The Valley VOICE

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

Abattoir project plans met with mixed reaction at Slocan meeting

by Don Currie

A large turnout of Slocan villagers, rural residents, farmers and ranchers filled the gymnasium at WE Graham School on November 22 to hear about the proposed abattoir and other local issues.

The abattoir project had the support of the farmers and ranchers, but some Village residents were not as enthusiastic.

The Village received a $10,000 grant from the Province to do the planning for the abattoir, which would serve the entire West Kootenay area and would meet the requirements of the new Meat Inspection Regulation.

The Slocan Valley Abattoir Co-operative (SVAC) is forming to take the project on – to have the facility built by August 30, and then operate it.

A four-page report by the co-op states, "The planning stages are well underway – the facility plans are being finalized, the Co-operative is being formed and finances are in the process of being secured."

The proposed location for the slaughterhouse is on 3.9 acres outside Village boundaries but owned by the Village, adjacent to the Fortis substation between South Slocan Road and Highway 6. This is a piece of land that the Village purchased for a pellet plant project, which fell through.

The facility will create 13 new jobs and a sizeable spin-off of support to business and industry, according to the report. It claims the abattoir will increase the income of 1,500 small producers in the area by an amount in excess of $2.25 million. The anticipated volume in years 2 and 3 would generate in excess of $3 million and $5 million respectively.

The number of animals predicted for the first year is 1,000 cattle, 300 sheep, 1,100 pigs, 12,000 chickens and 1,500 turkeys. The livestock slaughter will be for both certified organic and conventional meat, and there will be a cut and wrap facility.

A floor plan of the facility details a 14,450-square-foot plant complete with a holding area, knock down area and slaughter area, coolers, freezers, packing rooms and offices.

The waste will be handled by using a system called 'in-vessel' composting developed by Transform Compost Systems based in Abbotsford. Materials that cannot be composted will be incinerated.

Dave Anderson of Legendary Meats said that after 25 years being in the business of killing animals for Valley residents, new government regulations forced a change that disallowed unlicensed facilities from slaughtering animals. He supported the co-op because it was a way for livestock producers to meet the new government regulations and have access to a licensed facility to legally slaughter and process animals for sale to local businesses and the public. Anderson said the Village of Slocan was the only municipality to come forward in support of an abattoir.

Local farmer and forestry worker Michael Mills identified himself as the first shareholder in SVAC. He said MLA Corky Evans was in support of the plan and was also a shareholder. Mills said the forestry industry was in decline and that the facility would provide jobs and that the "spin-offs were huge."

When asked why he didn't volunteer to have the facility on his land, Mills said ALR rules required that 50% of the product used in a facility had to be produced on the ALR land in question, so half the animals slaughtered in the facility would have to be raised on his land. He said if Slocan didn't want the abattoir, SVAC would look elsewhere.

Local ranchers said rising transportation costs and changing government regulations were making it more difficult for them to stay in business. One stated that without an abattoir, some could be forced to go underground and produce meat illegally.

Several questioners asked what the project would cost Village taxpayers. Jeremy Lack said the estimated capital cost would be $1.5 million with yearly overhead of $400,000 to $500,000. He said the money would come from the shareholders in the co-op.

Another person pointed out that if the abattoir is located on Village-owned land outside of Village boundaries, the Village will not be able to tax the business.

Mayor Van Bynen said that if the project does not go forward on land owned by the Village, the Village can sell the land and get its money back.

Several questioners wanted to know if the Villagers would be given a vote on the project, suggesting that it be put to referendum at the Village byelection on February 2. Mayor Van Bynen said council was seeking consensus on the project. He said there may not be time for a referendum and said another meeting would be called in late January to answer more questions. Councillor Septav said if we are split "we will come back to the public."

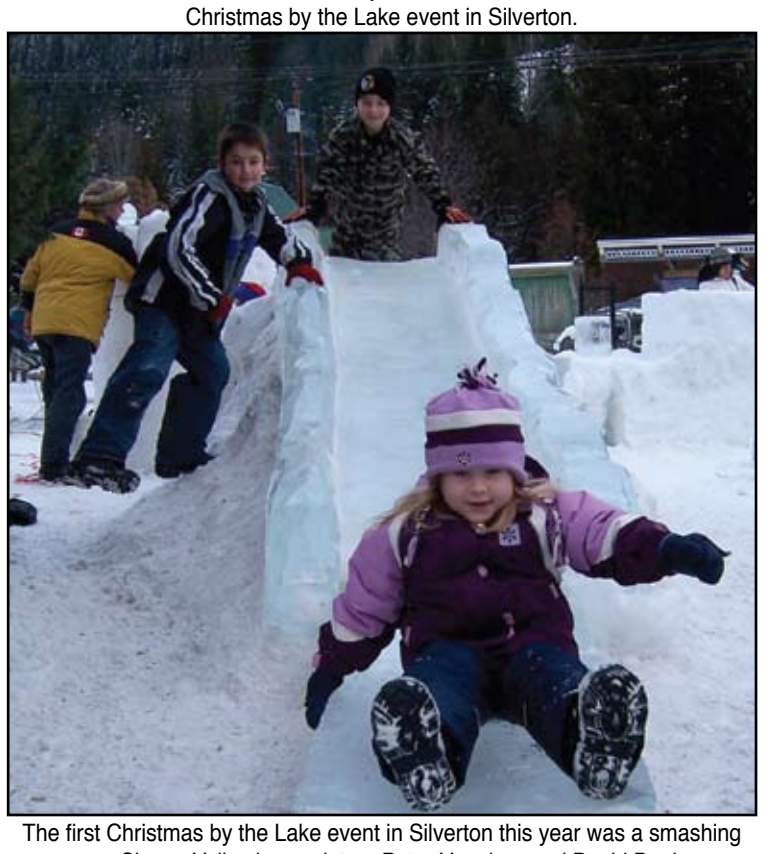
There were several questions related to the water supply for the facility, pointing to current summertime restrictions on water supplied by the Village's state-of-the-art water treatment plant. Mayor Van Bynen responded that "we haven't got there yet" on the water issue.

Jeremy Lack, when questioned about the use of chemicals, explained this would be minimized by the use of "pressure washing."

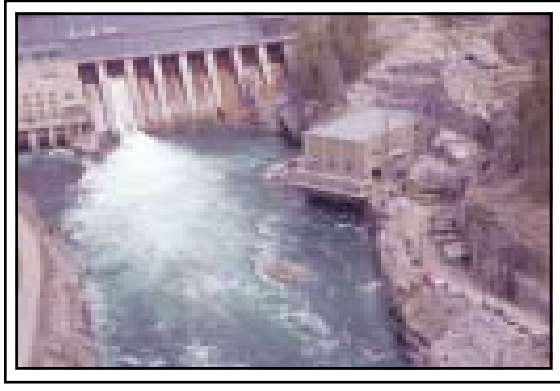
The answer to a series of questions regarding the health and environmental problems associated with the operation of an abattoir was simply that the facility would have to meet BC Department of Disease Control and other government standards regarding groundwater pollution, disposal of waste, animal smells and noise.

Tera Nicholson was one of many children to visit with Santa at the Christmas by the Lake event in Silverton.

The grounds of the Silverton Gallery were dotted with these charming wooden huts for the Christmas by the Lake weekend.



The first Christmas by the Lake event in Silverton this year was a smashing success. Slocan Valley ice sculptors Peter Vogelaar and David Ducharme made this slide, which provided hours of fun for the kids.



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Columbia Basin climate change report forecasts major changes

by Art Joyce

If you want a snapshot of what the Kootenays will look like under the effects of climate change, look no further than the recently released report by the Columbia Basin Trust, Preliminary Analysis of Climate Variability and Change in the Canadian Columbia River Basin: Focus on Water Resources.

The 1990s was the hottest decade in 1,000 years, primarily due to human activities that have increased carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere by as much as 30% in the past century. The CBT report studied temperature changes and the effects on precipitation and snowpack. Temperature increases in the Basin were almost double the global average, at about 1.4 degrees Celsius. The CBT study projects annual temperature increases for the 2020s, 2050s, and 2080s of 1.3°C, 2.6°C, and 4.3°C respectively. The 3º C increase projected by the 2050s for the West Kootenay would create mean average temperatures similar to Osoyoos.

The relationship between warming trends and water in the Basin is critical, given that mountain snowpack and glaciers supply about 30% of the annual flow. The report noted that even a small increase in the average temperature "may cause profound changes in runoff by increasing the frequency of melt events (even) without additional increases in precipitation." A warming climate means that winters are shorter and spring temperatures higher, creating an earlier runoff and potential late summer water flow shortages. This trend is independent of precipitation changes. Climate models for the US portion of the Columbia River Basin are projecting snowpack losses of 21% and 35% for the 2020s and 2040s, with serious impacts on water supply for hydro-electric generation, irrigation and human use.

The impacts will be mitigated somewhat by the 3% per decade increase in precipitation in the Basin over the past 100 years. Climate change models predict a further 1-6% increase in precipitation by the mid 21st century. However, due to temperature increases this will mean less snow and more rain, except during the increasingly hotter summer months when 5-16% less rain is predicted. There has also been a global trend toward more extreme weather events. In the Basin, this could translate into more spring rainstorms that create erosion, landslides and debris torrents.

Glaciers throughout the Basin are retreating at a rate consistent with global trends, which have seen a loss of glacial ice at about 10% per year since the 1960s. This decrease is especially significant in the Canadian portion of the Columbia River Basin, which – although representing only 15% of the total Basin area – supplies 25-50% of total runoff, depending on the season. About 50% of the flow in the Columbia River at Dalles, Oregon originates in Canada in late summer. An average of 16% of ice cover (area) was lost in the Basin between 1986 and 2000, with the Slocan and the Bull watersheds losing 47% and 60% of their total ice area.

A lesser known but still critical impact of warming trends is soil evapotranspiration. Simply put, this is the rate at which moisture evaporates from the soil, and it is increasing. In years following a dry fall, the dry soil absorbs more of the spring snow melt than it does following a normal or wetter year. Then, during the summer, more water evaporates before it reaches streambeds, reducing flow by up to 20%. This has implications for both crop irrigation and fire hazard during drier summers. This effect is accelerated by deforestation, for example through clearcut logging, as more open ground is exposed to the sun. The report concludes that "the impact of large land-use changes on hydrology is similar to and in some cases greater than the impact of climate change."

Climate change reports for the Columbia River Basin posted online by the Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology round out the picture. Don Gayton, a specialist in grasslands ecology, notes that the change in rainfall patterns could see the region transition into a climate more favourable to grasslands and dry forests characterized by Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir. This change will be complicated by an explosion in the growth of noxious weeds, and an accumulation in forest fuel buildup. "Global warming in the Canadian Columbia Basin will not result in more grasslands, but more weedlands."

Bob Forbes noted in his 2003 report for Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection (now merged into the Ministry of Environment), that wildlife habitat zones in the Basin will shift due to climate changes. As water tables decline and alpine tundra shrinks, the treeline will rise and some species will migrate northward. By 2050, mountain caribou habitat in the East Kootenay could be reduced by up to 75%. While disastrous for caribou, large ungulates like sheep and elk will benefit as a more grassland-style ecology emerges similar to south-central Washington.

The CBT climate change report is available online at www.cbt.org or by calling 1-800-505-8998.

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2008 LOCAL BY ELECTION

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Nominations for qualified candidates for the office of:

Councillor (1)

will be received by the Chief Election Officer or a designated person, as follows:

at the Village of Slocan Municipal Office
503 Slocan Street
P.O. Box 50
Slocan, BC
V0G 2C0

From 9:00 am Tuesday, December 18, 2007 to 4:00 pm Friday, December 28, 2007
Excluding Statutory Holidays and weekends

Nomination documents are available at the Village of Slocan Municipal Office during regular office hours, Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE:

A person is qualified to be nominated, elected, and to hold office as a member of local government if they meet the following criteria:

- Canadian Citizen;
- 18 years of age or older;
- Resident of British Columbia for at least 6 months immediately before the date nomination papers are filed; and
- not disqualified by *Local Government Act* or any other enactment from voting in an election in British Columbia or from being nominated for, being elected to, or being a holder of, office.

FURTHER INFORMATION on the foregoing may be obtained by contacting:

Eunice Ludlow, Chief Election Officer
Ella Michiels, Deputy Chief Election Officer
Phone (250) 355-2277

Chief Election Officer

We have done our official ads to comply with the election requirements; this ad is a courtesy for local ratepayers.

Mountain Caribou recovery plan a 'greenwash' say critics

by Art Joyce

The recovery plan recently announced by the government of BC and a coalition of environmental groups calling themselves the Mountain Caribou Project is nothing more than a 'greenwash,' according to Valhalla Wilderness Watch, and will not be enough to save the remaining herds.

VWW notes that since the planning process to save the mountain caribou began in 2003, the population has declined from 1,900 to 1,600 in 18 subpopulations, "most of which were isolated by habitat fragmentation."

According to a report released by VWW, the red flag in the recovery plan is its stipulation that there will be no reduction in the annual allowable cut (AAC) for five years, and no more than 1% of the timber harvesting land base made available for new protection. Millions of hectares of low- and mid-elevation forest containing critical spring and early-winter habitat for mountain caribou could still be logged. Scientists agree that habitat destruction, chiefly by logging, is the main factor that has driven mountain caribou to the edge of extinction.

The plan proposes 2.2 million hectares of protected mountain caribou habitat, but the VWW report notes that this includes "parks that have been protected for years or decades, including huge areas of rock and ice within these parks." The report says old growth reserves in patches left between clearcuts have also been included. Habitat fragmentation of this kind has been referred to by biologists as creating 'islands of extinction' for endangered species such as the caribou.

Critical to the survival of mountain caribou has been the inland temperate rainforest found in the southeastern interior of BC. The forests at low and middle elevations have the highest biodiversity, and provide spring and autumn/early winter habitat for mountain caribou. It's also at these elevations that the most profitable timber grows. The inland rainforest has been clearcut at the rate of 47,679 hectares a year for the last 40 years, with only 20% of the southern portion of the range still intact.

These forests also foster hundreds of species of lichens, including 13 new species recently discovered by biologists. An essential source of winter survival food for caribou, scientists say the greatest threat to lichens is logging.

Mark Zacharias of the Species at Risk Coordination office says 3.8 million hectares of mountain caribou habitat was identified by the government science team, some of which includes non-forested areas. Total forested area identified by scientists was 2.6 million hectares, 1.6 million of which are already no harvest areas, i.e. parks, old growth management areas, or wildlife protection areas. The plan adds a further 600,000 hectares that will be fully protected. Of this figure, 77,000 hectares will be taken out of the timber harvest land base, and a further 300,000 hectares out of 'modified' zones, where limited logging is currently allowed.

Zacharias is unsure whether the AAC will be reduced or left as is, but expects some reduction in the timber supply areas in the Arrow Lakes region, which is currently under review. He says the stipulation of only taking 1% out of the timber harvesting land base came directly from government, and is represented by the 77,000 hectare figure. Pine beetle harvesting taken out of the caribou range will have to be replaced at a 2:1 ratio with high suitability habitat.

Anne Sherrod, spokesperson for VWW, says there is no evidence that logging prevents the spread of mountain pine beetle. In fact, lichenologists find an increase in lichen growth in damaged areas, which supports caribou.

Sherrod believes the government is being disingenuous in its inclusion of parks in mountain caribou protected areas. She says many of these parks, for example Goat Range Park, contain little low to mid-elevation valley bottom because the government rejected most of these areas in the original park proposal.

Sherrod explains that the 77,000 hectares being taken out of timber supply areas will be spread out in tiny pieces over the entire mountain caribou range. This despite the fact that nearly all scientists agree the caribou cannot survive habitat fragmentation. And she points out that having a Timber Supply Review is no guarantee of any reduction in AAC. In fact, the president and CEO of the Council of Forest Industries has claimed that the caribou recovery plan will have no impact on the AAC.

"This is a species that is being driven to extinction by logging, so how is a plan that doesn't reduce logging going to save them?" asks Sherrod.

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TFL #23 treated as asset for sale in P&T court proceedings

by Jan McMurray

They say there's always a first for everything, and it sounds like MLA Corky Evans is having that kind of experience while attending the Pope & Talbot insolvency proceedings in the Supreme Court in Vancouver.

"It's the first time I have seen public land being treated as a corporate asset," he says.

The public land he is referring to is Tree Farm Licence #23, which extends from Revelstoke to Castlegar and has been held by Pope & Talbot since 1995.

The TFL is part of the 'asset purchase agreement' (APA) between P&T and Interfor. The agreement also includes three sawmills (Castlegar, Grand Forks and Spearfish in South Dakota), and two forest licence tenures in the Grand Forks area.

Evans says he understands that the sawmills are assets that can be sold, but "I don't get how two million acres is their asset to sell in a court process. I don't believe that P&T or the Wells Fargo bank [P&T's 'secured lender'] owns the contract to TFL #23. I think the people of BC own TFL #23 and historically it's always been the Minister of Forests who decides what is in the interest of the people, not a court process."

He says he has no objection to Interfor as the bidder, but he feels that Interfor should get the right to operate on TFL #23 from the Minister, not from the court.

In the legislature, Evans and his colleagues have been asking Minister of Forests Rich Coleman to take the TFL away from P&T, engage in a public consultation process with the affected communities about the fate of the TFL, and make a decision based on those consultations. Evans points out that this is what happened in 1992 when Westar went broke and P&T bid on the assets.

However, the Minister has said he will follow his legal advice, which is "to let those [court] proceedings proceed because there are some offers coming in with regards to this…The opposite is to go in and interfere in the process today, put it in jeopardy and then lose the two mills and lose all the job opportunities in the Kootenays."

Bob Simpson, NDP Forests critic, told Coleman that Interfor's offer could still be on the table if the TFL were taken away.

"We can allow the court to decide the terms and conditions with which the transfer of that licence occurs, or the minister can … take back the licence, go out to the communities and engage the communities and the workers in determining the terms and conditions."

NDP leader Carole James told Coleman: "Lawyers in the court confirmed that if Pope and Talbot disperse their assets without intervention from the minister, workers and businesses will be last in line and will receive dimes on the dollar. The only way workers and businesses will be treated fairly is if the minister actually intervenes and takes back TFL 23."

But the Minister was not swayed. "I'm going to take the legal advice that I have in front of me — that we should allow the stay of proceedings to proceed to see if this company can restructure so that we can protect the jobs in British Columbia."

Local logging contractors to be represented in P&T court proceedings

by Jan McMurray

At the next Pope & Talbot court session on December 6, a hearing on behalf of local logging contractors is scheduled.

The contractors will ask for "a charge in all of Pope & Talbot's Property…as security for repayment of all amounts owed" since October 29, when P&T filed for creditor protection. They will also ask that P&T pay their legal fees so they can participate in the proceedings.

The requests are supported by an affidavit filed by Wayne Lintott, General Manager of the Interior Logging Association and authorized representative of 23 of P&T's logging contractors, most operating in the Nakusp area.

Lintott argues that the services of the contractors are essential to the continued viability of P&T's business operations, as P&T needs inventory to continue operating. He also points out that the continued supply of inventory from the contractors will significantly increase the value of P&T's operations, and thus the purchase price of its assets.

"If the Logging Contractors are unable to continue providing services to Pope & Talbot, Pope & Talbot will not be able to maintain inventory levels, and therefore, cannot obtain the best price possible for these operations."

The affidavit states that the contractors cannot afford to keep operating if there is a risk that they will not be paid for their services. It concludes then that the charge on P&T's assets to secure payment for the contractors will facilitate the court proceedings.

Lintott argues in the affidavit that P&T should pay for the contractors' legal fees because the company requires "the participation of the Logging Contractors in the proceedings in order to maximize value for all the stakeholders."

Lintott points out: "By continuing to provide supplies and services to Pope & Talbot, the Logging Contractors will significantly increase the value of Pope & Talbot's operations. This increase in value will primarily benefit Pope & Talbot's secured lenders rather than the Logging Contractors to whom the increase in value can be directly attributed. The Orders requested by the Logging contractors will assist in treating the Logging contractors fairly in the Pope & Talbot CCAA proceedings."

In a telephone interview, Lintott said that the contractors and P&T have come to an agreement whereby the contractors have returned to work and P&T is prepaying them. He also said he hasn't given up on trying to recuperate the money owed to the contractors from before the October 29 P&T filing for creditor protection.

"We haven't given up – we're just trying to find a process to follow through on," he said.

When asked about the liens placed on P&T logs by contractors in Fort St. James, Lintott said the Interior Logging Association lawyer has advised that the liens will eventually have to be removed. "You can do it, but you'll only get so far in the process and then they'll have to be removed," he said.

Pope & Talbot private land sales update

At the November 29 Pope & Talbot court proceedings, the Justice gave P&T the right to execute four private land sales.

The four sales represent 13 of the 36 properties that P&T declared redundant to its woodlands operations and placed on the market in September. Four of these properties are in TFL #23 and therefore cannot be sold until the Minister of Forests agrees to remove them from the tree farm licence.

The sales agreements have been made with: Kelowna Family Golf Centre Ltd. for the Beaverdell South property for $550,000; Don, James and Byron Norn for the Deer Park property for $751,000; Paterson Pole Ltd. and Jones Ties & Poles Ltd. for the Shields Creek property for $1,350,000; and RJR Investments (Lethbridge) Ltd. for ten of the properties for $5,563,627.

The agreement with RJR includes the four TFL properties: Beaton Schedule A, Galena Bay Thumb, Arrowhead and Galena Bay. It also includes the Blanket Creek, Beaton Complex, Taite Creek, Tuzo Junction, Kettle River Park North and Kettle River Park South properties.

New Democrat Forests and Range Critic Bob Simpson introduced a private member's bill on November 29 to protect the public interest when lands are removed from tree farm licences.

"The people of the Kootenays need to know that the fate of their communities and workers will not be determined by a bankruptcy proceeding. We need to expedite passage of this bill to give them some peace of mind," said Simpson while introducing the bill.

The bill, entitled the Public Interest Protection Act, would require the public to be immediately notified when a request was submitted to the Minister to have lands removed from a tree farm licence.

The Campbell Liberals rejected any debate on the bill. It will be on the agenda for the next sitting of the legislature, in the new year.

Simpson said the bill is needed "to restore transparency and accountability to the process of releasing private lands from tree farm licenses."

Chip truck accident destroys semi

by Art Joyce

Seatbelts and air bags save lives. That's the message RCMP are giving out after attending to an accident on Highway 6 near Slocan Park on November 28.

The driver of a southbound pickup truck crossed the centre line and collided head-on with a northbound semi tractor trailer (chip truck). The crash caused the semi to explode into flames, with the driver getting out quickly and receiving only minor injuries. The impact sent the semi into a nearby field where the Passmore Fire Department suppressed the fire.

The driver of the pickup truck was saved by the deployment of his vehicle's air bag and suffered only a broken arm. He was transported to hospital in Trail. The pickup's engine was thrown clear of the wreck and landed in another field. Police have determined that drugs were a factor in the crash.

The accident closed traffic on Highway 6 for about five hours. Constable Tony Holland of West Kootenay Traffic Services was quoted as saying it was "as bad a crash as I've ever seen where nobody has been killed. I don't want to use the word miracle, but it's close to it…"

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ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM PILOTS NEW SMALL GRANTS STREAM

Columbia Basin Trust's (CBT) Environmental Initiatives Program (EIP) is now accepting applications for community-initiated and supported environmental projects in the Basin. The EIP supports projects that address current and future impacts of human communities on local and regional aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Requests for up to $20,000 per project are invited.

New this year...CBT has added a small grants stream to the EIP – this means a shorter and simpler application form for requests under $5,000. The small grant application forms will be available January 30, 2008. Please watch the CBT website for details.

Support during proposal development is available through The Land Conservancy and Columbia-Kootenay Fisheries Renewal Partnership. Contact the Golden CBT office for details at 1-800-505-8998 or 250-344-7065, or email golden@cbt.org.

Completed applications, for both the large and small grants, must be received no later than March 7, 2008 at 3:30 pm PST/4:30 pm MST.

For a detailed program description, eligibility criteria, or an application guide and form, visit the CBT website at www.cbt.org or phone 1-800-505-8998.

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Voices from the Valleys

Green/Greed

Forty years ago, people chained themselves to their homes and orchards to defend a self-sustaining way of life. The government of the day arrested the protesters, burned their homes along with a rich ecosystem, and dammed the rivers anyways. I've been told that the BC premier received an island in the Duncan for his hard work.

Our poor Columbia is the most dammed waterway on earth. They tore the heart out of our valleys, and now they are after the arteries – selling off all the water rights to our creeks. Crown land is being liquidated before the treaty rights come into play, whether it's hydro or wind for independent power projects, mining fever, or ski resorts for the rich. If you put all the older hydro projects together, you have the largest corporation on earth with the biggest land-grab in history – waterfront property – and they are selling that as well. Life is for sale in the Kootenays, in BC, and it's going cheap!

We stripped our forest of old growth and turned the only inland temperate rainforests on earth into a desert that is burning up – all this for jobs and progress without a thought towards climate change or any future legacy.

Now they want every tree and last drop of water as the earth is drying up and can barely recover. Animals and plants are going extinct daily and still we can't stop these dinosaur corporations from devouring everything.

They buy and sell the earth like a game, make a fortune in profits then go bankrupt when there is nothing left. They don't have to honour contracts or be responsible for what they do to our environment. They sell the crown land for development as though they own it. Corporate money rules while poor Canadians go homeless and animals starve.

Thirty-four grizzly bear tags have been sold off for hunting in a part of the Duncan where biologists only counted 32 bears, so I guess some will have to be shot twice.

Then there are the closed door meetings with government and chosen environmentalists to plan a corridor where the almost extinct caribou will walk.

All these well groomed and educated people managing nature, piece by piece, while business is managing our sources and animals into extinction. And, they all call themselves 'Green' (and democratic), when in reality they behave like members of a secret society who swear an oath of silence to enter the inner sanctum and dictate their decisions to us lower life forms.

Instead of encouraging self-sufficiency by putting up a solar or wind panel on your house, your tax dollars will go to helping big business sell you power and water. Instead of putting a turbine at the Duncan reservoir, or micro-hydro systems along the Lardeau that would be community owned and provide jobs, community members will end up working for someone else to reap the profits. Instead of transformative industry with local co-operatives, that think small and work slowly with the environment, we have corporations that think BIG, swiftly take everything, and leave devastation behind.

This has nothing to do with work or a job; it has everything to do with the greed of the few over the many. Real work should improve the quality of life for all beings around us rather than annihilate it. Most of all, real work should leave a living legacy for future generations.

Eloise Charet
Bear Clan, New Denver

Do the math, folks!

Check out John Calvert's new book, *Liquid Gold*. According to the Library of Parliament publication, the Glacier/Howser power project is estimated to generate 450 person years of employment.

The Axor geologist from Montreal assured us that this "small project" would employ only one or two people full time once it was running, since satellites do most of it. This project is labour intensive only for the set-up. Two years work for 200 men and 50 person years to split into 40 years tenure? Do the math.

Is it worth destroying an ecosystem endangering the bull trout further, setting a dam into the middle of the mountain goat range (nobody mentions this) and losing the water once it is dammed to private interests if 'Security and Prosperity' comes to pass? Not in my backyard.

Gabriela Grabowsky
Glacier Creek

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*.

Avoid cell towers

According to Alex Jones on SW Radio, he now has an information site on www.prisonplanet.com that deals with cell phone technology and the 'irradiating of America.' I took notes, but he only managed to get through four of his 12-page report, getting more distressed as he read. Get the info – it's out there and it's not good – cancer clusters, dead birds, etc. Good for New Denver! Hold them off! Anywhere within 500-600 feet of a tower gets irradiated. This is proven carcinogenic!

Gabriela Grabowsky
Glacier Creek

Response to 'Cellphone Capital Investment'

I am dismayed by Richard Caniell's latest letter and his still so desperate fight against cell phones.

I thought this issue had been addressed from every possible angle already, including how many lives have already been saved and will be saved; how low level these signals are; and how well shielded today's cell phones are from sending any harmful signals into the caller's head.

Why does Mr. Caniell simply choose not to buy a cell phone, and why does he feel compelled to interfere with other people's freedom to buy one or not?

I am very much involved in environmental issues, professionally and business-wise, and from my practice I can say, some 'environmentalists' often cause more harm then good to the cause, usually for their lack of education and expertise. Sorry for being this hard, but somebody had to say it.

Talking environment, just one little example: a cell phone can be used for timely reporting of illegal dumping of toxic chemicals.

Vladimir Stuchlik, P. Eng.
Nakusp

Diplomacy or international disaster?

After ten hours waiting in a foreign land with a strange language, who would not be frustrated? Did no one try to assist by interpreter? No one even offered him a coffee and a doughnut.

This was a European seeking a new life in Canada, not an enemy.

Suddenly four military men confronted the unarmed European, who had harmed no one and who had his hands up in the universal gesture of surrender. The officers showed no gesture to calm the stranger. Instead inside a half minute, he was tasered once, then twice.

Why? The four of them could easily have handcuffed the victim, alive.

Why this total disregard for the life of a Polish national?

Who was out of control – the Polish immigrant or the RCMP?

And what of the unarmed senior citizen sitting in his car who was tasered in the face? What was his offence?

Or have officers a new toy that they must try out, as someone commented?

We can't think of a more welcome image for visitors to the 2010 Olympics.

Because of unnecessary and high-handed authority, Canada now has a shameful international atrocity. To the military, human life is expendable. If this airport tragedy is a sample of public safety then the Minister of Injustice should be booted all the way to Iraq.

In Canada and the US, there have been some 300 taser deaths. However, 300 cockroaches can't be swept under the carpet. Why 50,000 volt jolt? Would not 30,000 be ample?

Either ban the taser, or reduce its force to 30,000 volts.

Ron de Forest
Kaslo

Dogs more of a problem than bears

In regards to Joyce Davidson's letter in the last issue, I tend to agree that dogs are more of a problem than bears.

Every year in BC, far more children are injured by dogs than by bears.

There are many more aggressive dogs in Kaslo than bears. Both my daughter and I have been threatened and occasionally attacked by dogs in Kaslo. This is no joke when you are walking and have no car to escape into.

While most dog owners in Kaslo are very responsible, a few believe it is their right to allow their dogs to come off their property and behave in an aggressive manner on the public highway.

Also, as the "jogger" who was apparently "stalked" down the highway, I would like to let people know this is exaggerated. Yes, it is true that I was followed, and yes, I did hitch a ride to avoid any confrontation, but the bear was probably just checking me out (not for dinner I hope), or it may not have seen me at all, since bears have relatively poor eyesight.

However, putting it into context, there are many more common risks to our wellbeing presented from living in the Kootenays, like driving in winter (and being bitten by a dog)!

But, I agree with Mr. Cockrell that the number of bears in Kaslo is very high this year and they don't seem to want to go to sleep. Whether this is from the lack of decent berries this year or because of our garbage – or a bit of both, I don't know.

It does seem like the bears are becoming increasingly habituated to 'town' life. But I agree with Trisha Clare – if we don't like it, maybe we should think about moving.

Francesca Blishen
Kaslo

Think twice before buying a car in the US

With the Canadian dollar climbing above par with the US dollar, more and more shoppers are going south of the border, and record numbers are buying new vehicles. There have been several news stories discussing the issue, including ones about the danger of Canadian auto workers losing jobs because of the downturn in sales here in Canada.

However, the thing I think you should consider is the US taxes that are being collected through these sales. Not sales taxes, since you pay the GST and PST at the border when you bring the car home. But other taxes – the auto dealer who makes a profit on the sale, the mechanic who preps the car, the US auto worker who makes the car – they all pay US income taxes. As well, the money made by all of those workers is spent in the States. So not only do the businesses they support pay more income taxes, but also there are sales taxes on a lot of that money that's being spent. And that US tax money goes toward US hospitals, US schools, the US military, and the war in Iraq. That means that when you buy that car south of the border, you are supporting the United States and their role in the world, instead of paying for Canadian schools, hospitals, highways, etc.

There is an argument that you might buy a Canadian-made car, even if you buy it in the States, or vice versa. However, I calculate that your chances of getting a Canadian-made vehicle are three times greater if you buy in Canada.

We all buy US goods at times, but the problem is one of scale. Buying a car is one of the biggest purchases most of us will make, other than buying a home.

So before you buy a car down there, think about what is important to you, and what country you want to support.

Mark Adams
New Denver

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Voices from the Valleys

Referendum needed on cell phones

I am frustrated and feel alienated by New Denver council and the Chamber of Commerce executive by the direction they have taken the cell phone issue in New Denver.

Why haven't the citizens and business owners been given the opportunity for valid input in the decision of cell phone use in New Denver?

One concern expressed against cell phone use is that cell phones will be used in restaurants. This is a concern for the proprietor to regulate. They can post a sign saying YES or NO.

Another is that cell phones promote poor socialization skills in children. Socialization and courteous use of cell phones is the responsibility of parents.

As for the concern that the cell phone tower will present an EMF emissions hazard to people, the earth and atmosphere have always been exposed to emissions causing health hazards. Hospitals and homes have forever had dangerous germs (smallpox). Today we have super bugs that produce flesh eating disease or meningitis. Medications can be hazardous, i.e. thalidomide babies born with stubs for arms or legs. Marijuana users may suffer from schizophrenia or their grandchildren may have their genes altered causing a loss of their innate skills. Hospitals have x-ray, cat scans, nuclear equipment that emit radiation. In our homes we receive emissions from TVs, computers and microwaves. Go outdoors and the hydro rays and sunbeams shower us with their cancer causing emissions.

We live in an old mining area. Our Carpenter Creek ran grey with pollution from the mines, in the mid 1900s, for many years. Traditionally in this type of area the soil is polluted (arsenic). Our area is far from pristine. And some people worry about a small amount of EMF emission! Where is the empirical research proving it is a cancer-causing agent?

The reasons for wanting cell phones are: that they facilitate instant communications that would assist the police, paramedics, firemen in the performance of their duties; and that they provide seniors, children, hikers, boaters, tourists with help in emergencies, or for information or assistance.

Should we live in a protective bubble or live with the dignity of risk, by making our own choices?

The first action of council could have been to hold a secret balloted referendum. Then they would have known the wishes of their citizens.

Democracy is a government by the people, in which the supreme power is retained and exercised in a way that favours equality and is not snobbish or exclusive.

Donna Campbell
New Denver

Frustrated with poor government service

I spent an informative few minutes on the phone at 1-800-O-Canada, our single phone connection point to all things government. I said a few things to the operator that I want to reach a wider audience, hence this letter. My apologies to the operator – as I said at the time, I do not hold her responsible in any way, but I had no one else to yell at.

First the background. I've been off work for six weeks now. I applied online for EI medical benefits, and have been awaiting word. I suffer from depression, with chronic pain. I live an hour's painful ride away from the nearest Service Canada office in Nelson. I have no other income, and my son and daughter live with me.

On Friday, November 23 I received a letter dated the 19th with my name, address, the sentence "Return all report cards after the latest period ends" and a form message with the website and 1-800 number. At the website, I needed an "Access Code" to get in, which should be on the letter. I phoned the number to ask what to do next. After long forays through their byzantine system, I discovered there was no answer and no option which led to a human. Back to the website, where there was no phone number for my local office and no way to email Service Canada – there was only the 1-800-O-Canada number. I called and after explaining my problem, was given the same number I had. I tried again to find a human, failed and went back to 1-800-O-Canada, only to be told there was no other number. Thus my rather despairing outburst, which went something like this:

"You mean in this entire @#$%ing country there isn't one single @#$%ing human being I can @#$%ing talk to about this??!!"

This is just too classic. I have spent most of my adult life believing in and defending this country and this government when people slagged it for bad service, thinking they were just not trying. Now I need some help and some service, and here I am eating my words!

So after a long tense weekend, and rather than waste an uncomfortable full day by bus, I will be driven to town tomorrow, sending more hydrocarbons into the air, to stand in line and ask a question that could be answered in two minutes on the phone or with a single email. So much for global warming. 1-800-O-Canada indeed.

Ken Forsythe
Slocan

Burton heli-pad: public consultation sorely lacking

At the well-attended RDCK land use meeting held in Burton on October 23, the major issue for many residents was the heli-skiing pad located near the townsite.

Residents felt the decision was made without locals being aware of the proposal, as only 20% of the population receive the media chosen to advertise the proposal in. The current arrangement between the Ministry of Tourism, Sports and the Arts (TSA) and the tenure holders allows for at least 24 flights per week (currently over a three-day period — that is eight flights per day), and will expand to heli-hiking as well, resulting in a year-round disruption of the residents' previously quiet lifestyle. The flights go over areas that consist of houses, farms, hobby farms, critical bird habitat and areas used for recreation by residents.

As the tenured land is crown land, the RDCK has no jurisdiction over it, and we are dealing with the Ministry of TSA. As far back as April 2006, a widely advertised and consequently well attended meeting was held regarding a different heli-pad proposal. This proposal was unanimously opposed. A petition was circulated and signed by nearly 50 residents which in part stated that Burton residents were against "any project involving helicopter operations in the Burton area in general." The local TSA Ministry office, with Harry Mitchell in charge, was notified of this petition, but it seems to have had little effect on his decision.

There is genuine concern that not only the rights and wishes of the community were felt to be of less importance than the wishes of commercial enterprises, and were in fact not solicited in any meaningful way, but also that such invasive and environmentally insensitive operations are given precedence over the natural beauty and quiet which brought many of us here to live in the first place.

If you are not a resident of Burton, why should you care? Because you may also find yourself waking up on a Saturday morning wondering what that persistent whop-whop-whop noise is — and how it happened without you knowing about it. When 80% of the affected populace does not need to be notified of such substantial changes to lifestyle, then it can happen to anyone, anywhere.

Phil McMechan, Cam Greig, Georgia Calder, Liz Gillis, Shelley Bortnick, Tom Tatlock, Lori Eger, Denice McMechan, Millie Lukenda
Burton

I'm a what?

A hypocrite, come on. I didn't suggest anyone not be allowed to speak, just that people spouting party lines should be charged for the advertising. I don't care if it's Grit, Tory, NDP, Green or whatever.

It's interesting when people, who disagree with what I have to say, take the tact of shooting the messenger. From experience I know, when people attack me personally over something I've said, it usually means I've hit a nerve. From both responses to my last missive, it is clear such a nerve has been touched. I'm not at all sorry for that, and it's nice to know people are actually reading my diatribes. I work very hard on them you know!

It does not escape my attention that neither of the respondents took on my charges against the Greens. If they really wanted to blow me out of the water, they could have called me on what I was saying, which is: the Green Party social platform is somewhere right of Harper, and their economic platform, which calls for 50 per cent tax cuts, is right out of Neverland.

I can only assume from the nature of the responses in your letters pages, that neither Mr. Edwards nor Mr. Faulks have a strong argument against my complaint, and must resort to other tactics, such as Edward's unfounded supposition that I intend to run for office, or Mr. Faulk's intense self-explaining.

Guys, I wasn't attacking any one individual! I was attacking the outmoded, dysfunctional, ridiculously inept political system we're operating under here in the great white north, and people who go around acting as mouthpieces for these entirely self interested organizations!

Nor was I necessarily advocating voting for an independent. If either of these gentlemen had read the article from an objective place, they would understand I was cheerleading the idea of voting for the candidate who best represents the ideals and aspirations of the people of this region, regardless of their political affiliation.

I'm sorry for one thing – my misinterpretation that Mr. Faulks is a member of the Green Party, and an ardent campaigner on their behalf. When I read his letter, I was quite certain that is where he was coming from, his party. I also want to assure him that I agree with him on many issues, most in fact, except for the big one. I do not believe the Greens are going to save us. My opinion is: if we are to be saved, each and every one of us will have to participate in it.

Finally, with regard to Mr. Edwards, I'd be glad to challenge him to a soapbox derby race. However, if he is the same Mike Edwards I once planted trees with, then I'd be very concerned that in such a race, he might run himself over!

Will Webster
Kaslo

Vallican Whole School asks for community support

The Vallican Whole School is under the threat of being shut out from its premises at 3762 Little Slocan River Road after 35 years.

The school is refusing to vacate its facilities and is requesting the community's support in preserving one of the Slocan Valley's most precious social assets.

The Vallican Whole School originated in the early 1970s out of a vision for a free school with a focus on self-directed learning, social interaction and artistic expression. The centre was established by the hard work of parents and community volunteers who built the beautiful building to house the school – still its primary function.

The early pioneers of the Vallican Whole School operated the business of the school through two integrated legal personalities: the Rural Alternatives Research and Training Society (RARTS) incorporated in 1972, and the West Kootenay Educational Resource Society incorporated in 1973.

Public funds were solicited for RARTS for the construction and maintenance of the building on the basis that the facilities remain "available to any person or persons who wish to use them in accordance with the purposes of the facilities..." This provision for public access to the building is unalterable, according to the RARTS constitution.

The primary – continuing – business of RARTS has been the operation of this building on the basis of grant monies and student tuition, while the school's educational and administrative operations have been carried out by a parent body constituting the board of the West Kootenay Educational Resource Society (WKERS).

By letter of June 25, 2007, the directors of RARTS have given notice to shut out the school from continued use of the building as of June 2008. At stake is the fate of 27 schoolchildren who have an immediate and critical interest in the continuity of their education, as do four staff members in the continuity of their full-time employment.

This 'eviction' is premised on the characterization of the school as standing in a landlord-tenant relationship with RARTS. In actuality, no such landlord-tenant relationship exists. The Vallican Whole School arose out of the collaborative accumulation between RARTS and WKERS of capital and social resources. The school has an equitable interest in these resources, including the permanent facility with which it has been synonymous since its inception – a facility that remains subject to an unalterable public access provision.

In the opinion of the WKERS board, if the lockout of the school were to occur, it would constitute an offence to the community and a violation of the obligations of RARTS under its own constitution and the laws of the province.

RARTS has refused to enter into discussion with WKERS despite repeated attempts by the Vallican Whole School to engage in a dialogue with a view to achieving a mutually acceptable and peaceful solution.

West Kootenay Educational Resource Society openly asks the RARTS board of directors, once again, to engage in a dialogue to arrive at a meaningful win/win solution.

The Vallican Whole School is a firmly rooted educational institution within the Slocan Valley. For over 35 years, the proven determination of the students, their parents, and the community have ensured the sustained operation of this unique and vital community school that will continue to exist for many years to come.

You can support the Vallican Whole School by contacting the West Kootenay Educational Resource Society at: support-us@vallicanwholeschool.org.

The board of directors
West Kootenay Educational Resource Society

Dear neighbour

I live in your community. I'm alone 90% of the time. I am dying of loneliness. I'm sure I'm not alone in this dilemma as there are so many people moving into these smaller towns. There are no cafes or coffee shops where I am, so it is very difficult to meet people.

Where are your meeting places? Do you have clubs, organized activities? How do I find these?

I would like to ask you, who are well established in your area, to reach out to all who are new – you might reach me. Help!

Lonely & Pathetic in the Kootenays

New Denver council, November 27: Composter program initiated

by Leah Main

•Council adopted a policy initiating a "Composter Program" beginning in 2008. The program will offer a subsidy for up to 50 New Denver residents each year to purchase a composter from a local supplier. Further information will be available at the Village office.

•The Official Community Plan and zoning bylaws received final adoption.

•Newly appointed Corporal Todd Bowden appeared to introduce himself to council and present his vision for policing the community. Council welcomed him, and expressed concern over a recent rash of vandalism incidents.

•Councillor Greensword reported on items from the recent West Kootenay-Boundary Hospital Board meeting, including the request to the Province for longer term financial planning (currently limited to one year), and discussion about available medical training (nursing) through Selkirk College.

•Mayor Wright reported from the most recent RDCK meeting that regional district staff will look at consolidating the existing seven sub-regional emergency programs into one. New Denver might participate in a regional effort if it were to be undertaken in a rational and well thought out manner.

•Council received Slocan District Chamber of Commerce's request for a grant-in-aid to be used "for the 2008 portion of a project to erect banners on our main streets." Council discussed previous grants-in-aid to the Chamber, including $1,800 last year toward a projector, and $1,400 the previous year for banners. Council did not feel the financial information provided with the request was sufficient to make a decision, and referred the matter to administrative staff to get more information.

•The Solid Waste Management and Rates Amendment Bylaw, No. 621, 2007 received three readings. This provides for garbage service to move to a tag system beginning in January. Information will be distributed by the Village office.

•The Water Use Rates Amendment Bylaw, No. 620, 2007 received three readings. The increase in rates will allow for approximately 1.5% of the value of the water system to be put into a reserve fund each year. The reserve fund will be used for upgrades on the system, which will meet its planned life expectancy in the next 30 years.

•Councillor Greensword was appointed to represent New Denver on the Ferry Stakeholders Advisory Commission.

•Council received four bids for its backhoe, which were opened in public session. The highest bid, from Ken Butler for $5,577 was accepted by council.

SLOCAN LAKE GOLF CLUB SPECIAL

Looking for a Holiday gift idea? How about a MEMBERSHIP to the SLOCAN LAKE GOLF CLUB?

No GST on all memberships and locker rentals purchased prior to DECEMBER 31, 2007. DON'T DELAY!

For more information, call
Jim Hildebrand: 358-2230
Shelley Welch: 358-2456

Slocan RADS offer wonderful ATV opportunity

submitted

The Black Bear motocross track may be gone, but the Slocan Recreational ATV, Dirtbike Society (RADS) lives on.

The revenue of the race track during its operation has been sitting, waiting for the right time and idea to get used. With the most generous donation of a DS 90cc ATV by Playmor Power Products, the RADS were able to come up with an idea.

We can all remember kids who could not afford to have the same motorized fun that some of us were privileged to. Slocan RADS would like to present this ATV to a child who is between 8 and 12 years old for a term of two years. Then, the RADS will take the ATV back and do the process over again.

Slocan RADS will pick up the expense of the riding gear so the child is protected while riding the ATV, and will provide the needed training for the safe and legal use of the ATV. Holeshot Originals, Chris and Dianne Fox's small engine repair business in New Denver, will donate the cost of all routine maintenance and upkeep of the ATV during the two-year term and will rebuild the ATV afterwards for the next child to use.

The RADS are looking for children in the *Valley Voice* reading area to send a letter explaining why they think they should get the use of this ATV. The concept is that the ATV will go to a hard working, community oriented family that cannot afford to buy an ATV for their child. The ATV will allow the child to join friends on ATV excursions.

Slocan RADS will accept letters from interested families within the *Valley Voice* reading area until the end of January 2008. The decision will be made soon after. Send letters to Box 312, New Denver, BC V0G 1S0 ATTN: Chris Fox. For more info call 358-7996 and ask for Chris.

Calendars available to support Slocan Valley First Responders

submitted

The first response from businesses in Slocan Park, Passmore, Vallican and Winlaw was, "How can we help?" When it comes to not just one community but a few working together for everyone's benefit, this is a marvellous offer to help buy needed equipment for First Responders.

First Responders are a specially trained group of firefighters who are the first to arrive after a 911 call for medical assistance, if the ambulance can't get there immediately. That quick response is often critical to ensure that adequate attention is given as quickly as possible. Sometimes the person will be made more comfortable or be prevented from further harm. And sometimes First Responders save lives.

First Responders need good equipment to assist people properly and effectively. In order to raise the funds needed for this equipment, a calendar focussed on fire safety has been produced. First Responders are part of the Passmore Volunteer Fire Department but are the First Responders for Passmore, Slocan Park, Vallican and Winlaw. So, businesses in each community didn't hesitate to help out. They bought advertising in the calendar and many of them volunteered their own time to sell the calendars.

"We think the people in our communities will help by buying the $20 calendars to help make the first response the best response," said Michael Jones from the Passmore department. The calendars can be purchased at Fomi's, the Winlaw Volunteer Fire Department, Jennie's Book Garden, Sleep is for Sissies, Slocan Park Medical Clinic, Slocan Valley Co-op, Heritage Credit Union, Cowpuccino's, Slocan Park Service and the Passmore Volunteer Fire Department.

HEY KIDS!

If you are between 8 and 12 years old, enter to win an ATV for a two-year term.
Send a letter by January 31, 2008 explaining why you would like the use of the ATV to: Chris Fox, Box 312, New Denver, BC V0G 1S0.
Sponsored by the Slocan Recreational ATV, Dirtbike Society
For more information, call 358-7996

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REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

NOTICE is hereby provided to the residents of Electoral Area H that the Regional District intends to lend to the Friends of the Slocan Valley T.V. Society the amount of $10,000.

The nature of this loan is to provide funding for a pending application to the Courts to determine the status of the Slocan Valley T.V. Society and governance issues, and for tower maintenance. The term of the loan is December 2007 to June 2008 and will include an interest charge of 5%.

The extent of this loan is restricted to $10,000.

THIS NOTICE is provided pursuant to Section 185 of the *Local Government Act*. The source of funds for this loan is the Discretionary Grant Fund allotted to Regional Directors.

For further information about this loan, please contact Mr. J. Gustafson or Ms. D. Attorp at the RDCK at 1-800-268-7325.

Formal adoption of the foregoing will be considered by the regional board on Saturday, December 8, 2007.

UNEMPLOYED? UNDECIDED? In the Slocan Valley?

Kootenay Career Development is your employment expert. Chart your next move with an employment counsellor in Slocan City at W.E. Graham Community Learning Centre.

Tuesday Dec. 18, Jan. 8 & 22, Feb. 5 & 19, Mar. 4 & 18
10 am to 3 pm
Want more info?
Check out www.kcds.ca or call 250-352-6200
Toll free: 1-877-952-6200

KCDS Kootenay Career Development Society — Canada

Silverton council, November 27: Council debates grants-in-aid to Chamber of Commerce

by Art Joyce

•The Slocan District Chamber of Commerce submitted a request to the Village for a grant-in-aid to support its banner program, along with its year-end financial statement. The request generated lively debate, with most councillors of the opinion that the banner program did little to attract new commerce. Mayor Everett said that both he and Mayor Wright of New Denver had discussed their dissatisfaction with the Chamber's overall performance this year. Councillor Bell, a Chamber board member, said that in all fairness, support from business owners has been minimal. "If you're not sitting at the table making decisions, you can't complain about the decisions being made," she said.

Councillor Wiseman felt the money spent on banners would have been better employed increasing business signage in the community or producing brochures. Bell said the Chamber distributed 5,000 copies of its brochure this year.

Mayor Everett said he has discussed with the Chamber the idea of supporting them through monies raised from the Village's business licences. Councillor Wiseman wanted to know why these licences had increased so much this year. The mayor said the new rates reflected increased administration costs and were more in line with other communities. However, there is still little left over after administration costs. Wiseman said if that's the case, using this money for grants-in-aid to the Chamber is not a viable solution. Council voted to reply to the Chamber that no money for grants-in-aid has yet been budgeted for 2008.

Councillor Wiseman also wanted to know why businesses not based in the Village were being charged for licences. Mayor Everett answered that it was because they conduct business within the Village. Wiseman objected to the fact that Telus, Sears, and Star Choice weren't required to take out licences, while a non-profit organization like the Red Mountain Internet Society was. Mayor Everett thought that had to do with a misunderstanding of the society's status. Councillor Wiseman proposed a motion that the Society's 2007 business license fee be returned. The motion passed.

•Village Administrator Junko Ida reported that a successful metal recycling day was held November 23 and that public works was able to contribute by removing several pieces of industrial detritus on Village property. Two dumptruck loads of metals were collected for shipment to the regional district. Ida also reported that the new John Deere tractor had arrived, was licenced and operating.

•Councillor Bell reported on the Central Kootenay Invasive Plant Committee strategic planning meeting, where it was noted that bagged and clearly marked invasive weeds can be deposited for free at area landfills.

•Councillor Laktin reported that the Friends of Silverton Memorial Hall received $800 for musician's performance chairs from Area H grants-in-aid.

•A verbal request was received from Werner Mengler that the Village plow the south part of Alpha Street, behind Yofonoff's house. Mengler noted that at a previous council meeting Councillor Wiseman had said all streets within the Village would be plowed in winter. Councillor Laktin pointed out that council had agreed to investigate whether that part of the street is within Village boundaries. CAO Ida said it is. Councillor Wiseman was of the opinion that the street is not useable, and expressed concern that Mengler had not yet provided the Village with engineering reports despite having two years to do so. "I don't think we want to create a liability by plowing it when there are slope stability issues," Wiseman said.

•A letter was received from Richard Caniell raising concerns about the introduction of houseboats on Kootenay Lake, encouraging council to pass bylaws forbidding the launch of houseboats from Village shores. Caniell's letter was referred to the Advisory Planning Commission.

Radical Advent

We are intentional about the environment we live in and the foods we eat, how intentional are we about our celebrations and activities during Advent? Join us as we explore some of the key themes of Advent and how to connect them with our own lives and experiences. What does it mean in our lives today to still celebrate Christmas? Are you curious about God, spirituality and faith, wondering if there is something more to Christmas than a commercialized holiday? Let's take some time out of this busy season to still ourselves and come to know God.

Where: St. Stephen's Anglican Church, New Denver
When:Session 1: Thursday, December 13, 2007
Session 2: Thursday, December 20, 2007
Time: 7:00 - 8:30 pm

ANOTHER YEAR HAS GONE BY
AS WE REFLECT ON THIS DAY
IT'S SO HARD TO BELIEVE
YOU HAVE REALLY GONE AWAY

EAGLES STILL SOAR
AND THE DIMES THEY COME TOO
THEY ARE PAINFUL REMINDERS
OF HOW MUCH WE MISS YOU

FOUR YEARS HAVE SLIPPED BY
AND MANY THINGS HAVE CHANGED
BUT THE EMPTINESS & SADNESS
ARE AS IF IT WAS JUST YESTERDAY

THE TEARS COME SO QUICKLY
WITH JUST A FEW NOTES OF YOUR SONGS
MANY MEMORIES OVERWHELM US
BUT WE STILL TRY TO STAY STRONG

SO WE HOLD ON TIGHTLY
AND CHERISH THE YEARS
THAT WE HAD YOU HERE WITH US
AND TRY TO HOLD BACK THE TEARS

AS WE REFLECT ON THIS DAY
EACH MOMENT COMES BACK CLEARLY
OF HOW WE LOST YOU MAT
WHO WE LOVE SO DEARLY

Breakfast with Santa, December 9

submitted

The Winlaw Elementary PAC presents the 7th annual Breakfast with Santa and Silent Auction on Sunday, December 9 at the Appledale Hall.

Breakfast will be served between 8 and 11 am with the Silent Auction ending at 11:30 am sharp. Breakfast will consist of pancakes with blueberry sauce and ham and selected beverages. Santa will be available for pictures between 10 and 11 am. The Silent Auction features over 200 local crafts, products and gift certificates – there's something for everyone at this year's Breakfast with Santa and Silent Auction.

For more information please contact Shannon O'Hara at 226-7708.

Slocan post office celebrates

submitted

On October 31, the Slocan Post Office held a Customer Appreciation Day. Refreshments were served and prizes were won. The event was well attended by the community.

Local Area Manager Norm Ouellet surprised Postmistress Mable Bone by presenting her with her 30-year pin. Congratulations to Mable for 30 years of service at the post office.

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VILLAGE OF SILVERTON

NOTICE OF PROPOSED DISPOSITION OF LAND

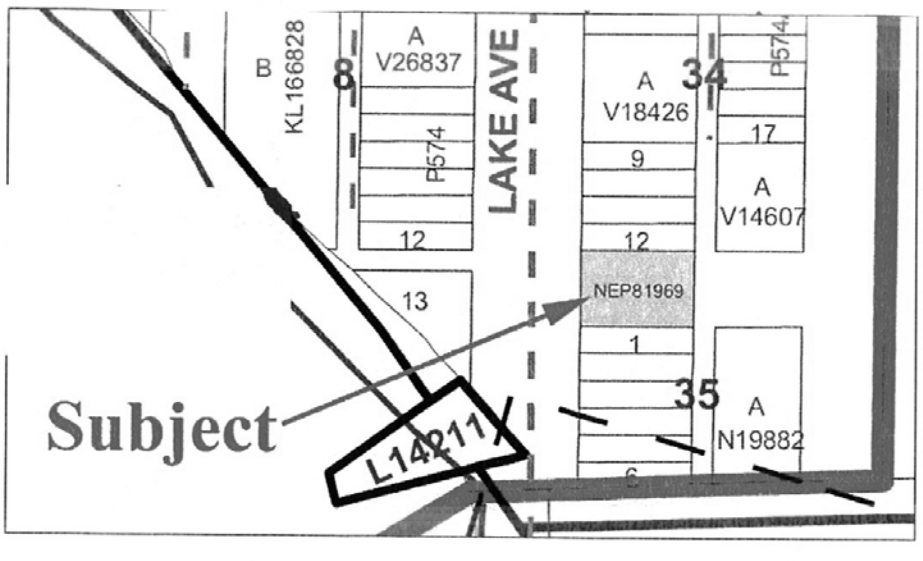
Pursuant to Section 26(3) of the *Community Charter*

TAKE NOTICE that the Village of Silverton proposes to dispose of the following land to: Mr. Kenneth J. Stethem and Ms. Naomi H. Thomas on December 20, 2007.

PID: 026-805-286
Legal Description: That part of District Lot 434, Kootenay District
Shown as Closed Road on Plan NEP81969
Silverton, BC V0G 2B0

The proposed disposition is a transfer of the fee simple interest in the Land for the sum of Fifty-Five Thousand ($55,000) dollars.

Any enquiries concerning this proposed disposition may be directed to:
Ms. Junko Ida, Administrator,
The Village of Silverton,
P.O. Box 14, Silverton, British Columbia V0G 2B0
Telephone (250) 358-2472



Slocan meeting addresses backlog of issues

by Don Currie

After wrapping up discussions on the proposed abattoir for Slocan, the meeting held November 22 at WE Graham School dealt with a wide range of questions submitted in advance in writing by Village residents to mayor and council.

An answer sheet containing brief answers to the questions that were "relevant to the larger public" was distributed. Also, a five-page summary of a report from the Integrity Group: Education and Conciliation Ltd. was distributed to residents who had signed a request list to receive the document. Residents were told the report would explain what had led council to retain legal counsel at the cost of $40,000 to taxpayers.

The summary of the Integrity Group report is undated and on Village of Slocan letterhead. It contains no information about the Integrity Group, and no reference to the group showed up in a website search.

The summary report states that the Integrity Group was retained to perform a fact-finding investigation of allegations that a member of council had a conflict of interest with respect to the proposed Slocan skateboard park. The Village also retained the Integrity Group to provide a workplace analysis and to make recommendations for improvements in workplace relationships.

The conflict of interest investigation concludes: "There is no question that Councillor Ellis had significant involvement in the Park through her role as Co-Executive Director of WE Graham, and her passionate commitment to the project is apparent in the amount of time she spent to achieve a successful conclusion for the Park. It is this personal commitment that, arguably, led Councilor Ellis to confuse and/or ignore the separate roles she fulfilled as a Co-Executive Director with WE Graham and a Council member, although she made some limited efforts along the way to flag what she identified as potential conflicts of interest in matters involving WE Graham and the Village.

"After receiving this report and in consideration of legal advice provided by the Village, Council concluded that Councilor Ellis did participate in Council discussions, debates and votes about the Park while she had a conflict of interest. Councilor Ellis has subsequently resigned her office and is no longer a member of Council."

The Integrity Group then goes on to summarize its findings on the workplace assessment. The report states: "Although Mayor, Council and the Administrator appear to be extremely loyal to the Village and dedicated to promote its growth and development, their inability to function together in a respectful and professional manner has made it difficult, if not impossible, for the Council to fulfill its commitments to its constituents."

The Integrity Group's 15 recommendations to council include: education on requirements for confidentiality, training on financial and budgetary issues, mandatory attendance at the Local Government Leadership Academy, and mandatory attendance for council and the administrator at training sessions regarding effective communication and conflict resolution in the workplace. The report recommends written guidelines on the roles of mayor and council members, and how they should interact with the administrator. It also calls for a detailed job description for the administrator, including expectations of mayor and council, and professionally conducted job performance reviews. The summary report and recommendations are available at the Village office.

There was no indication in the report as to whether council and the administrator had discussed or agreed to implement the recommendations.

The issues addressed on the answer sheet included the sale of Village lots, the OCP, the hydro plant, the medical centre, and the ticketing bylaw.

In answer to questions regarding the sale of Village lots, the statement said council had offered ten lots for sale to adjacent owners, and offers had been received. Mayor Van Bynen said the Village had incurred some high expenses, including legal expenses and the $1.5 million cost of the water treatment plant. One questioner wanted to know if the sale of lots meant the Village had spent its reserves. The Mayor said that Village reserves were intact. Councillor Septav said the sale of lots would cover legal expenses and the purchase of the 3.9-acre parcel proposed for the abattoir. He said the sale of the lots would discharge all Village debts.

Councillors said the date of the byelection, scheduled for February 2 to fill the seat vacated by the resignation of Joanne Ellis, was due to the requirements of the Community Charter that set specific guidelines for nominations and elections.

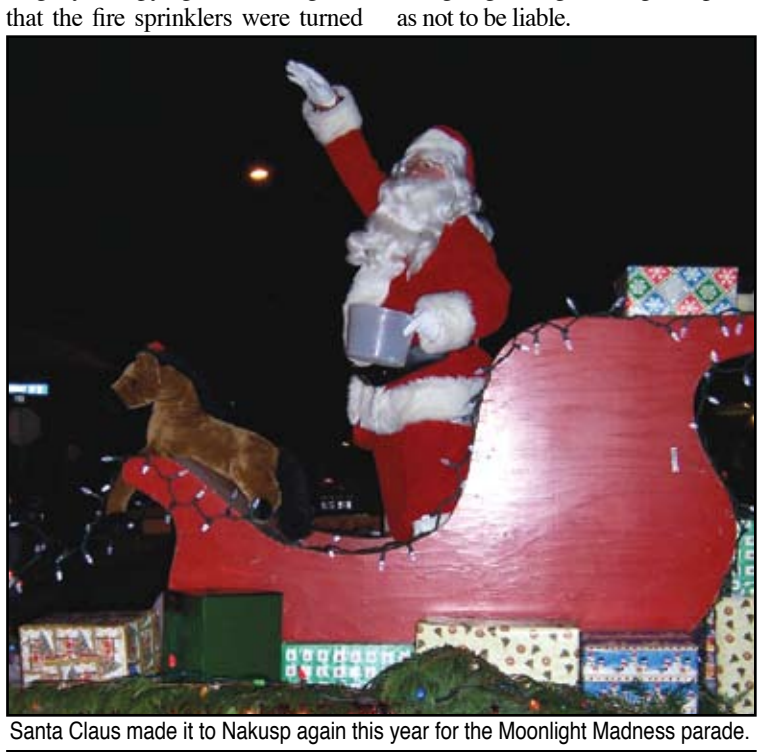
On the need for an Official Community Plan (OCP), the answer sheet states: "We already have an OCP done for Slocan and it will take $12,000 to update it. We need to budget that expense." Councillor Perriere commented that the Village needed to update the OCP now because it affected such issues as boundary expansion.

Regarding the hydro plant on Springer and Goat Creeks, the written answer said that council was still waiting for licences and that representatives from crown land had been to the Village that week for discussions. "This project is still the #1 priority for the Village."

On the Medical Centre, the written statement said council representatives and MLA Evans had met the Minister of Health at UBCM and there was a possibility of sharing a doctor with Nakusp. "We want to pursue the possibility of a nurse practitioner."

Council said the ticketing bylaw would be dealt with at the January council meeting.

One resident called for a ticket to be issued against the derelict hotel. This prompted Councillor Gates to explain that council was taking steps to protect the Village from liability. He said in his capacity as Fire Inspector he had issued a local fire order against the building. He said council had been advised to board up the windows of the abandoned hotel at an estimated cost to Village taxpayers of $10,000. He said he was aware that people were illegally occupying the building and that the fire sprinklers were turned off and not working. A resident suggested the building be placarded with warnings but Mayor Van Bynen said it was private property. He said the name of Mr. Stokes was still on the title to the property and the Village was going through the legal steps so as not to be liable.



Santa Claus made it to Nakusp again this year for the Moonlight Madness parade.

The Overwaitea float won third prize in Nakusp's parade. First went to the Rotary Club and second to the Scrappers. Winners of the store window decorating contest were Home Hardware (first), Saddle Mountain Dental Clinic (second) and Shaggyz (third).

Thank you to all participants and volunteers for the 2007 Christmas Parade & Light-Up.

Parade
1st - Rotary Club of Nakusp & Area
2nd - Gifted Scrappers
3rd - Overwaitea Foods

Store windows
1st - Nakusp Home Hardware
2nd - Saddle Mountain Dental Clinic
3rd - Shaggyz Hair Care

A special big Thank You to the sponsors for the new Christmas lights on the big trees at the Courthouse!

Chris and Gene Nagy, property owners
Sandi Scott, Courthouse
BC Hydro
Nakusp Home Hardware
Village of Nakusp
RDCK Area K
Kootenay Savings Credit Union
Rec. Commission #4
Kuskanax Lodge
Cheryl Black, Coldwell Banker
Christopher Johnston Law Corporation
Igloo Loma
Ken Watson Law Corporation
Royal LePage Selkirk Realty
Saddle Mountain Dental Clinic
Touch of Fashion
Nakusp Esso
O'Briens Service & Repairs
Ulrike Zobel-Lawyer
What's Brewing on Broadway?

Thank you again to everyone - We couldn't have done it without you.

– Nakusp & District Chamber of Commerce

Rotary Dinner Theatre tickets on sale now

submitted

The Rotary Club of Nakusp's tenth annual dinner theatre features 'The Lady Pirates of Captain Bree,' a musical, performed by Mirror Theatre.

"Obscure legends say they are only the most ruthless, thieving pirates who have ever sailed the Seven Seas! They're a nasty lot, every single one of them! Pirates! Cutthroats! Rotten to the core!" says Professor Bidwell.

The lady pirates capture a British sailing vessel with swashbuckling action, lots of fun, and captivating tunes until the Royal Navy makes the scene.

The evening will include a great dinner, a 50/50 draw and lots of fun and laughter. So come out and enjoy, and don't forget to come in costume if you like.

Dinner Theatre tickets make great stocking stuffers for Christmas giving. Tickets go on sale on December 5 at Barton Insurance.

Get your tickets to this year's Rotary Dinner Theatre – on sale now at Barton Insurance. This year's performance, by Mirror Theatre, is a fun-filled musical entitled 'The Lady Pirates of Captain Bree.'

RDCK, November 24: Consolidation of emergency services to be investigated

by Jan McMurray

•The board will consider consolidating the seven emergency areas into one service after consultation with the seven zones. Staff will prepare a plan for the consolidation, in consultation with RDCK Emergency Program Coordinators, and municipal, provincial, and partner agencies.

•The General Affairs committee has come up with seven recommendations on how Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiatives and Affected Areas funding should be administered. The board decided to invite Neil Muth, CBT CEO, to an upcoming committee meeting to speak about the recent evaluation of the funding program. A sample contract between the RDCK and applicants to the program will be available at the meeting, as will a list of issues associated with the funding program.

•The document, 'Water and Sewer System Acquisition Strategy,' will be distributed to Area Directors for comment so that staff can draft a regional policy to be considered at the January Rural Affairs committee meeting. Staff was also asked to work with the Ministry of Health to clarify outstanding issues. When a policy for acquiring water and sewer systems is adopted, the moratorium will be lifted and systems will be acquired according to the policy.

•A grant application for $406,843 will be made to the Public Transit Infrastructure Program for: bus shelters and sites ($167,200); four bus bicycle racks ($6,000); six bus radios ($6,000); two Navistar or equivalent capacity buses (50% of $350,000 = $175,000); and a contribution to Transit Exchange of $52,643.

•The positions of board chair and vice chair will be voted on at the December meeting. Nominations for chair so far include current chair Gary Wright (nominated by Director Kettle) current vice chair Josh Smienk (nominated by Director Henderson) and Director Joe Snopek (nominated by Director Gates). No nominations for vice chair have been made.

Area D

•With the Lardeau Valley and Pineridge mosquito program in a deficit of about $18,000 this year, staff was directed to obtain a legal opinion about BC Hydro's liability for this cost.

The increased cost of the program was caused by Duncan Dam discharges, when BC Hydro's attempts to maximize flood constraints during the mosquito breeding season failed to prevent backflooding.

•Staff will have discussions with BC Hydro about the proposed new boat launch at Glacier Creek Regional Park, in consultation with the Ministry of Forests and the Glacier Creek Regional Park Commission.

The new boat launch is part of the Duncan Dam Water Use Plan (WUP), which includes $120,000 for the project. However, the RDCK board has not endorsed the Duncan Dam WUP, as BC Hydro has not agreed to a financial contribution to the mosquito program. The board also has concerns about assuming responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of the boat launch.

•The board will advise the Ministry of Forests and Range (MoFR) that it does not support issuing the Grabowskys a grazing permit within the vicinity of Glacier Creek Regional Park.

The Grabowskys applied for the grazing permit to allow 20 horses and two cows to graze in the lower Glacier Creek valley, lower Howser Creek valley and the main Duncan River valley from Glacier Creek to the Westfall River junction. A stipulation in the permit is that livestock is not allowed within the boundaries of the RDCK's Glacier Creek campground. However, the Glacier Creek Park Commission noted that the Grabowskys' animals have always entered the park in the past, despite requests to keep them out. The Commission is also concerned that it will be responsible for the cost of keeping the animals out of the park under the permit.

•The bylaw bringing Fletcher Creek into the Kaslo and Area D fire service was adopted.

•The McDonald Creek Waterworks Amendment Bylaw was adopted. The Operational and Maintenance Service Agreement between the RDCK and the Village of Kaslo for the operation of the McDonald Creek Water Distribution System will be signed.

•The Kaslo and Area D Regional Parks Extended Service Amendment Bylaw was adopted.

•An alternative approval process will be used to obtain elector assent to borrow $58,000 for the purchase and upgrade of Ainsworth Wharf. The deadline for receipt of elector responses is January 16.

Area H

•The board received correspondence from the Silver Ridge Community Club and from Sandon residents Dan Pasemko and Christine Meerman asking for the board's help in having BC Hydro become the electrical service provider for the planned Sandon Regional Historic Park.

The RDCK board will write a letter to the Chair of the BC Utilities Commission, asking the commission to investigate the public's concerns about service provided by the local Sandon utility, Silversmith Power & Light Company. The letter will also ask that, should a satisfactory response not be provided to the commission, that the commission consider scheduling a public hearing to determine if Silversmith Power & Light Company should retain its Certificate of Public Convenience & Necessity.

•A letter will go out to BC Timber Sales, asking that they hold off on their proposed road building and logging on Perry Ridge until the board receives word on its Municipal Green Fund application for a hazard mapping project on the ridge, and on any recommendations arising from the hazard mapping. Also, Al Skakun of BCTS will be invited to attend the January meeting of the Rural Affairs committee to discuss this.

•A bylaw bringing Avis Road into the Slocan Valley Fire Protection area was given three readings.

•The Slocan Valley Seniors Housing Society has been invited to apply for $20,500 for a Seniors Fitness Pilot Project under a program offered by Local Government Program Services.

The board confirmed its willingness to provide overall financial management of the project.

Area K

•The Minister of Forests will be requested to hold community meetings in the communities affected by the transfer and/or sale of Pope & Talbot TFL 23 lands prior to the transfer of such lands and licences. The board will also call for public consultation over the removal of private lands from the TFL.

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Whatshan location for electrical station unpopular with residents

by Jan McMurray

Local people made it clear at a meeting November 21 in Fauquier that they are not happy about BC Transmission Corporation's (BCTC) choice of location for a 'capacitor station.' The property proposed for the station is near Whatshan Settlement Road, between Edgewood and Fauquier.

This proposed capacitor station, along with another one proposed for Trout Creek near Summerland, would allow for about 15% more power to be moved through the hydro lines in the southern interior. This power would enter the grid and be distributed throughout the province.

The station would cover an area approximately 150 by 100 metres, enclosed within a minimum 8' high fence. Inside the fence would be the equipment, sitting on platforms about 25'-30' above the ground, and a small control building. A new transmission tower would also be required to connect the transmission lines to the capacitor station.

BCTC has already purchased private property for the station, which will be partially visible from Whatshan Settlement Road and from Highway 6. BCTC reps said they would like to work with the RDCK, which owns the adjacent property, to build a berm for further screening.

People at the meeting were clearly opposed to this industrial development in such a rural residential area. It was pointed out that people had moved there specifically to get away from this type of development. In fact, three nearby families are not even on the grid, by choice. Also, the school bus stop is right where the capacitor station is proposed to be built.

"All you are doing is pushing your weight into a community that doesn't want you," stated one resident.

One man asked why they were not putting the station where it would not affect anyone, such as on top of the Monashee mountains.

Don Cochrane, one of the project managers, explained that the site had to be "relatively close to the centre line of the transmission line." Also, there has to be all-season road access to the site. He mentioned as well that the property BCTC bought for the project was available for sale and "it's not a simple thing to acquire crown land." He admitted that the station could be put "in many places" from an engineering point of view, but indicated that cost and access had to be taken into consideration. He added that they had done a report on possible sites, which will be part of their application to the British Columbia Utilities Commission.

Leon Pendleton, local resident, had taken the BCTC reps up to an alternative site near Snowshoe Lake Road. However, Brooke Dutka, another project manager, said this site was not suitable, as it is not flat and has a very long access road.

Area K Director Paul Peterson pointed out that because BCTC does not have to pay taxes for its infrastructure in rural areas, it is "saving a bundle." He told them that if it cost them even $10,000-$30,000 more to put the station in another location, it would be worth it because of this saving.

Peterson also stated that the RDCK planning department staff had told him the project could not be stopped from a zoning point of view. A call to the RDCK confirmed that utility infrastructure is allowed in any zoning.

Despite the overwhelming objections to the proposed site, BCTC did not commit to looking for an alternative one. Rather, they encouraged people to voice their objections during the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) review of the application, expected to take place in spring and summer 2008. This can be done by registering as an 'intervenor' through the BCUC website.

People at the meeting also had many questions about the 'passive microwave reflector' that would be put up at about 950 metres elevation near Pin Road on the west side of Arrow Lake, southeast of Fauquier, as part of the project. The reflector is for control and communications purposes, and would allow BCTC's control centre in the Lower Mainland to monitor the capacitor station.

The microwave signal would transmit between the proposed Edgewood capacitor station and the existing repeater site at Scaia Mountain west of Lower Arrow Lake, via the proposed reflector. Kevin Daglarno, BCTC rep, assured that the electromagnetic radiation emitted was well within the standards. There was, however, some skepticism from the meeting participants regarding these standards.

An Edgewood resident let BCTC reps know that the community did not want cell phones. BCTC's Kevin Dalgarno explained that cell phones were based on a broadband system, not on this microwave system. The microwave system, he said, has been around for 30 years – long before cell phones – as a "foolproof" communications system to enable the BCTC Control Centre to monitor all facilities on the transmission system throughout the province.

Cochrane also mentioned that even if the location for the capacitor station was changed, "this may still be best site for the reflector."

This project, called the Southern Interior Series Compensation Project, is worth $60 million and is scheduled to be in service by fall 2011.

First public meeting of lake stewardship society attracts capacity crowd

by Art Joyce

The Slocan Lake Stewardship Society (SLSS) packed nearly 40 people into the tiny Hidden Garden Gallery in New Denver Friday, November 23 for its first public meeting. Society directors held the meeting to familiarize the public with their mandate and goals, seek ideas for direction, and answer questions.

Twelve-year-old Annie Collins attended to remind adults to consider the future of youth in any decisions they make in planning for lakeshore management. Collins echoed many residents' concerns about protecting Slocan Lake from excessive development and preserving the environment.

Hillary Elliott, president of the society, said the society's role was to collect as thorough a data set as possible on the unique characteristics of the Slocan Lake shoreline and its tributaries. Ruby Truly, society director, explained that a study of tributaries is essential as these water sources shape the lake environment.

The society has already begun a baseline study – shoreline inventory mapping (SHIM) – with the generous help of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). Applications were made to Columbia Power Corporation and the Columbia Basin Trust to fund further studies. Due to the sheer scope of the terrain, the society will probably limit itself to collecting data within 100 metres of the shoreline.

Peter Roulston attended to represent concerns of the New Denver marina that the society might be biased against motorized traffic on Slocan Lake. Elliott reassured the audience that the society is committed to hearing all perspectives and incorporating them into its final report and recommendations.

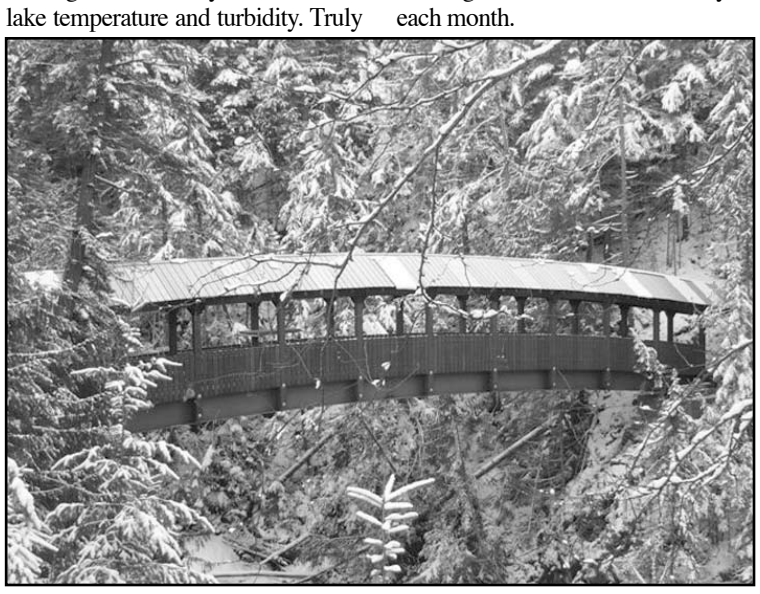
"Motorized traffic on freshwater lakes is a federal jurisdiction," explained SLSS director Randy Spears. "So there's not much we could do to affect that. The last thing we want to do is polarize the community."

The society's final report will be compiled based on a more complete set of studies carried out with DFO assistance, including fish and krill population monitoring. DFO will likely submit its own recommendations based on the studies, which SLSS will use as the basis for their report. This will then be submitted to the Area H Advisory Planning Commission (APC), which will decide based on the report what recommendations regarding shoreline regulations to make to the regional district (RDCK) through Area H Director Don Munro. APC members Liza Ireland and Gerry Toop were present to explain that they are a citizen-based volunteer committee who act in an advisory capacity to the RDCK. It will then be up to the regional district board to set policy and bylaws based on these recommendations.

Elliott estimated that the society needed to raise about $55,000 to complete its studies. Originally that figure had been $72,000 but that included ongoing water monitoring and analysis, which the society will deal with separately. Roulston has been volunteering to take Secchi readings 12 times a year to monitor lake temperature and turbidity. Truly added that data collected on Slocan Lake during the development of the Columbia River dam development was never released to the public and is only available in an archived student paper she is trying to track down at UBC.

For this reason, the CBT's latest report on climate change in the Columbia Basin does not include information on Slocan Lake. The CBT report noted, however, that climate change here is accelerating at roughly twice the global rate, with average temperature increases of 1.5 degrees Celsius. SLSS may also have an opportunity, through the CBT, to have input on discussions regarding the renegotiation of the Columbia River Treaty coming up in 2009.

SLSS annual memberships can be purchased for $20. Those interested in joining also have the option of working off their dues as volunteers. The membership list grew at the meeting by about 15 to roughly 50 members in total. To join, phone 358-2766 or email slocanlakess@netidea.com. General membership meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month.



Congratulations to the Kaslo Trailblazers for the amazing volunteer achievement of installing a bridge over Kaslo River. The bridge was installed with equipment and labour donated by Rick, Glen and John Settle of Settle Holding Company. Silvio and Stefan Lettrari built the bridge, with the help of several other volunteers. Trailblazers member Ron de Forest wrote to us to say, "Hats off to all those area engineers who can SETTLE a $70,000, 39,000-lb., 113-foot arched steel bridge on its abutments astride the Kaslo River with such professional care that one would think they did this once a month!"

Kaslo calendar a community effort to raise funds for City Hall

by Art Joyce

What better way to preserve the past than by producing a calendar?

The Kaslo City Hall Conservation Committee's 2008 calendar is now available, with beautiful photos featuring the village's heritage assets and notable personalities. The Kaslo Historical Society was able to cover printing costs with a grant, and funds raised from calendar sales will go toward the restoration of City Hall.

The calendar was conceived by Donna Cormie, who came up with the idea of matching up old-timers with heritage buildings. Photographer Sara Rainford met Cormie at the Friday market in New Denver in mid-summer. Cormie was looking for someone "as enthusiastic as she is about doing the calendar." They started planning right away and the calendar rolled off the presses in mid-October. Rainford spent about three weeks taking the photographs.

"It was absolutely fabulous," says Rainford. "The photography would take 15 minutes and the stories would take an hour. That was the best part of it – meeting the people."

Sara said talking with Aya Higashi was probably the most interesting, learning about her days as a teacher. She enjoyed playing a round of golf with Stan Leathwood, and seeing the trophies from the old clubhouse. Meeting Mavis Stainer and Barb Neeland "dressed to the nines" in heritage garb for the photo shoot at the JB Fletcher store in Ainsworth was another highlight.

"I think the families are really enjoying seeing their parents and grandparents on the calendar," says Rainford. "It's a way of acknowledging them."

Rainford was taken on a walking tour of Kaslo by Cormie and got a privileged look at the insides of many heritage buildings. Inside City Hall they found the old fire helmet that Johnny Matthews wears in his photo. And it's not just about the past, but the future: Rainford says the upstairs floor of City Hall, once restored, would be an ideal venue for weddings, plays, and cultural events.

Both Cormie and Rainford see the calendar as a means of drawing the community together. Plans are in the works for another calendar next year, to include some of the village's heritage homes. Cormie says the TLC (The Land Conservancy) recognizes City Hall as one of the most important heritage assets in the area. She hopes that eventually the committee's fundraising efforts could widen out to benefit other buildings in town. Calendars are available at Figments, Glacier Soapworks, Sunnyside Naturals, City Hall, and other outlets in Kaslo.

"There was a small group of players, and everybody was in favour," says Cormie. "It shows how easily things can get done when everyone's on the same page."

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Nakusp council, November 27: Hot springs restructure discussed

by Jan McMurray

•Councillor Mueller reported on the hot springs committee meeting of November 26, where the treasurer stated that preliminary projections show a $60,000 loss by the end of the year. "We are in dire straights and we really need to do something," she said.

She brought forward a recommendation to council from the committee: that council proceed with the formation of a management corporation, modeled on the Community Forest corporation; that the Village have a business plan done for the hot springs and hire a marketing consultant; that the board of directors of the corporation consist of two non-voting staff, two councillors, and three members of the public with marketing and business expertise.

After much discussion, council ended up asking the committee to bring forward more information on establishing the corporation.

In response to questions from other council members, Mueller said the committee was thinking it would try to "salvage" the hot springs within a year. If it didn't work, they could "go to the public and say we have tried everything and maybe now it's time to sell it."

She said the current model, where the committee has no decision-making power, but only makes recommendations to council, is "cumbersome." She said a more business-oriented model is what the facility needs. "Anyone else would have looked at staffing, pricing, advertising, tried to get more services up there…Council should not run a business. It's just a political football that gets kicked around."

•BC Hydro sent the Village an agreement whereby BC Hydro pays for wharf repairs undertaken by the Village. All council members were surprised to see that the repair work described in the agreement included work they had understood BC Hydro was going to take care of while doing a feasibility study for a long-term wharf solution. Tasks listed include replacing about 50% of the deck planks, the entire guardrail, nine fender piles, and two fender chocks, and re-securing seven fender piles. Council had understood that the Village would take on only the urgent work of replacing rotting planks, at BC Hydro's expense.

Although council members were wary of taking on the responsibility and liability of the project, Councillors Switzer and Dahlen spoke in favour of it if the Village could get the job done faster and locally. Council voted to get more information on the cost of the project and the availability of contractors to do the work.

•Beth McLeod attended to present the 2007 campground report on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce. The report includes suggestions such as upgrades to the washrooms/showers, power to more sites, more lighting, and the creation of 12 more campsites. The facility turned a profit of about $20,000 this year, and is already booked for next year's Music Fest weekend. The Chamber thanked the Village for the opportunity to lease the campground for the past three years. The lease is up on December 31.

Council asked staff to provide a recommendation for tendering the campground contract at the next meeting of council. Mayor Hamling also asked treasurer Richard Mahoney to put together a report on the costs of the campground. "Are we spending more than we're getting? We should be looking at it as more of a business deal," she said.

•Council discussed the Village land adjacent to Pope & Talbot that was advertised for sale. No offers came in by the closing date of November 23. "So effectively it is off the market, unless we re-advertise it," said CAO Bob Lafleur.

Councillor Mueller reminded council that they were going to use the $1.5 million from the sale of the property for the arena and fire hall, "so we really need to think of where to get the money [for those projects]."

Councillor Dahlen asked if council still wanted the property zoned Resort Residential as had been discussed in the OCP process. Lafleur said the land use map for the OCP shows the intent of council, but is not a legal document. The zoning map is not necessarily the same as the land use map.

The issue was referred to the OCP process.

•Council received word that a Chamber survey showed the majority of businesses against the idea of a one-way lane for two blocks south of Broadway. Councillor Heppner spoke strongly in favour of the one-way lane for safety reasons. Dahlen said the delivery trucks were the reason the businesses were against it.

Council also received a report from Public Works Manager Dominic Castellano on the one-way lane proposal. He estimates that the "minimal signage" required would cost $6,000-$8,000 and he questions the effectiveness of the signage.

The CAO was asked to find out why the costs were so high and to speak to Fire Chief Terry Warren about the implications of the proposed one-way lane for the fire department.

•Councillor Dahlen asked that a report from the Music Fest accounting for the $20,000 received in CBT Community Initiatives funding be brought forward for discussion. The report shows that the Nakusp Roots Music Society spent $62,872.53 on the community park project "before the society decided to withdraw from the project due to the lack of a timely decision process by the council of the Village of Nakusp."

Councillor Dahlen questioned the expense of $62,000 on a project that was not completed. Mayor Hamling said that a lot of preparation work was done and that the RDCK was looking into this, as it was under their jurisdiction. She confirmed that she had asked the RDCK to keep her informed.

•Mayor Hamling gave an update on the Pope & Talbot situation. She said local business people were organizing to place a bid to purchase TFL 23 and possibly the Castlegar mill. Lawyer Bob Macquisten advised her that an affidavit of support for this bid from the Village would be helpful. Council voted to write a letter in strong support of a local company. Since the meeting, the local group has decided not to submit a bid.

Council also decided to ask the Ministry of Community Services about the Communities in Transition funding program.

•A meeting with Director Peterson on the arena tax allocation was scheduled for December 4 at 2:30 pm.

•A public hearing will be scheduled for Isaque Vieira's application to reduce the minimum lot size from two acres to one acre on his property zoned heavy industrial on Hot Springs Road.

•Three readings were given to the bylaw that will amend Development Permit fees (Bylaw No. 355-2, 2007). The bylaw sets application fees for Development Permits on the basis of estimated project development costs. For example, for projects worth $100,000 or less, the application fee will be $100; for projects worth $1 million or more, the fee will be $1,650.

Applications for Development Variance Permits cost $150. Applications to amend the OCP Bylaw or the Zoning Bylaw will cost $500; a joint application to amend both these bylaws will cost $650.

•The bylaws increasing the water and sewer rates by 2% were adopted.

•Council received a draft report on the Revelstoke/Mica Sequence Identification Project. Councillor Switzer, who is on the committee for this project, pointed out that the committee recommendation on the sequence is: Mica 5 – Mica 6 – Revelstoke 6. He had reported this incorrectly at a previous council meeting.

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Applications will be accepted until the position is filled, with an expected start date of January, 2008.

To apply for this position please email resume, including 3 references to Doug Switzer, Executive Director at dswitzer@aslcs.com

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

NOTICE is hereby given to the residents of Electoral Area K that the Regional District intends to lend to the Nakusp and Area Community Forest (NACFOR) the amount of $30,000.

The nature of the loan is to facilitate the start-up of the Community Forest Not-For-Profit Corporation. The term of the loan is once NACFOR has established a cash flow and a balance of $50,000., the funds will be repaid without interest. The loan may not have to be repaid in the event NACFOR does not receive approval to begin operations.

The extent of this loan is restricted to $30,000.

THIS NOTICE is provided pursuant to Section 185 of the *Local Government Act*. The source of funds for this loan is the Discretionary Grant Fund allotted to Regional Directors.

For further information about this loan, please contact Mr. J. Gustafson or Ms. D. Attorp at the RDCK at 1-800-268-7325.

Kaslo council, November 27: Council wants another business case study on provincial building

by Jan McMurray

•The Village has asked for another extension, to March 31, to conclude negotiations with the Province on the provincial building. This would give council time to receive another business case study on the purchase.

A motion to have Am Naqvi update his original business case was defeated. Council will put out a call for proposals for a comprehensive business case study on the purchase of the building if the Province grants the deadline extension.

In an email November 19, the Province indicated that it would like to know if the Village is prepared to drop its interest in purchasing the provincial building so it can be sold to the private sector, or if the Village would like to continue negotiations.

•Correspondence from campground contractor Trish Bennett, outlining recommended improvements to the campground, was referred to the Planning and Development committee for further discussion with Bennett. She hopes a sani-dump can go in at the sewage treatment plant, as the one at the Esso will not be open next year, and would like to see an outside sink for dishwashing, more fire pit rings, and new bathrooms.

Council also adopted amendments to the campground policy as recommended by CAO Sawyer that will increase rates to a "more realistic" amount in terms of recuperating the costs of garbage generated and hot water used by the campers. The proposed cost will be $15 for the first two adults and $4 for each additional person. Kids under 10 free.

• Council agreed to make offences under the garbage bylaw ticketable, as recommended by Bear Smart Coordinator Gillian Sanders. Sanders recommended that the garbage bylaw be stronger, include fines and be enforced, in efforts to ensure that garbage is not being left outside, attracting bears.

Sanders also recommends that fruit trees in the Village that produce small, scabby fruit and that are too high to practically harvest fruit from be removed before summer 2008. She notes that there are several of these trees in the Kaslo Bay area. Foreman Glen Walker will view the trees with Sanders.

•Lynn van Deursen contacted council on the Spirit Square project proposed for the old bowling green. The funding application was initially turned down because council had not guaranteed the space for the project. However, van Deursen indicated that there was an opportunity to update the application. Council confirmed that the space can be used for the project and that it is creating a bylaw that designates the lots as 'Front Street park reserve.'

•The North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society application for Community Health Promotion funding for the 'Kaslo Good Food Mobilization Project' was endorsed. The project goals include developing the community garden as a demonstration garden, implementing a 'lawn to garden' program, matching local and regional farmers to consumers, engaging young and low income people in food self sufficiency, and exploring the possibility of a food based economic development centre.

•Anne Malik of the Kaslo & District Public Library requested support for a proposal to bring more of Area D into the taxation area for the library. This was referred to the Planning & Development committee for recommendation to council.

•Tom Humphries, lawyer, attended to present more detail about Mr. Radford's request for access to his private property via roads on Village property near the airport. Mayor Holland suggested that a properly dimensioned plan would help council in considering the request.

Radford plans to subdivide the property into three four-acre lots and a smaller fourth lot. He would like to have access to the lots via Bjerkness Creek Forest Service Road and then along the road parallel to the airstrip. Both of these roads cross Village property, and he would need the Village to sign off on a road dedication.

Radford would upgrade the road, and suggests that the road would be suitable as access to the industrial park area, the transfer station and the Village waterworks. He also suggests that the power line he plans to have installed to his property could possibly be used for the transfer station and industrial park.

•Later in the meeting, council received an email from Ramona Mattix at the RDCK regarding the airport road dedication request. The email confirms that a subdivision approval would require a road dedication. An easement, "even for the public purpose of protecting the airport," would not be sufficient for subdivision approval. She also states that the RDCK is not issuing building permits on lots off forest service roads unless the Ministry of Forests grants an access permit. "Your applicant should have confirmed in writing that MOF is willing to give up this road as a hauling road and that MOT is prepared to accept the dedication and maintenance." The email was referred to the Planning & Development committee for recommendation to council.

•Council received minutes of a November 13 Planning & Development committee meeting, where the Radford subdivision and rezoning to Single and Two Family Residential in Kaslo Bay were discussed. In her email to council, Ramona Mattix of the RDCK recommends that council have a "focused discussion" on whether or not it is beneficial to reduce the tourist commercial zoning along the lake. She says the rezoning requested by Marina Ridge would also require an OCP amendment and suggests that the subdivision request should only proceed if the rezoning is approved.

•Minutes of a City Hall Conservation committee were referred to the Planning & Development committee for recommendation to council. The committee, at its November 26 meeting, recommended that at least $16,120 be budgeted annually for maintenance of the building. A Heritage Legacy grant application has been submitted for the roof replacement project.

•Council received an email from the Chamber, asking for three to four Chamber members to organize Loggers' Sports. They ask those interested to contact them by November 30.

•Council decided to apply for flood hazard mitigation funding to do a study assessing all risks and possible mitigation of the effects of flooding on the Kaslo River water system intake.

•The Administration & Finance committee, Area D Director Shadrack, RDCK staff and the Kaslo fire department will meet to discuss fire services outside Village boundaries in December.

•A pro forma lease with the Kaslo Riding Club Society will be drafted to incorporate any previous special conditions.

•Blair Weston, Fortis BC, will be invited to speak to the Planning & Development committee on an energy efficiency statement in the OCP.

•The waterworks bylaw and park reserve amendment bylaws were adopted.

•Accounts payable of $124,011.12 were approved.

Usher in the season at Kaslo's Light-Up, December 7

Kaslo's Light-Up on December 7 offers the perfect opportunity to get into the Christmas spirit, socialize with your neighbours, and best of all, to get your Christmas shopping done!

The street turns into a pedestrian mall at 4 pm. The stores will be open until 7:30 pm, and the buzz around town is that they will be offering 'light-up specials' from 4:30-7:30. So support your local economy and do some Christmas shopping locally this year.

Activities for kids this year include the collaborative creation of a paper chain at the Family Drop-In Centre from 5:30-6:30, and face painting with the infamous Yvonne Boyd at the storefront next to Fern's, where Santa will also show up to hear the kids' Christmas wishes.

The parade starts at the Moyie at 6 pm and travels up Front Street – and yes, the Moyie will light up this year!

After the parade, people can warm up around the brazier on the street. Hot dogs and hot chocolate will be served by KSCU staff next to the Landmark Bakery, and the grads will be taking orders for Christmas trees. Teresa will be taking donations for the Food Bank and wrapped presents for the Christmas Hampers – please mark 'boy' or 'girl' on the package.

When the shopping is all done and the activities have wound down, the Langham offers a reading of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* with a special guest from CBC Radio. At St. Andrew's Church, there will be 'A Celebration of Angels' fundraiser for the Guatemala/West Kootenay Stove Project.

Support the Langham – join the Polar Bear swim

submitted

The annual Polar Bear Swim fundraiser for the Langham will again take place on New Year's Day at 12:00 noon at the Kaslo Bay Beach, site of the Jazz Festival.

At this time of year, with rising costs for heat and lights, the Langham depends on this fundraiser to get by and to continue providing our ongoing programming.

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Get Outta Town

with Peter Roulston

Sentimental journey to Octopus Creek

In the five years I've been in New Denver most of my writing has been about my rambles in this vicinity and within a radius of about an hour's drive. But I did spend 25 years at Nakusp, and in fact saw much of it during my days logging, and later with the Forest Service.

Octopus Creek feeds into Arrow Lake about 18 kilometres south of Fauquier from the Valkyrie range of the Selkirk mountains, which could be considered a sister range to the Valhallas. This part of the valley gets really severe with lots of rock bluffs and cliff faces. There's been talk for a long time that someday a nice smooth highway will connect Fauquier to the Castlegar area, but don't hold your breath on that.

A friend of mine from Hills needed a hand getting her canoe back home from a cabin down Arrow Lake last week, so we decided to do a daytrip: grab some breakfast in Fauquier at the Mushroom Addition café, do some sightseeing, then worry about the canoe… This was before snow reached the valley bottom, so this trip may be one to keep in mind for next spring.

From Fauquier we took the Applegrove Road south, down the east side of Arrow Lake. This is a great gravel road that passes a number of private driveways en route and often goes under the huge power line towers that end up going over the ridge to South Slocan. There are a few newer roads that dodge off uphill to logged areas, but generally speaking you keep to the good main road and bear to the right at these minor junctions.

Maybe nine kilometres down you'll pass the access to the Taite Creek recreation site, a scenic lakeside campground maintained by the Forest Service and free for public use. Because Arrow Lake water levels can fluctuate up to 20 vertical metres, these places along the lake can either have high water to the trees or at times vast open beaches.

Travelling several kilometres further south brings you to the Octopus Creek recreation site, which is not quite as nice as Taite and adjoins a log dump to the south. Octopus Creek was named when some famous dignitary standing onboard the SS Minto paddlewheeler noticed a huge floating stump near the creek mouth and commented that it resembled an octopus! Upon arriving there I was impressed to see that a big leaning snag is still standing, complete with a great osprey nest on top of it.

From this location you can look north up the lake to see the ferry shunting back and forth from Needles, and right across the lake from here you can see sand banks and sand dunes at Edgewood, which itself is always worth a visit. At this latitude, the forest type has changed from the sometimes dark and gloomy hemlock/cedar mix to the hotter, drier climate types of Douglas fir, white cedar, juniper and Ponderosa pine I like so much.

The added bonus to this little road trip is a spectacular viewpoint only a hundred metres off the logging road about 1.5 kilometres (roughly a mile) past the Octopus Creek bridge. Absolutely worthwhile, as either a stiff walk up the road or a steep, almost four-wheel drive effort to the first switchback where the road gets briefly level and then swings steeply back to the north. There's easy parking here and the somewhat unkempt trail leads nicely through the open forest to the lookout.

You'll emerge from this pleasant spacious forest onto the steps of a massive rocky bluff, with clumps of lofty mature trees spreading downslope to the water's edge, some 300 metres below. Arrow Lake stretches far to the south, looking wild and wonderful from this vantage point. You can see down toward Renata and the hills north of Castlegar. Way down the lake there seemed to be a large log boom with a boat fussing away at it, with the shoreline at Snag Bay and remote beaches visible. This is an easy viewpoint to drive to, with a tiny access trail, so it deserves high marks as a fine spot to complete an afternoon drive.

We then hustled back out 18 kilometres to Fauquier and blasted up to Arrow Park before dark to load up the canoe and both felt that it was a day well spent. Octopus Creek is certainly worth an easy daytrip.

Peter Roulston once lived at Nakusp and now finds the Slocan Valley even nicer. 358-2133

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with Jamie Barber

One of the insights one comes across while traveling in Asia is how they have developed appropriate vehicle transport for themselves. I have discussed the prevalence of small motorcycles and scooters in previous columns, but I should also remark on the fact that many of the private cars and taxis are also appropriate for their conditions. Like most of Europe, the vehicle of choice usually is equipped with a small displacement diesel engine. The fuel is cheaper and the mileage much higher. They are commonly of small size and efficient in seating capacity. If you have been reading this column for any length of time, you will recall that I have questioned why this technology is not common here in North America.

Now, it would be wrong to suggest that it is impossible to purchase a small vehicle with an efficient diesel engine here in Canada, but they are rare beasts, and the few that are available have been plagued with technical problems. It seems that the reasonable course would be to simply import one of these vehicles from Asia or Europe if one wants a dependable, efficient, small vehicle. Fortunately this is now possible.

My friend Doug, who lives and drives in Vancouver, recently purchased a remarkable vehicle, imported from Japan. It is a 4-wheel drive mini van that is powered by a turbo charged, direct injection diesel. Not only does it get very good fuel economy, but it has many features you don't normally see here, including a small refrigerator/hot box and electrically operated privacy screens for the windows when you are in "camp" mode. He has fallen in love with the beast and thinks everyone should drive one.

In fact, I have seen these same vehicles on the roads here in the valley and there are even more in Nelson. They are noticeable, as they are right hand drive and it looks like the driver is in the wrong seat. I have heard some discussion on the demerits of right hand drive on roads designed for left hand steering wheels. There seems to be some concern about lack of vision when overtaking, but my own experience driving an English car in France and my friend Doug's experience with his Japanese van leads me to believe this problem is minimized as you acclimatize yourself to the new driving style.

The Japanese have a strange law that makes it difficult to keep an old vehicle on the road. As the vehicle gets older, it costs more to license, until eventually, it simply isn't worth it. This is the point at which they are purchased from auction and shipped to Canada. Doug paid around $10,000 for his and enjoyed the added benefit of contacting the purchasing agent and asking for a vehicle of a certain colour and configuration.

Of course there are problems other than the aforementioned steering wheel incompatibility. Another is the availability of parts and service for a transplanted vehicle. I am sure these shortcomings can be addressed with some patience, but the situation seems to be a good fit – a surplus of good used vehicles in Japan and a demand for those same vehicles here in Canada. If you want a bit more information on the subject of importing a car from Japan, check out www.bestjapancar.com

Cool Eateries of the West Kootenays

with Andrew Rhodes

Hello all you Kootenay food fans.

I went to Vancouver, where I found two places you might want to drop into on your next coastal visit.

The first is one of 4th Ave's oldest eateries. It was once called the Kits Cafe, but is now the Kits Restaurant. It's on 4th and Maple and has a very diverse menu. Sushi, Chinese, Western...the whole nine yards. I had a big bowl of homemade chicken soup and a BC roll. The soup bowl was enormous and the soup hot and satisfying. The BC roll was chewy and delicious, and the prices are shockingly low.

Several blocks down 4th Ave is a place called The Noodle Box. It's been open for a year, and the place was rocking on a Tuesday night. I had hot and sour soup and a glass of red. It was an exciting place where you could see the staff of 11 working wildly in the kitchen while the music made me want to dance. The soup was excellent. So was the wine.

It seems that Vancouver still has some great eateries that are easy on the wallet.

I travelled back from Vancouver with a friend. We drove all the way up the Coca-Cola highway to "the Loop" then came down through Vernon and the Monashee. What does this have to do with food? Plenty.

We stopped somewhere along Highway 5 at a Husky to procure food and caffeine. My friend had a complicated coffee. I rarely drink coffee, but under pressure I ordered a "half-caf" latte in a medium cup and a turkey sandwich – all 'to go.' The plastic-wrapped turkey sandwich surprised me. It had a thick layer of turkey stuffing right in the sandwich. I must admit, I didn't read the ingredients, but it tasted so good I didn't care. Does this make me a bad boy? I say: give Husky a break. They're based in Western Canada, aren't they?

Back on the road the "half-caf" made me talk too much and too fast, but it was all so good, eating sandwiches and drinking semi-fancy coffee while watching hundreds of miles and kilometres of the BC winter wonderland whizzing by on both sides…like travelling through a 500-kilometre long painting.

Finally, after 10 hours, we were back in New Denver. The following morning, on a hot tip, I went to the Winter Fair at the Silverton Gallery. Among other things, I bought a bratwurst from the Rosebery Parklands Society booth. The hot brat came in a bun from Sappho's along with a scoop of hot sauerkraut. Now, I'm from Milwaukee, so I grew up eating brats, and I'm here to say these brats were #1. So good! I also checked out the Soup Du Jar set up. Keep your eyes and ears open for news about them! Good eating!

So! Have a safe and enjoyable holiday season, and eat what makes you happy. We'll talk more in a couple of weeks.

Keep on eating.

Seniors fitness program looking for help

submitted

Slocan Valley Recreation, the RDCK, and the Slocan Valley Seniors Housing Society are looking to develop a list of volunteer drivers to assist with future seniors fitness-related programs in the new year. They also want to find out if there are seniors in the area who would be interested in attending a variety of free, fun programs including fitness, mobility training and Tai Chi.

Many of the programs will be based out of the Passmore Lodge and driver assistance may be required to help seniors to attend. If funding is received there may be monies available for gas honorariums for volunteer drivers.

"Right now, we're trying to see if there are drivers willing to help make this happen and if there are members of our community who could take advantage more easily if the programs were available and accessible," says Craig Lawrence, Recreation Coordinator. "At this point no commitment other than your interest is needed." If interested in finding out anything more, or getting involved, give the Recreation Office a call at 226-0008.

WHAT, DECEMBER ALREADY?
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ATTENTION
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The Regional District of Central Kootenay is conducting a survey of all property owners and residents of Electoral Area 'H' South as part of a consideration of an Official Community Plan for your Area to create a vision for the future. Area 'H' South communities include: South Slocan, Playmour Junction, Crescent Valley, Krestova, Slocan Park, Vallican/Passmore, Winlaw, Appledale, Perry's Siding, Lemon Creek and Rural Slocan Village.

The survey results and findings will be presented at public meetings shortly after the new year in Area 'H' South communities. All returned surveys are kept strictly confidential.

The survey was mailed out the week of November 5, 2007. If you have not yet received a copy of the survey, or have questions, please contact Monty Horton at 250-352-8159, toll free at 1-800-268-7325 or email: mhorton@rdck.bc.ca.

Your reply is essential so that the results of the survey accurately reflect the views and opinions of all property owners and residents.

Please return completed survey by NOVEMBER 30, 2007.

Thank you for your participation.

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CARD OF THANKS

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE who supported the Samaritan's Purse in Nakusp. There were 172 boxes and $960 sent in. This year's boxes are going to Venezuela, Guatemala, Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

THE MOUNT SENTINEL FORESTRY CLASS would like to express their thanks to Kalesnikoff Lumber and Hlookoff Logging for their generous donation and delivery of a load of firewood logs. The class would also like to extend their appreciation to CPS Investments and the Barabanoffs for their donation of, and to D.W. Sicotte Trucking for their hauling of, a load of firewood logs. The class uses this wood for practicing chainsaw maintenance and use, and sells the firewood as a fundraiser to support the class.

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COMING EVENTS

WINLAW HALL'S X-MAS CRAFT FAIR Dec. 15/07 9:00 am-3:00 pm. Tables $12.00 Bring a friend and taste the goodies the Hall will be serving for Breakfast/Lunch - lots to choose from. Call Carey for table rentals 226-7702. Call early to book your table.

COFFEE HOUSE-CALL FOR PERFORMERS: The Whole School's 10th annual Blue Moon Coffee House takes place Saturday, December 15th from 6:00 to 11:00 pm at the Vallican Whole. Musicians interested in performing call Bevan at 359-6654. More info 226-7737.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA and Silent Auction Sunday December 9, Appledale Hall. Pancake breakfast will be served 8:00-11:00 am, Silent Auction ends 11:30 am sharp. Info 226-7708.

YOGA AT THE DOMES - Come and join together for the last yoga class of the year on Thursday Dec. 6 at 9 am. It's time to take a break. Yoga will start up again in the New Year with fresh classes (Mon., Wed. afternoon and Sat. morning) with one of the days featuring a special class series. Watch for the posters. Thanks for joining together and sharing your energy. May your holidays be full of grace, laughter and friendship. Madeleine 358-2475.

100 MILE POTLUCK IN WINTER! Saturday, Jan. 26, 5pm, Vallican Whole Community Centre. Silent auction, dance.

TURKEY BINGO Legion Hall in Slocan 1:00 p.m. Sunday, December 16th. $2.00 a card. Refreshments available. EVERYONE WELCOME.

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND: Registration Now Open - call Karen Dubreuil 358-2828! Personal Wellness Training Course: Session #1: Runs January & February 2008 (starts 1st week in January) OR Session #2: Runs February & March 2008 (starts 1st week in February). Days: Tuesday & Thursdays only – mornings-afternoons or evenings (prefer no weekends but I could be flexible on this). Time: 2-hour private sessions once/week for 8 weeks. Location: In New Denver at 1105 Columbia Street – Karen Dubreuil's home. Cost: $500 per 8-week course (=$250/month). Openings: Only 6 spots available for each session – so register NOW. Deadline: For Registration for either course is December 31/07. Call: Karen Dubreuil @ 358-2828 – Make all your changes Positive Changes! **Remember: What you resist, will persist! So register NOW.**

KOOTENAY DANCEBEAT SOCIETY AGM - December 8, 2007. Brent Kennedy School, South Slocan, 6 pm. Mini Lesson 7:30 pm, Dancing 8 pm-11 pm. Everyone Welcome! Cost $5.00.

GOAT MOUNTAIN SCHOOL AGM will be held at 7 pm Tuesday, December 11 at LESS in the shop. For info, call Ruth 358-2116.

SINIXT NATION SOCIETY AGM All are welcome to join us! December 15th 2007, 2-6 pm, Passmore Hall.

SLOCAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COMPLEX SOCIETY AGM. Monday, January 7, 2008, WE Graham School, 7 pm.

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

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Passmore senior citizens branch welcomes members both old and new

submitted

Are you a senior citizen new to the Passmore area in the Slocan Valley? Do you want a chance to socialize a bit and get to know some oldtimers and maturing "boomers?" Passmore Seniors Branch #116 welcomes you for social recreation and a chance to exchange concerns and ideas.

The Passmore branch meets the second Sunday of every month at 4 pm with a potluck afterwards and a chance to play cards. Members also gather for cards on Friday nights and some do carpet bowling on Wednesday afternoons.

The group has hosted an annual Mother's Day breakfast for many years. Members participate in the Seniors Olympics, bringing home medals from a variety of events from track and field to cards. The Passmore Seniors were also responsible for much of the fundraising that went into the creation and construction of the Passmore Lodge.

Passmore Seniors Branch #116 was granted a charter on July 1, 1976 by the Provincial Senior Citizens, and there was an official inauguration on January 14, 1977. The Passmore Hall seemed like the best place to gather but it was in need of renovations. The hall was built in the 1920s and had served as the local school. So the seniors applied for a New Horizons Grant from the Federal Health and Welfare Department. The Minister at the time, Marc Lalonde, sent them a personal letter, letting them know they were awarded $7,880 towards refurbishing their meeting place. In 1986, a further grant from the Seniors Lottery for $3,000 was awarded to replace the furnace.

Medical sources say isolation can cause stress, which can harm the heart. Be kind to your heart and give the Passmore Seniors a try. For more information call Cynthia at 226-6860.

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Streamkeepers and students work to restore Slocan River

submitted

Good news stories seem rare these days. Can you remember the last time you heard something positive about the environment? Here in the Slocan Valley we have an environmental success story and an example of a community group, local schools and agencies working together to effect a positive change.

Now in its third year, the Slocan River Riparian Restoration Program provides funding to help landowners who want to restore native vegetation and conserve their riverfront land. Erosion and loss of soil along riverbanks due to livestock activities are serious issues along sections of the river. This year alone, the restoration program, which is supported by Columbia Power Corporation and the Columbia Basin Trust, has provided funding to fence over 550 metres of riverbank.

To complement this important work, students and Streamkeepers planted over 1,000 trees on the fenced banks and, with help from a local permaculture specialist, stabilized badly eroding sections using bioengineering techniques.

The efforts are part of a larger initiative to restore our riparian landscape and provide habitat for fish. However, like many things that address a serious need, the program speaks to multiple issues.

We know the value of vegetation for wildlife but the plants also help offset effects of warm water as well as providing nutrients and reducing erosion. The students that collect stems and plant trees are also learning to work together to care for the river and help the environment while earning funds to do other community building efforts. The partnership is unique and the Slocan Valley can be proud of the example being set.

The Slocan River Streamkeepers would like to thank hard-working students from the WE Graham Alternative Education Program, Mt. Sentinel's Help Mexico Project students, and riverside land owners who participated in this year's program. We look forward to working with you next year! Thank you Springer Creek for supplying wood chips for mulching trees and West Kootenay Plants for donating trees.

To learn more about the Slocan River Streamkeepers call Jennifer at 226-7339 or Eva at 226-7309.

Edgewood checkers challenge

Brady Milne is the undisputed checkers champion of Edgewood Elementary School – and beyond.

After Brady had neatly secured the school championship, he decided to challenge Pattie Adam, chair of the School District 10 board of education, to a game.

When Adam received letters from students in the grades 4-7 class at EES at the beginning of November, she was very curious, as she doesn't often get letters from students. "I was so excited that I was being invited to participate in a checkers challenge at EES that there was no way I could not accept!"

Adam admits that she was feeling a bit nervous as she entered the school for the big game. After all, she had not played the game in about 30 years.

However, the class went through the rules to refresh her memory, and she says she was "put at ease" by her opponent's smile.

Although she lost, she feels she gave Brady a challenging game.

"There is a very important lesson that I must share. It's not about winning the game – it's about playing an old game again, but being a winner at heart!" she says.

EES student Brady Milne firmly held onto his title of Checkers Champion after a game against Board of Education Chair Pattie Adam on November 14.

Ann Mott showed her paintings at a festive reception on November 28 at the Pavilion in New Denver.

CORRECTION

In an article entitled 'Unstable Perry Ridge put up for logging bids by BCTS,' it was reported that the Perry Ridge Water Users Association (PRWUA) is proposing that the provincial government allow Perry Ridge to be set aside as an ecological reserve managed by the Regional District of Central Kootenay. In fact, PRWUA is asking the RDCK to support the proposal of a Perry Ridge ecological reserve, but not to manage the reserve. The Ecological Reserve Act is provincial legislation and is administered by the Minister of the Environment. The management of a reserve must be in accordance with the regulations in the Act.

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Grant Eligible Retrofit Options | ecoENERGY Retrofit Grants | Fortis BC Rebates*
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*Fortis BC grants are for electrically heated homes only and are equal to 5¢ per kilowatt hour saved annually. The federal ecoENERGY Retrofit - Homes grants are for all heating types. ecoENERGY is an official trademark of Natural Resources Canada. Used under license.
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The Valley VOICE
wishes everyone a
HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!
Thanks for another great year of serving your communities
LAST ISSUE OF 2008 – DECEMBER 19 (Deadline December 14)
NEWS FLASH!
In 2008, the Valley Voice will be a Thursday paper
Friday deadline remains the same
Biweekly schedule remains the same
FIRST ISSUE IN 2008 - JANUARY 17 (Deadline January 11)
The office will be closed December 22 through January 6
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