Slocan Wellness Centre. Council will be kept informed about the matter.

•During the adoption of the agenda Councillor Ellis reminded council that the Community Charter required an audit by May 15 and that an auditor should be appointed. Administrator Ludlow said the audit was starting the following day by auditors Berg Naqvi Lehmann, still under contract to the Village to carry out the 2006 audit.

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• Wednesday March 28 at 10:00 AM, Kaslo Seniors Hall
• Wednesday March 28, 2:00 PM, Kaslo Seniors Hall
• Thursday March 29, 7:00 PM, Kaslo Seniors Hall
• Friday March 30, 10:00 AM, Lardeau Community Club, Meadow Creek
• Friday March 30, 2:30 PM, The Friends Meeting House, Argenta

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DOOR PRIZES!

Regional forum on youth sexual diversity attracts crowd

submitted

Safe Spaces EK's public forum, *Opening the Closet: Understanding Youth Sexual Diversity*, drew over 100 guests on February 15 to the Prestige Inn, Cranbrook, and the Nelson Health Co-op. The forum focused on identifying the lack of support for sexually diverse youth in the Kootenays and looked at ways to make changes. The forum was also held in Trail on March 13.

Safe Spaces EK Coordinator Kris Dickeson said the response to this event demonstrates that the problems of the sexually diverse are not only unrecognized, but misunderstood.

"We wanted to call on all the communities to address the issue of creating safety for sexually diverse youth. This objective was also key in helping identify measures to potentially influence public policy."

Keynote speaker Christopher Moore, a trans activist/educator, hosted a workshop designed to help those wanting to explore issues of gender or who want to support others faced with these.

An afternoon panel featured Kimberley RCMP Victims Services Unit, a National Safe Spaces Program representative, a middle school counsellor, a sexually diverse youth, an EK Safe Spaces Advisory Committee member and a representative of the transgender community. Among issues discussed were education in schools for sexually diverse youth, ways to change community perception, and school district policies.

Safe Spaces EK's funding from National Crime Prevention ends in mid-March and it is hoped that new funding will become available to continue the program, now in its third year. The forum was sponsored in part by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, School Districts # 5 and 6, Interior Health Authority, and GALE BC.

Activist and educator Christopher Moore hosted a popular workshop at the Safe Spaces EK forum held recently in Nelson and Cranbrook.

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Health officer releases drinking water report

submitted

Provincial health officer Dr. Perry Kendall has released a report on activities that have taken place in BC to improve water quality during the 2003-05 period. It calls for improvements in both data collection and monitoring the effects of resource extraction activities. It is the first report since the Drinking Water Protection Act came into force.

"Under the Act," explains Kendall, "public water supply system operators must now be certified, and drinking water officers are working with these operators to implement drinking water protection plans."

The Province will focus this year on improving the reporting framework. An additional 20 new positions in health authorities have been created. The BC Centre for Disease Control and other approved laboratories test over 75,000 water samples each year. These tests check for biological contamination and mandatory testing for E coli and local coliforms. Reporting of positive results has been streamlined, and additional testing is now done for chemical contamination.

Kendall's report urges improvements in drinking water management, including: systematic collection of comprehensive drinking water data across the province; new legislation requiring the licensing of groundwater extraction and restricting access to groundwater where aquifers are being over-used; and addressing the challenges of small water systems.

Other recommendations address the preservation of drinking water quality, by ensuring all public water systems have timely access to laboratory testing. The report calls for "a better understanding of the true cost of producing high quality drinking water."

Notes from the RCMP

THE FOLLOWING REPORTS ARE BASED ON PRESS RELEASES AND MAY HAVE BEEN EDITED

RCMP have charged 31-year-old Kelly Ryan Harrison for the incident that occurred October 17 at Dirt Clothing in Nakusp. Harrison has been charged with break and enter, theft, and possession of stolen property under the Criminal Code of Canada. A warrant has been issued for his arrest and RCMP are asking anyone who may know of his whereabouts to please come forward. Please contact Constable Brandon Buliziuk at 250-265-3677 or Crimestoppers at 1-800-222-8477.