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

What the Kootenay Central candidates have to say leading up to the October 24 provincial vote

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The provincial election is coming up on October 24. Four candidates will be on the ballot in the Kootenay Central riding – incumbent Brittny Anderson for BC NDP, Gordon Skulnec for the Conservative Party, Nicole Charlwood for BC Greens, and Hunter Corrigal for OneBC.

Kootenay Central includes the municipalities of Nakusp, New Denver, Silverton, Kaslo, Nelson, Salmo, and Creston. Other communities in this riding in the *Valley Voice* region include Argenta, Cooper Creek, Johnsons Landing, Lardeau, Meadow Creek, Shutty Bench, Mirror Lake, Ainsworth Hot Springs, Summit Lake, Hills, Rosebery, Retallack, Sandon, and Zincton.

PHOTO COURTESY: BC NDP

BC NDP incumbent Brittny Anderson is running for re-election in Kootenay Central.

PHOTO COURTESY: BC GREENS

BC Greens candidate Nicole Charlwood is running for election in Kootenay Central.

PHOTO COURTESY: ONE BC

OneBC candidate Hunter Corrigal is running for election in Kootenay Central.

PHOTO COURTESY: CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF BC

Conservative candidate Gordon Skulnec is running for election in Kootenay Central.

BC NDP – Brittny Anderson

Brittny Anderson was elected as MLA for Nelson-Creston in 2020, and re-elected in 2024 for Kootenay Central. She has served as Minister of State for Local Governments and Rural Communities, Parliamentary Secretary for Tourism, and as the Premier's Special Advisor on Youth. Anderson previously served as a Nelson city councillor and RDCK board member.

"I grew up in the Kootenays and know that people here need quality healthcare when they need it, good jobs, the ability to afford to live, and a clean environment," Anderson told the *Valley Voice*.

Anderson is committed to permanently protecting old growth

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Thirty-nine new family doctors and nurse practitioners recruited to the region; BC has most doctors per capita in Canada

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

One recent physician recruitment to Nakusp is an encouraging sign of what's been happening across the Kootenay Boundary region.

"We're really happy to join Nakusp and area residents in welcoming Dr. Eric Sona to the community," Dr. Trisha Goodman, Kootenay Boundary Board Chair of the Divisions of Family Practice, told the *Valley Voice*. "Having another physician practising locally means more people can get the care they need, and helps ease pressure across the local healthcare system."

But it's not only Nakusp that's had recent success recruiting new doctors.

"Over the past 18 months, including Dr. Sona, we've had 39 new family practitioners choose to live and work here in the Kootenays," said Dr. Goodman.

New Denver and Kaslo have a full contingent of practitioners and have not been recruiting for a while.

BC has the most doctors per capita in Canada, with 271 physicians per 100,000 residents.

In the last 12 months, the Health Connect Registry – the regional registry for residents who need a family doctor or nurse practitioner, has connected 7,214 residents with a family doctor or nurse practitioner.

The Ministry of Health announced in September that, since 2018, one million people in BC have been connected to primary care, and 4.47 million people – 80% of BC's population – now have a primary care provider.

Connecting people to primary care is part of the government's efforts to strengthen the BC healthcare system. Part of this strategy includes the Health Connect Registry.

The Province also launched the Health Human Resources Strategy in 2022, to train, recruit, and retain more doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals. Between 2017 and 2025, BC's population increased by 15% while the number of longitudinal (or ongoing, continuous care) family doctors has increased by 33% and the number of nurse practitioners has tripled.

In 2025 more than 1,200 internationally trained doctors received licenses from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, for a total of 6,000. More than 4,400 internationally educated nurses have received full or provisional licences. As of September 1, 2026, there are 77,880 nurses licenced to practise in BC through the College of Nurses and Midwives.

Closer to home, more than 765 new training seats have been added in post-secondary institutions in BC for midwives, registered nurses, psychiatric nurses, practical nurses, and nurse practitioners, and 360 news seats for allied health professionals. The Simon Fraser University Stephens Family School of Medicine in Surrey welcomed its first cohort of 48 students. Enrolment will grow in phases to 120 students annually.

SFU will also launch its first family medicine residency positions in 2027, with further expansion phased over time. Including the University of British Columbia's residency training growth, BC's total family medicine intake will rise to 224 positions in 2027 (compared to 174 in 2022).

Anyone who still needs a family doctor or nurse practitioner can register for the Health Connect Registry at kbhcr.ca.

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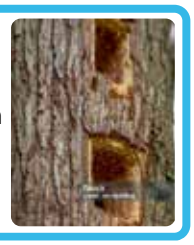
DID YOU KNOW?

Pileated woodpeckers drill holes in trees to prospect for bugs (irregular shape, rough edges and surfaces, bored 5–20 cm in), and for roosting and nesting (larger, rectangular-shaped cavities).



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Arrest warrant issued for Ontario man accused of assaulting ostrich farm's neighbour

by Jan McMurray

The Ontario man charged with assault, assault with a weapon and mischief against a 73-year-old Edgewood resident during the Universal Ostrich Farm fiasco did not appear for his trial, scheduled for October 7 and 8 at the Nakusp courthouse.

Judge Robert Brown issued a warrant for the arrest of Timothy Regan for failure to appear in court.

Regan is accused of assaulting the ostrich farm's neighbour, Lois Wood, on September 22, 2025. He has pled not guilty to all three charges.

Regan's lawyer told Judge Robert Brown that he had notified Regan of the trial date on March 3 by email, and received a reply with a "thanks." The lawyer received another email on July 22 from Regan's email address "with some commentary about the matter but nothing in regards to getting in touch for preparations [for the trial]," the lawyer said.

Judge Brown said Regan's lack of contact with his lawyer "doesn't speak kindly about his commitment to be here." He said he was satisfied that Regan had been notified of the date and time, and noted that the charges were "serious."

Regan was scheduled to be at the Nakusp courthouse at 2 pm on October 7 for trial. The judge allowed 10 extra minutes in case Regan was running late. When he didn't show, Judge Brown issued the arrest warrant.

The warrant is just BC-wide, but will appear on Regan's file if he ever comes into contact with the police anywhere in Canada.

Lois Wood attended court that day and told the *Valley Voice* she wasn't surprised Regan was a no-show. "I had retired RCMP officers tell me he probably wouldn't appear for trial, so that shows even the police are expecting faults in the system. This experience has made me want to advocate for improvements to the justice system, like fewer delays and adequate consequences for crimes."

Wood said she was traumatized by the incident, and the trauma is ongoing. "The physical injuries have healed, but I am living with constant fear and long-term adverse impacts on my mental well-being," she said.

The alleged altercation occurred on September 22, 2025, just after dozens of RCMP officers arrived at the ostrich farm in Edgewood to provide security for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. The CFIA occupied the farm to cull the ostriches, due to the detection of avian flu on the farm.

Shortly after arriving, police became aware of the alleged assault at the neighbour's property. An RCMP press release at the time said Regan was identified and arrested without incident, and the 73-year-old female victim received medical assistance from RCMP medics on scene.

The victim, Lois Wood, described the incident in an email to several media outlets and others later that day. She said she opened her front door at 7 am to feed her cat, and saw a man in a black balaclava and black clothing pouring gas from a five-gallon jug along the wheelchair ramp at her house. He was reaching into his pocket, and she says she figured he was reaching for a lighter. Somehow, she was able to bite him quite hard on his bare arm, she said, but when he got loose, he hit her face. She said she fell, but had kicked him in his "privates." She had gas poured all over her, she said, and he ran away when she got her phone out to call for help. She said there were about six protesters at the end of her driveway with video equipment, and they posted a video of the incident on Facebook soon after it happened.

"My attacker was tracked by RCMP dogs and identified by a bite mark on his arm and arrested," she said in the email.

Wood adds that she had been through "nine months of harassment by UOF supporters, owners and family" and had reported this to the police. She said the day before the alleged incident, she stepped outside and was yelled at by protesters that she was to blame for the CFIA and police occupation of the farm.

The Universal Ostrich Farms ordeal began in late 2024, when ostriches started dying on the farm. A total of 69 birds died between December 10, 2024 and January 15, 2025. Testing by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency came back positive for 'highly pathogenic avian influenza,' resulting in an order to cull all ostriches on the farm by February 1, 2025. Farm owners took the matter to court to try to get the cull order reversed, but the case was dismissed in federal court on May 13, 2025 and again in the federal court of appeal on August 21, 2025. When the Supreme Court of Canada rendered its decision to not hear the case on November 6, 2025, the cull was carried out right away, on November 6 and 7.

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Kootenay-Monashee candidates share their platforms and priorities ahead of the October 24 vote

by Nikko Snyder

The *Valley Voice* caught up with the four candidates running for election in the provincial riding of Kootenay-Monashee, and invited them to tell us – in their own words – about their platforms, priorities, and experience.

Readers in South Slocan, Crescent Valley, Slocan Park, Passmore, Vallican, Winlaw, Perry Siding, Appledale, Playmor Junction, Krestova, Slocan, Brandon, Lemon Creek, Burton, Fauquier and Edgewood will see the following names on the ballot on October 24: incumbent Steve Morissette for BC NDP, Stephen Hill for OneBC, Connie Larochelle for BC Greens, and Warren Mirko for the Conservative Party.

OneBC – Stephen Hill

I'm running to make a difference for my children. Why did they leave and now work and reside in Alberta and Ontario? We need to change the current conditions to attract them back, with their families and children. This will ensure the long-term viability of our small communities. If the youth continue to leave it will prevent sustained and productive growth.

My [past] experience is simple. I ran a successful business out of Trail for 30 years and expanded it across Western Canada. We had nine offices and over 50 staff and advisors. Our clients ran successful businesses and employed thousands in their small businesses. We must create wealth and business opportunities to support investment in our schools, hospitals and social programs. We should not drive the wealth creators out and spend money we do not have.

I will do exactly what I did in Midway when I ran for the federal Conservatives. I will ask what they need and then execute the plan to meet that need. They wanted to reopen the Midway mill. I said sure and led the charge to accomplish that goal. The NDP MP drove by that closed mill 1-2 times per week for years and did nothing. He only dropped by after the mill was reopened and successful to drop off Unemployment Insurance documents; I guess he was foreshadowing the future. Failed NDP policy caused the mill to close and failed NDP policy continues to keep it shuttered.

My goal in Trail is simple: let's make Trail the Recycling Capital of BC/Canada. This will create immediate jobs and ensure the long-term viability of Teck Cominco for generations to come. Handing out $400 million in Corporate Welfare to an $85 billion company is not the way to proceed.

BC NDP – Steve Morissette

I am seeking re-election as MLA for Kootenay-Monashee to build on my predecessor's work and the experience I have gained over the past two years in the Legislature. There is still much work to do to make life more affordable, improve healthcare and public safety, and support family-supporting jobs in forestry, critical mineral processing, and small business. I enjoy the work and serving my community.

Sustainable forestry is vital to the future of our Southern Interior communities, our environment, and good local jobs. My experience working with Community Forests in BC over the past year has shown me the success that comes when communities have a meaningful role in determining how the forests they control are managed and what they are used for. Our government has supported new forest industries such as Kalesnikoff Mass Timber and continues to advocate for and support traditional forest operations in our region.

I will continue to support Selkirk College and other rural colleges as important and affordable pathways to university, skilled trades, healthcare, early childhood education, and other careers our communities need. I will also continue working closely with Selkirk's leadership to ensure the college remains a strong economic development partner for our region. Rural colleges are vital for economic development here and across the province.

Healthcare must remain a priority. We need to build on the momentum already underway, including the new ambulatory care and emergency wing at our regional hospital and the addition that will house a new MRI, doubling our imaging capacity and helping reduce wait times. We will also work toward a Community Health Centre in Castlegar modeled on the success of Trail's Riverside Health Centre, which has attracted doctors and connected more than 2,000 previously unattached patients to primary care. Our government has built a new medical school where we are training new doctors to work in the province as well as creating pathways for many new healthcare practitioners from the US to come and practise in British Columbia.

I support expanding clean power generation in our region. We already produce approximately 60% of British Columbia's electricity, and I believe we can responsibly grow that contribution through clean sources such as solar and wind. Our BC NDP government has also recently made calls for power and rebates for solar panels.

We also need to prepare for the opportunities and challenges of emerging technologies. Before the election was called, we had begun work on AI regulation. With a strong mandate, I would continue that work to develop sensible safeguards for this rapidly evolving field.

Being accessible to constituents is one of my priorities. Over the past two years, I have made several trips throughout the riding, including to Cherryville and communities such as Burton, Fauquier, and Edgewood. I believe effective representation starts with listening directly to the people and communities we serve. My constituency office has two staff members who provide personal and professional services for constituents who need assistance with provincial government issues. They also have a strong relationship with local communities and provide assistance to anyone who needs it.

If I could change one thing about provincial politics, it would be the tone. Political parties can disagree strongly while still treating one another with respect and working toward the common good of British Columbians. I demonstrated my commitment to that principle by delivering a five-minute speech in the Legislature on the importance of decorum and leading by example in respecting those with different and opposing views. I am known to be a person who can work with all types of people regardless of political views.

I bring 10 years of municipal and regional government experience, along with two years at the provincial level. One lesson I have learned throughout those 12 years is that relationships are critical to getting things done. I hope to return to the Legislature and continue working with those relationships to deliver positive results for Kootenay-Monashee.

BC Greens – Connie Larochelle

We need a new choice instead of the same old politics.

Running as the BC Green candidate for Kootenay Monashee is my solution. Giving people a choice to send a message that politics needs to shift back to people.

There may be new faces in this old horse race, but it's still a horse race. I am not another horse, I am the mule. A bit stubborn, definitely tenacious, low maintenance and willing to pull my weight.

Forestry, rural education, rural healthcare, power generation and data centres are pretty big issues across the riding – the BC Greens have policies on all of them.

Common concerns I have heard about are housing, health, transportation, childcare and education. The BC Greens address all of these through funding of the Fair Share Tax. Some include: bringing back the community housing fund and expand the $10/day childcare; expanding transit and making it free; putting a moratorium on data centres; encouraging alternative green energy; and replacing old growth deferrals with permanent protection.

If I had to focus, it would be housing and healthcare. When people don't have stable housing and a doctor or nurse practitioner, when their pharmacist is an untapped resource, people are not able to care about other things. People need stability to care about mining in Rossland, Data Centres in Fruitvale, old growth in Slocan.

[On engaging with constituents] I want to be realistic with my response. Each community has its own telegraph trail. No one size fits all. Some rural communities rely on a handful of people, others have networks of parents, community groups and businesses. Some are strong with social media, newsprint and radio. I understand this and can walk many paths.

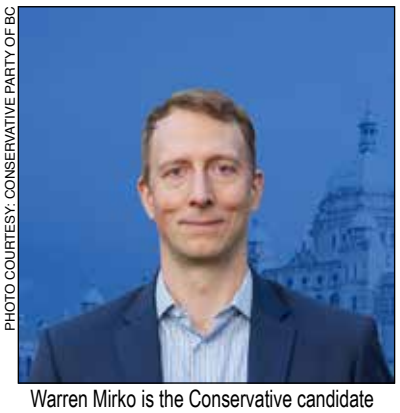
PHOTO COURTESY: BC NDP

BC NDP incumbent Steve Morissette is running for re-election in Kootenay-Monashee.

PHOTO COURTESY: BC GREENS

BC Greens candidate Connie Larochelle is running for election in Kootenay-Monashee.

PHOTO COURTESY: CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF BC



Warren Mirko is the Conservative candidate for Kootenay-Monashee.

[If I could change one thing about how provincial politics operates, it would be] cooperation between party lines definitely hands down. Regardless of who you vote for, you need water, air, land, food just like your neighbours. Proportional Representation would go a long way in making real cooperation happen.

I have worked, lived and volunteered in remote, rural and First Nation communities most of my life. Having this lived experience and knowledge is a plus when advocating for communities.

As a bonus, I ended my career with a decade in the provincial government as a senior research advisor. Having worked inside the system gives me the inside scoop

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Kootenay Central candidates continued

continued from page 1

forests and preserving watersheds, while supporting workers and communities. She says the BC NDP is working to find new markets for BC wood products and is investing nearly $100 million into value-added manufacturing, which will create over 3,500 jobs.

"We need to support transformational change in the forestry sector and are fighting back against [Donald] Trump's attacks on the industry," she said.

Anderson said children deserve the best education possible, and that the Province has hired thousands more teachers, education assistants, and school counsellors, strengthened school food programs, and implemented early literacy screening.

"The Conservatives have said that healthcare and education would take the brunt of their cuts," said Anderson. "The last time they were in power, they closed over 250 schools across the province and fought teachers in court to increase class sizes."

Anderson said residents should have access to healthcare when they need it.

"We're doubling the capacity of the Ronald McDonald House, building the first new medical school in western Canada in 60 years, and hiring thousands of new doctors and nurses across the province, including in Nakusp," she said. "We're fighting against the Conservatives' approach that would cut healthcare and move us to US-style privatization."

Anderson says the BC NDPs are also investing in rural healthcare by eliminating hospital reliance on costly private temp agencies and redirecting savings to rural travel nurse programs.

When it comes to AI, she says the BC NDP wants to protect communities, the water supply, and the grid.

"We're setting strict new water-efficiency standards and mandating AI companies report their water use. It's critical that communities have a say in their future and we're requiring engagement with local communities on conservation and drought planning," said Anderson.

She also said she's been supporting her constituents with power self-sufficiency, whether it's supporting plug-in solar panels or connecting a local power generating facility with relevant ministers.

"I'm also proud of the BC NDP's work on this front, including the recent calls for power and rebates for solar panels," said Anderson.

The BC NDP's platform can be viewed at bcndp.ca.

BC Conservatives – Gordon Skulnec

Born and raised in the West Kootenays, Gordon Skulnec is a husband, father, volunteer, and small business owner. He began his career as a medical radiographer at Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital in Trail before joining the RCMP for 17 years. Skulnec is also a rental housing provider and property manager. Faith matters deeply to Skulnec and his family. They attend Connect Church, where he helps lead the men's group.

The *Valley Voice* was unable to get in touch with Skulnec. The party's platform can be viewed at conservativebc.ca/plan.

The BC Conservatives say they will not raise taxes for British Columbians. The party also plans to cut provincial income tax, putting $1,000 back in residents pockets and saving the average family $2,000.

The Conservatives aim to keep emergency rooms open, recruit and retain more doctors and nurses, and protect current health care funding, while keeping BC's system universal and publicly funded. The party also plans to support rural medical practices at risk of closing, and invest $50 million into an emergency fund.

To promote safe schools, the Conservatives plan to repeal SOGI 123 (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) – a resource endorsed by the provincial education ministry that focuses on addressing discrimination and bullying to create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ students.

The party also plans to repeal DRIPA (Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act) and promote economic reconciliation.

The Conservatives say they will hire and deploy 250 more police officers; improve access to mental health care by expanding psychiatric services, crisis response, and residential treatment; introduce compassionate intervention so affected individuals are taken off the street and into care; and end the NDP's safe drug supply experiment.

The Conservatives' Energy Superpower Plan aims to double natural gas production by 2032, and triple it by 2035, creating jobs, attracting billions in investment, and generating new revenue for BC services. The party aims to cut red tape, speed up project approvals, build the power and infrastructure needed for growth, bring investment and corporate headquarters back to BC, and put First Nations partnership and ownership at the centre of new development.

The party also says it will remove PST from Canadian alcohol for the duration of Donald Trump's trade war.

They also aim to lower insurance rates and seek justice for serious injuries in auto insurance. It plans to compensate victims while keeping premiums low and expanding consumer choice.

BC Greens: Nicole Charlwood

A former Nelson City councillor, Nicole Charlwood has lived in the Kootenays for over 25 years, with more than 16 years of experience organizing politically. She studied economics and international trade, earning an honours degree from the University of Waterloo.

Charlwood's focus is fair funding for local governments, rural transit, inland ferries, and responsible stewardship of the region's natural resources – but what she hears from constituents will set her priorities in Victoria.

"The best way to learn what matters to a community is to show up, ask, work on it, and report back," Charlwood told the *Valley Voice*. "I can be an MLA who answers to you before my party. I'll bring a critical eye to how we spend public money, and practical experience protecting watersheds and building rural services that actually reach people."

In the forest sector, Charlwood says she will push to set harvest levels through regional, area-based planning based on what each landscape and watershed needs to stay healthy. The BC Greens plans to end raw-log exports, direct 30-50% of available fibre to value-added manufacturing, grow community forests, and share more forest revenue directly with municipalities, First Nations, and regional districts.

On the subject of education, BC ranks second-to-last among provinces in per-pupil funding, said Charlwood. The BC Greens plan to replace the current formula with a stable, needs-based model.

"For rural districts, I'd make sure the new model recognizes what it really costs to run small schools, long bus routes, and hard-to-fill positions, so keeping a small school open is never treated as a luxury," she said.

The BC Greens also aim to establish integrated, team-based Community Health Centres in more communities, and cover mental health care through the public system.

"I'd build on what we already have: turn our village health centres into stable, team-based clinics with reliable staffing, backed by housing and retention support for rural health workers," said Charlwood. "I know rural care costs more to deliver, and I know how to make the case that it's worth it."

The BC Greens want more electricity generated and owned closer to where it's used. Charlwood said she'd push for a clear, affordable path for projects like small hydro, solar, and storage, to connect to the grid easily and at fair rates.

"I'd also call for a review of BC Hydro's grants-in-lieu of taxes so reservoir communities like Nakusp get a fair return, and for those communities and First Nations to have a real seat at the table on the future of the Columbia River Treaty," she said. "We live in one of the country's most power-rich regions, and too little of the benefit stays here."

The BC Greens plan to place a moratorium on building and operating AI data centres until a public-interest audit and proper regulations are in place. They also plan to work with Ottawa on an AI oversight commission to test AI safety. AI use in K-12 classrooms would be paused until the Province sets clear directions on safe, ethical use.

View the BC Greens plan for British Columbia: bcgreens.ca/our-plan.

OneBC – Hunter Corrigal

Hunter Corrigal has worked in and alongside many industries, in the private sector, for the federal and provincial governments, and as a business owner in the resource sector. He is also Métis.

"Members of my family have worked, and continue to work, in settings connected to Indigenous culture and communities," Corrigal told the *Valley Voice*. "I'm not naïve about the challenges we face in finding a shared vision for how we live and work together across cultures."

Corrigal said each community in Kootenay Central is unique, shaped by its own history, culture, and connection to the land around it.

"Rural and remote life is its own experience, and it shouldn't be drowned out by the noise of the Lower Mainland," he said. "My job would be to carry this riding's voice to Victoria, not the other way around."

Some highlights of OneBC's platform, which can be viewed at 1bc.ca/priorities, include:

Repeal DRIPA and declare UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) to have no force and effect in BC; demand constitutional reforms to repeal the Indian Act, transform reserves into townships, and unite British Columbians under one law and political framework; and end mandatory land acknowledgements within the government and government-funded institutions.

25% tax cuts for every single tax bracket, including corporate; 2% off PST; approve a pipeline to the Port of Prince Rupert or Kitimat to get Canadian Energy to foreign markets; and undertake an audit of BC's 176,000 regulations to reduce bureaucratic bloat.

Increase the allowable yearly cut to ensure there is available wood fibre to grow and thrive; reduce stumpage fees for lumber companies to make the market more competitive; speed up permit approval times and consultations.

Private healthcare alongside fully-funded public healthcare; repeal the Health Professions and Occupations Act (HPOA); phase out the ICBC insurance monopoly and end No Fault Insurance; adopt the findings of the Allison Inquiry from Canada's federal parliament to shape BC's vaccine protocols.

Bring back standardized testing in schools; remove SOGI 123 and politicized content from classrooms; and institute a Parental Bill of Rights guaranteeing informed consent and classroom transparency for parents of minor-age students.

Eliminate safe supply and drug consumption programs; cancel new drug consumption sites and turn current sites into drug recovery centres; involuntary drug rehab and housing for the severely addicted; and rollback all decriminalization programs.

Crack down on repeat and violent offenders; prosecutors will be instructed to consider past charges or convictions of offenders as an indicator of future danger to the public; and work with the federal government to counter organized international criminal elements.

Provincial firearms storage program in case federal buy-back or confiscation program risks taking a law-abiding British Columbian's legally obtained firearms.

Adopt the Western Canada Alliance plan for BC to work with the governments of Alberta and Saskatchewan to strengthen provincial sovereignty.

Voices from the Valleys

Enough of the DRIPA bashing!

DRIPA consultation is what is going to protect your watersheds from being laid bare and strip mined by the International Mining Consortium.

DRIPA consultation has already protected you from more critical minerals tailings pond collapses such as the Imperial Metals' Mount Polly gold and copper mine, the largest Canadian tailings pond collapse disaster that destroyed the salmon runs and for over a decade has poisoned the drinking water of Quesnel Lake, and the salmon bearing Fraser River tributary.

DRIPA consultation requires updated mining techniques to prevent selenium poisoning that Teck is so guilty of, has paid millions of US dollars in toxified downstream fines.

DRIPA gives you the right to defend your home, land, air and water from industrial colonialism. Blaming DRIPA in the Cowichan land claim dispute is like blaming the invaded Indigenous for having their land stolen from them. The Indigenous are not the guilty. The stealers of the land are the guilty; those who sold Indigenous land (just the same as if someone sold your land, without your permission, to an uninformed buyer) for profit. Haha – that's colonialism!

Turn your eyes to the stealers of land and the resource extractors who do not want to consult the locals, who do not want to pay to protect ecosystem water purity, preserve old-growth, fish-bearing streams and caribou habitat.

These are the pillage and profit criminals that are bashing DRIPA, vilifying the Indigenous, and deceptively victimizing you.

Do not let the LORD colonists lead you like sheep to betray yourselves by badmouthing and blaming the Indigenous who are trying to protect you and all living with the experienced and hard-won DRIPA Agreement.

Susan Eyre
Sirdar

Is the Bear Smart Program working?

It is time to reassess the Bear Smart program. At a recent New Denver council meeting, the CAO explained that the program does not recommend hazing bears out of the community. I strongly disagree and believe this approach has contributed to the current problem. Today, while driving through New Denver, I saw two mother bears and three cubs within a two-block radius. Bears roaming so freely in a municipality should not be considered acceptable. Conservation officers are reluctant to address problem bears here because they believe Village bylaws should do more. I agree that substantial fines could help, but small municipalities lack the staff to enforce them. This is another example of the provincial government shifting responsibility to local governments across British Columbia. Some residents suggest removing all fruit and nut trees and tolerating bears in backyards, but I disagree. Fruit trees have long been part of this area—the Orchard is named for that history. Provincial policies on problem bears need to change, and the effectiveness of the Bear Smart program in British Columbia should be thoroughly reviewed. Other approaches recognize hazing as an effective way to discourage encounters, reinforce bears' fear of people, and keep them away from populated areas. We need a better strategy than the current program and the acceptance of bears roaming freely within municipalities.

Tanya Gordon
Silverton

Leader in sustainable forest management?

Interfor! Leader in sustainable forest management? Preserve watersheds? Emphasize quality of water and surrounding ecosystems? You do not give a rat's behind. The only mission of yours is shareholder profits, building value for shareholders. Why is BC's forest sector at a breaking point? Because the well-being of the forest was forgotten. Green gold – it will never be enough or fast enough. Devastated mountain sides, dwindling wildlife, broken water cycles. Happy National Forest Week, Lovelies!

Angelica Herlihy
Grand Forks

RSV vaccinations for seniors

I am somewhat confused by an email (see below) that I received from the BC Ministry of Health several days ago and am hoping for some better understanding.

I recently turned 75 years of age. The email that I received states that I am now eligible for a free respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine. It goes on to say that RSV is similar to a cold and while most people will recover without complications, it can cause hospitalization or death in older adults.

Naturally, I took this as something serious that I should pursue. There was a phone number provided to call for immunization locations and to book an appointment.

I called the number and was told that they were experiencing a larger number of calls than usual and as a result there would be a long wait time for my call to be answered (first time for everything). It was suggested that I go to a website, which was said so quickly that I had to listen to the message three times before I understood it.

From there I was directed to my regional health authority, Interior Health, where if I had the Excel application, I could download a spreadsheet of all the pharmacies in BC where the vaccine would be available. I have no doubt that there are a lot of seniors who would be totally flummoxed by this point.

Next step – I called the Kaslo pharmacy. I asked about making an appointment, but was told that at this time there was no vaccine available and if/when it would be available they were unsure if it would be free. They were as helpful as they could be, as they had been provided with little information from the health department. However, they suggested that I contact the local health clinic as they might have more information.

I called the Kaslo clinic and was basically told the same thing – no vaccine, not sure when, and unsure of the cost. Once again, they were helpful, but they were also suffering from a lack of information from the powers that be.

So, any suggestions for next steps would be greatly appreciated. I'll also add that my wife, who turned 79 this past month has not received any communication from BC Public Health regarding this RSV issue. It raises concerns regarding who actually received this public notice. Of course, it is a moot point as nothing can be done at this time. Which begs the question, why even bother sending these public health notices?

Hayward (Howard) Kirsh
Kaslo

Taxing the rich

David Eby is pledging to tax the rich if he gets elected in the upcoming election. In the past 10 years the NDP has given huge tax breaks and subsidies to the LNG developments, which are owned by rich foreign corporations whose shares are no doubt owned by rich people. Locally, the Eby government has doled out nearly seven million dollars to Kalesnikoffs, a staunchly anti-union company, to complement the eight and a half million dollars they received from the federal government to build a modular home plant in Castlegar, all while proclaiming themselves as the friend of workers and unions. They also subsidize private companies to take care of our highways, our ferries, our transit system and many other public services greatly increasing the cost. They claim to be the Party of the people, but use our tax dollars, and put us in deep debt, to subsidize the rich at every opportunity. Now... they're gonna tax 'em...right.

The NDP obviously have a lot of cash to spend on huge election signs sporting the phony smiles of their phony candidates, the same people who threw up their hands and refused to stand up for us when their contractors shut down our right to cross Kootenay Lake on our government-owned ferry.

We seem to be getting more and more political parties, each one a little more fascist than the last. I think it is about time we got ourselves a new Socialist party...one that supports union workers and actually believes in keeping Beautiful BC.... well...

continued on page 7

EDITORIAL / LETTERS POLICY

The Valley Voice welcomes letters to the editor and community news articles from our readers.

Letters and articles should be no longer than 500 words and may be edited. We reserve the right to reject any submitted material.

Please mark your letter "LETTER TO THE EDITOR." Include your address and daytime phone number for verification purposes. We will not knowingly publish any letter that is defamatory or libelous. We will not publish anonymous letters or letters signed with pseudonyms, except in extraordinary circumstances. Opinions expressed in published letters are those of the author and not necessarily those of the *Valley Voice*.

The Valley Voice Box 172, Winlaw, BC V0G 2J0
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Voices from the Valleys

BEAUTIFUL, instead of developing everything to within an inch of its life to keep the rich....well...RICH.

Rod Retzlaff
Glade

Congratulations to all municipal candidates

Firstly, thank you to all candidates who stood for election.

Secondly, I am asking the successful candidates to spend substantial time examining ways to improve expenditures of our tax dollars.

As an example, we live in Area D close to the village of Kaslo. Comparing eight years of property tax increases (2019 to 2026 inclusive), our 2026 tax bill is 214% of the 2019 total. Yes, our land value has doubled, but that should NOT be the main criteria. Our property tax, which reflects the Area D budget plus pertinent parts of the Kaslo budget, has risen at an average rate of ten percent per year compounded annually. By contrast the Canadian CPI index has risen about three percent per year compounded annually over the same period.

Considering our rather static population growth, the financial trajectory that we are on appears completely unsustainable.

Please investigate why our local governments have become so much more expensive and do what you can to fix this problem.

Allyn Steward
Kaslo

On community forests

An advertorial in the Sept. 24 issue of the *Valley Voice* had a big headline: "Imagine If Communities Had Control of the Forest Lands Surrounding Them." What kind of "control" requires a municipality to sign a contract to log the environment of its own citizens and neighbouring communities, and do so in an amount and location determined by the Ministry of Forests?

Last year the provincial Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) was increased by 50% over the previous years. Why? Because the mills are closing for lack of wood. Before the AAC was increased, many logging companies were not logging their full AAC. Why? Because the remaining wood was too far from the mills, too small to be profitable, on steep slopes or in sensitive areas like watersheds and wildlife habitat.

To force more logging, the Province is getting municipalities like New Denver to log close to communities and in other sensitive areas. The CFA advertorial tells us that this will have "environmental benefits," i.e. "protecting drinking water, biodiversity and sensitive habitats" for wildlife. When the Nakusp Community Forest clearcut the Western Toad habitat above Summit Lake, was that protecting wildlife habitat? If you follow provincial logging policy, you will see that what it's really about is providing more wood to the mills.

The big lure of community forests is the promise of wildfire risk reduction. "Log it before it burns!" we are being told. But the truth can't be kept secret anymore: The monster fires in BC in recent years have raced through numerous clearcuts, feeding on the abundance of dry slash left on the ground. The same has been true of tree plantations.

The province knows this, yet it raises the AAC to a level sure to require clearcutting, and induces municipalities to help perpetrate it. There is also mounting evidence that, while some tree thinning works to lower fire risk, in some conditions it actually raises the risk. Fuels are left on the ground and reduction of tree canopy exposes the ground to heat and wind.

Reducing fire risk requires cleaning up the small fuel left on the ground; it means cutting the lower branches of trees, and cutting the short trees that provide "ladder fuels." And it means leaving the larger trees to shade the ground and hold in moisture with their canopies. This is not profitable, it is expensive.

The drive to make a municipality into a logging company can only occur when profits ignore the consequences. Did we vote these Council members into office to have them direct the logging of our watersheds and viewscapes? The inducements we are hearing for community forests are not only false, they are dangerous, as VWS detailed in the previous advertorials. This requires immediate wide protests.

Anne Sherrod
Valhalla Wilderness Society

Not in favour

I am not in favour of having a community forest for the very reasons mentioned on page 5 of the September 10, 2026 edition of the *Valley Voice*.

Patrick M. Warren
Hills

Be right back

I am a professional woodcutter in the Slocan Valley.

I feel the need to communicate with certain people who weren't taught by their mothers what is right and what is wrong.

If a tree is discovered on the side of a logging road (especially bucked to lengths!), it is WRONG to take it.

My mother taught me to use a chainsaw and also to read and write.

If you see a sign that says "BRB," that usually means "Be Right Back," not "Bring Your own Beer" (though judging by the empty cans left behind that is clearly what you thought!).

Tree falling can be incredibly dangerous, and is very taxing on trucks and chainsaws and bodies. I'm sure I can speak for all professional woodcutters when I say: lessons are free now to anyone wanting to learn to do it the RIGHT way, or AT COST if we meet in the bush.

Hiagin Zoll
Hills

Oh snap!

David Eby is subjecting British Columbians to an early election truly without any legitimate justification.

Our Premier's premature election requires some historical context and analysis.

The BC Reform Party's introduction of the Five Principles of Direct Democracy, one such principle being fixed election dates to ensure that the timing of elections cannot be manipulated for political or partisan reasons, was introduced into law via the Constitution (Fixed Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2001 and then further by the Constitution Amendment Act, 2017, which states that a general voting day must occur on the third Saturday in October every four years. Abrogating this law can only be caused by a non-confidence vote of the sitting government.

In the smarmy game of BC politics, we saw a previous NDP Premier John Horgan circumvent this law by using the COVID-19 pandemic as a convenient opportunity to dissolve the legislature and orchestrate an election solely for the purpose of furthering NDP dominance in the legislature. Fear provides an excellent motivator!

It is important to understand in this matter that ultimately the decision to grant the Premier's request rests solely with Justin Trudeau's Crown appointed Lieutenant Governor. Traditionally the LG will use this power when advised by the Premier to do so, although it remains the right of the LG to decline the Premier's request. If this Lieutenant Governor had a smattering of ethical values let alone common sense this request could have easily been denied. C'mon folks, really? An election because Orange Man Bad?

An election that reportedly will cost something like $85 million that this government doesn't have. Not to worry, the Election BC apparatus will allocate whatever millions it takes to ensure that we, the great unwashed, can be happy that "Democracy" prevails in our province.

Make sure you know in which election you're casting your vote... Provincial or Municipal.

Pop Quiz ... a show of hands please ... who knows the name and pedigree of our British Crown-appointed Lieutenant Governor?

Brian Gray
Penticton

BC parents call on all parties to commit to three priorities for public education

As British Columbians prepare to vote on October 24, the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) is asking every party and candidate to commit to three priorities that matter to families in every community in the province.

Public education impacts every family in BC, no matter where they live or how they vote. Parents aren't asking for anything new. Public education is foundational to the success of our province, so we're asking for real investment in a strong public education system that every child needs to learn and thrive, and we want to hear how each party plans to deliver this.

1. Stable, adequate funding. Recent years have seen some progress, including school food programs and new school spaces. But per-student funding rates are unchanged this year while costs keep rising, and many districts are facing difficult budget decisions. Parents are asking for funding that keeps pace with rising costs and reflects the needs of students, so every school has the resources and supports necessary to provide a quality education.

2. Inclusive education for every learner. Too many families wait too long for assessments and support. Every student, including students with disabilities and diverse abilities, deserves timely help and enough education assistants and specialists to make inclusion work in practice.

3. Safe, healthy schools. Children learn best when they feel safe, welcome and supported. Parents are asking for access to mental health support in every school, and for continued work to make every school a place where all students belong.

We look forward to working with whoever forms the next government. Parents are ready to be partners. We encourage families to ask their local candidates where they stand on these three priorities before they vote.

After the election, BCCPAC will write to the Premier with recommendations for the new Minister of Education and Child Care's mandate letter.

Alicia Rempel
BCCPAC President

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Your monthly donation helps keep our full-time local journalist employed.
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Innovative partnerships: Rural health summit explores solutions for seniors

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

On September 25, the Rural Seniors Health Summit brought together representatives from almost 30 organizations to explore solutions to the current challenges facing rural seniors.

The event was organized by the Victorian Hospital of Kaslo Auxiliary Society (VHKAS). Other organizations present included the BC Rural Health Network, the Office of the Seniors Advocate BC, Kaslo Community Services, the Housing Society, the Kaslo and BC Seniors Citizens Associations, United Way, West Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital District, the RDCK, Better at Home, Nav-CARE, the hospice society, Kootenay Savings, and members of the VHKAS Hospital Expansion Committee.

The summit began with statistics, to set the scene of the current state of seniors' needs.

As of the 2021 census, Kaslo and Area D's population was 2,511, with 835 seniors (33%). There are 18 long-term care beds available in the area – one bed for every 46.4 seniors. To compare, Nelson and surrounding areas have a population of 19,119, with 22.6% seniors. There are 199 long-term care beds – one bed for every 21.4 seniors.

A recent Kaslo Needs Survey garnered 72 responses (7.5% of all seniors in Kaslo and Area D). Tyler Dobie, Chair of the VHKAS Hospital Expansion Committee, said 72 may not seem like many, but statistically it's significant.

"We've got a very healthy seniors population here," said Dobie. "I'm astonished at how many people I see bicycling up the highways on steep hills in their 70s – I can't do that!"

However, 58.3% of survey respondents anticipate needing homecare assistance for themselves, a spouse, or parent within the next 5-15 years, and 25% said they possibly will. 74.6% know seniors who had to leave the community due to a lack of available housing.

Dan Levitt, BC Seniors Advocate, said that the Province anticipates 400,000 more seniors in the next ten years.

"We haven't planned well for seniors," he said. "We haven't invested enough in the aging demographic."

95% of seniors in BC live independently, but after reaching 85 years old, one in three requires care (assisted, at home, or long-term) – or they're the person providing care to someone.

That's the trouble Dolly Parton encountered at the end of her life, said Levitt. She spent so much time caregiving for her husband that she neglected her own health. Caregiver burnout is real – for both spouses and other family members caring for others.

Housing is also part of the picture. Young families, essential workers, and seniors looking to downsize can't find affordable or market-rate housing.

Many seniors are at risk of homelessness, as property taxes and the cost of living rise. The median income for seniors is $37,000 per year, said Levitt. Seniors also face discrimination in the workplace that affects them financially: older workers are paid less than younger people.

The deficit in long-term care beds, assisted living, home care, and independent living options is hurting seniors. Many seniors need to move away from Kaslo to receive services, which can separate people from their spouses, families, and friends.

"People need a pathway that allows them to move from independent housing to assisted living to higher levels of care when their needs change," said Sarah Sinclair, BC Rural Centre Executive Director. "When someone leaves Kaslo for care, the cost is not only measured in kilometres, it is measured in missed visits, fuel costs, time away from work, weather-related risks for family caregivers, and the emotional burden of knowing that someone you love is living away and alone. Connection matters. Familiarity matters. Belonging matters. These are not extras. These are part of the care."

"Aging in place does not mean asking someone to remain alone in a home that is no longer accessible," Sinclair continued. "It does not mean expecting a spouse or an adult child to provide round-the-clock care. It does not mean waiting for a crisis to happen and then trying to find an emergency solution. Aging in place means having a range of safe and appropriate choices as our needs change."

Dobie said the VHKAS Expansion Committee is advocating for per capita fairness between small rural communities and big cities.

"Because cities are bigger, their voices are louder," he said. "They get heard, and their needs seem greater… But there are more small communities than there are cities [in BC]."

As part of a province-wide review of long-term care infrastructure, Interior Health Authority (IHA) has paused new long-term care expansion projects, said Lindsay Hetu, Chief Operating Officer of Clinical Operations with IHA, in a July letter to the expansion committee. Though committed to expanding, IHA is awaiting direction from the Province before future planning initiatives.

Solutions

With all that seniors are facing, what is the solution?

Innovative partnership opportunities, said Dobie, Levitt, and Sinclair.

"We can tell each other what we need all we want, but having key stakeholder partnerships in place to make some of these things happen is key," said Dobie.

Dobie and the expansion committee were inspired by Fairview Gardens in Nelson – a new 74-bed long-term care home located within the Nelson Community Health Campus, which also provides a range of community-based health services. The project was a collaborative effort between Columbia Basin Trust, Golden Life Management, the Ministry of Health, IHA, and West Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital District (WKBRHD).

Columbia Basin Trust funded the initiative, meaning the government didn't have to pay the capital costs of construction, said Dobie. If the government isn't going to build something, but IHA does want to expand services, finding partnerships like this could be a way forward.

Golden Life is a family-owned company with two divisions: an end-to-end construction service to build facilities, and another to operate them.

"Living in rural BC, when you want the government to do something, you don't wait for them to come dig a hole," said Sinclair. "You don't wait for them to build a road. The rural community gets together and does it themselves."

A possibility for Kaslo is the South Kaslo Development – about 40-acres of municipally-owned land that the Village is planning to develop. The process is slow, to ensure it is thoughtfully done, but it holds the potential for affordable housing, homes for seniors to downsize to, and facilities with different levels of care.

Care also doesn't need to look like a large facility, said Dobie. It can also look like a house, with 12 long-term care beds on the lower floors and independent living on the upper floors.

RDCK Board Chair and Area D Director Aimee Watson said that investing in rural communities results in a five-times return on local dollars – something you don't see in urban centres.

"We have to fund locally, not just for security [for seniors], but also for that return on investment," said Watson. "It ensures your grandchildren, my children, will also have a community to live in."

To stay informed as work develops, email vhkas353@gmail.com with the words 'Subscribe Summit' in the subject line.

Annual Kootenay Lake Summit to take place November 15

submitted by FoKLSS

Friends of Kootenay Lake Stewardship Society (FoKLSS) is gearing up for their annual Kootenay Lake Summit, taking place this year on November 15, 2026, at the Prestige Lakeside Resort in Nelson from 3 to 8 pm.

The Kootenay Lake Summit is an annual gathering that brings together community members, organizations, lake users, scientists, politicians, and stewards from across the watershed for an evening of connection, learning, and conversation about the lake we all share.

This year's theme, Synergy: Collaboration in Conservation, highlights the powerful impact that partnerships and collaboration can have in creating meaningful change. It celebrates the idea that by bringing together different perspectives, knowledge, skills, and experiences, we can accomplish far more than we could alone.

Kootenay Lake is a vital part of life in this region ecologically, culturally, recreationally, and economically. Protecting the health of the lake requires collaboration between the many people and organizations who care for and depend on it.

The Summit creates the opportunity for participants to connect with others working, volunteering, and living in the Kootenay Lake watershed, share ideas, learn about local stewardship initiatives, and set in motion opportunities for future collaboration. Interactive activities throughout the afternoon invite attendees to share the projects and contributions they are already involved with and explore new ways to take action together. No matter your background, your voice and lived experience is valued at the Summit.

The evening features a locally catered dinner, door prizes, live music by singer-songwriter Dana Lee, an opening lakeside ceremony by Robin Louie, Yaqan Nukiy land steward, a silent auction, the premiere of the Shoreline Stewardship short film, and a keynote speech from Juilet Craig, MSc, RPBio, and Program Director of the Kootenay Conservation Program.

Attendees can expect to leave the Summit better informed on what initiatives exist to promote conservation of the Kootenay Lake region, and empowered to take action with concrete tools from experts in the field.

Registration is now open for the event. FoKLSS members receive a 10% off discount on the ticket price and there are a limited number of reduced barrier tickets available to ensure the event is accessible to everyone.

This annual event always sells out, so get your ticket today: https://www.friendsofkootenaylake.ca/kootenay-lake-summit-2026-synergy-collaboration-in-conservation/!

Budget implications of lower enrolment now clear: SD 8 board meeting, October 13

by Nikko Snyder

The School District 8 Board of Trustees met on October 13, 2026. It was the last meeting of the current board ahead of the local elections on October 17.

Literacy Continuous Learning Report

District Principal Tamara Malloff presented the 2026/27 Literacy Continuous Learning Report, which provides an overview of literacy trends within SD 8, and describes the district's commitment to literacy success and associated action items.

While there is encouraging evidence of improvements in literacy among SD 8 students, there is also still room for improvement. For example, while the total number of grade 4 students assessed as "on track/extending" rose dramatically – from 55% in 2024/25 to 73% in 2025/26 – students with disabilities/diverse ability lagged behind, with only 33% "on track/extending."

The complete Literacy Continuous Learning report can be found at https://www.sd8.bc.ca/flipbook/41.

Support for Inclusive Education

Assistant Superintendent Jason Tichauer presented a memo to the board outlining the process for determining inclusive education supports and resources in SD 8. Board chair Susan Chew noted that Inclusive Education is one of SD 8's most important and complicated areas to understand and to communicate with communities about.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care (MoECC) expects all school districts to create an inclusive education system that supports students with disabilities and diverse needs to fully participate in school communities.

School districts with students who have provincially approved designations may receive supplemental funding in addition to regular operating grants. These funds are based on a student's designated category of unique need (level 1, 2, or 3).

The memo emphasized that these supplemental funds are not allocated to individual students; rather, they form a portion of the district's total operating funds. It also noted that not all diverse education designations receive supplemental funds, and that SD 8 supports all students based not only on approved designation, but also on presented need.

Every student with a MoECC designation has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), which is a document developed collaboratively between the district, school, and family. IEPs are updated annually and provide the school and district with guidance to support the student.

Support in the classroom for students with diverse needs can include assistive technology, adjustments to both curriculum and the classroom, in-school support, and other resources. In some cases, additional staff such as an Inclusion Support Teacher or Educational Assistant (EA) may be assigned to the classroom.

SD 8 allocates specialized teacher and EA staffing in the spring so that these resources are ideally in place by September of the following school year.

Budget implications of final 2026/27 enrolment

SD 8 Secretary-Treasurer Cathy MacArthur presented a memo on final enrolment numbers and the verification process currently underway by MoECC.

Districts are required to submit student enrolment data by September 30 of each year, after which there is a period during which MoECC verifies the data before confirming final numbers (and associated funding).

SD 8's actual 2026/27 enrolment is 4,508 full-time equivalent students. It's almost exactly what was projected; however, it represents a 2.5% decrease compared to the 2025/26 school year.

The number of unique students (those with Inclusive Education designations) remains very similar to 2025/26, which is higher than what was projected. The number of English/French Immersion students is lower than projected; and the number of Indigenous students is higher than projected (and also higher than in 2025/26).

All told, the overall operating grant from MoECC is estimated to be $47.7 million this year, compared to $47.5 million in 2025/26 – an increase of 0.5%. The district will not be eligible for funding protection this year.

Amended Capital Budget Bylaw

An amendment to the 2026/27 Capital Budget Bylaw was required due to the approval of additional capital funds after the original bylaw was passed. Specifically, $250,000 approved in August for a new HVAC system for Salmo Elementary School.

The board unanimously approved three readings of the amended bylaw.

Trustee vacancy

Following the local elections on October 17 there will be a vacancy on the board for the City of Nelson/Bealby Point. Information and guidance from MoECC will be needed to determine the process for addressing the vacancy.

Student Trustee reports

JV Humphries, Kaslo – Jorja Lamoureux

Recent activities at JVH include the Terry Fox Run (which raised around $800) and Orange Shirt Day. At the Orange Shirt Day assembly, the grade 2 class performed a drumming circle, and the grade 5/6 class shared their land acknowledgements.

Primary students visited Kokanee Creek Park to learn about and participate in salmon spawning. The high school foods class collected donated apples and made them into pies, which they sold to the community. The grade 12 English First Peoples class made bannock to share with grade 2/3 buddies they were paired with.

"And lastly, moving forward we have a school goal to increase K-12 cross-grade activities," said Jorja. "We're working really hard on that because sometimes we struggle with a lot of our school participation. We have a senior parliament and a junior parliament that are going to work together to try to form some more whole school-wide activities."

Mount Sentinel, Crescent Valley – Lola Chevalier

Student council hosted a pancake breakfast and helped organize the annual school spirit day the first week back to school.

"The school is divided into four separate teams that compete in chants and obstacle races and tug of war and lemon eating competitions and many more activities," said Lola. "It is definitely a highlight of our school year as it encourages our school to come together and our older students to take on leadership roles. It also encourages our new grade 7s to be more a part of our school."

The Terry Fox run was a success,

continued on page 12

PORCUPINE WOOD PRODUCTS

Cooper Creek Cedar Ltd (CCC) is referring the Company's Forest Operations Map (FOM) for Forest License A30171 CP 429 for public review and comment. The public viewing and comment period will be from October 1, 2026 to November 1, 2026.

Visit https://fom.nrs.gov.bc.ca/public/projects to view, and comment on, the FOM. A copy of the FOM is also available for public viewing at:

Porcupine Wood Products Ltd. - 8564 Highway 6, Salmo, BC, V0G 1Z0, during business hours: 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM Monday to Friday excluding statutory holidays.

The three year validity period upon which this FOM may be relied upon to apply for a cutting permit commences October 1, 2026.

Comments should be submitted to the Government FOM portal: https://fom.nrs.gov.bc.ca/public/projects

Or emailed to thaukaas@porcupinewood.com

Or mailed to: Cooper Creek Cedar Ltd, Box 850, Salmo, BC, V0G 1Z0, Attention: CP 429 FOM

PORCUPINE WOOD PRODUCTS

Cooper Creek Cedar Ltd (CCC) is referring the Company's Forest Operations Map (FOM) for Forest License A30171 CP 430 for public review and comment. The public viewing and comment period will be from October 23, 2026 to November 24, 2026.

Visit https://fom.nrs.gov.bc.ca/public/projects to view, and comment on, the FOM. A copy of the FOM is also available for public viewing at:

Porcupine Wood Products Ltd. - 8564 Highway 6, Salmo, BC, V0G 1Z0, during business hours: 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM Monday to Friday excluding statutory holidays.

The three year validity period upon which this FOM may be relied upon to apply for a cutting permit commences October 23, 2026.

Comments should be submitted to the Government FOM portal: https://fom.nrs.gov.bc.ca/public/projects

Or emailed to thaukaas@porcupinewood.com

Or mailed to: Cooper Creek Cedar Ltd, Box 850, Salmo, BC, V0G 1Z0, Attention: CP 430 FOM

Slocan Lake and River Partnership invites proposals to map the Slocan River and Little Slocan River floodplains

submitted by RDCK

The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK), as a member of the Slocan Lake and River Partnership (SLRP), has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to inventory and map the historic floodplain and riparian ecosystems of the Slocan River and Little Slocan River.

The resulting maps and guidance will provide current information to help government, landowners and residents make better-informed decisions about land and water use along the river. The mapping will identify the location and condition of riparian ecosystems and provide a common information base to support future planning, decision-making and working with landowners.

The Slocan River is one of the last undammed fifth-order rivers in the Columbia Basin, and its valley bottom contains rare and threatened ecosystems. Mature black cottonwood floodplains, including the provincially red-listed Black Cottonwood, Snowberry and Roses ecological community, support a range of species at risk. These riparian areas also help filter water, stabilize riverbanks and provide important connections for wildlife across the valley. Much of this land is privately held, so the future of the river depends on good information, strong relationships with landowners and a shared commitment to stewardship.

"The land along the Slocan River is mostly in private hands, so the health of this river has always depended on the people who live beside it," said Walter Popoff, outgoing Area H Director. "This mapping will help us see the whole river while still recognizing that each property is part of a larger system. Good information does not replace the care that landowners and neighbours already bring to the river. It strengthens it. It helps people see what they are already stewarding and their place in the river's story."

The project is funded through a $100,000 Community Works Fund grant approved by the Regional District of Central Kootenay Board in July 2026. It is led collaboratively by the Slocan Lake and River Partnership, which brings together the Sinixt Confederacy, the Syilx Okanagan Nation Alliance, the Regional District of Central Kootenay, the Villages of New Denver, Silverton and Slocan, and the Province of BC.

The mapping will follow the provincial Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (SEI) methodology and update baseline mapping completed by the Slocan River Streamkeepers in 2012. An SEI is an information resource that records which ecosystems are present and their condition. It gives the SLRP and its members a shared foundation for conservation, restoration and development decisions, and a starting point for working with landowners. The mapping itself does not create new regulations or change how any property can be used.

The RFP is posted at rdck.ca/bids and closes on October 28, 2026. To keep the process fair and open to all proponents, questions about the RFP must be directed only through the process set out in the RFP document. The Slocan Lake and River Partnership cannot answer proposal questions through informal channels.

The Slocan Lake and River Partnership works toward a healthy Slocan Lake and River ecosystem and balanced land and water uses. It brings together First Nations, local governments and the Province to share information and guide development across the watershed.

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Call for Expressions of Interest:

Child Care at W.E. Graham and Blewett Schools

School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) invites expressions of interest to provide accessible child care in the communities of Slocan and Blewett.

Submission Deadline: November 13, 2026

Learn more: **www.sd8.bc.ca/childcareEOI**

School District 8
Kootenay Lake

Winlaw 11-year-old in the running to become Super Kid

by Nikko Snyder

Eleven-year-old Winlaw resident Keagan Murphy is part of a continent-wide talent search to find the next "Stan Lee Super Kid."

The initiative is an online competition celebrating children who demonstrate community impact, creativity, and resilience. It's open to kids aged 5 to 17 across North America, and seeks to honour young people who perform outstanding everyday acts of kindness and leadership.

The grand prize is $25,000 USD, four VIP passes to the 2027 LA Comic Con, and an official superhero identity created for them in an upcoming Stan Lee universe comic book.

But first, participants have to make it through multiple rounds of public voting, which isn't exactly exciting for an 11-year-old.

"It's not really that fun," Keagan told the *Valley Voice*. "It's just waiting pretty much."

But he's not giving up. And Keagan's family is hoping to inspire more people to get behind him and help him move forward in the competition.

"Keagan is one of those kids who has a heart bigger than he is," his mom Cassandra Murphy told the *Valley Voice*. "He's strong, sweet, incredibly caring, outgoing, and the kind of kid who will talk to absolutely anyone. He's always looking for ways to help people, and he has a pretty simple idea of what being a superhero really means: helping people, no matter who they are – even your enemies."

The Super Kid competition serves as a primary fundraising vehicle for The Stan Lee Foundation, with all proceeds going to the charity, which supports literacy, creative education, and narrative arts mentorship programs.

"I think it would be good for Keagan's self esteem and friendships," said Cassandra about what she's hoping Keegan will get out of the experience. "I think it would build him as an individual. And he's got such a good heart that I think he would be a really great superhero."

PHOTO COURTESY: THE MURPHY FAMILY

Winlaw's Keagan Murphy, age 11, is competing to become the next "Stan Lee Super Kid."

What superpower would Keagan most like to have?

"Telekinesis," he said without hesitation, adding that he'd like to be able to steal cookies from the cookie jar. "I can also fly with it, because I can lift myself up. Because if you think about it, telekinesis is just you lifting up an object. Right. So why not just [use it] on yourself?"

You can vote for Keegan at https://thesuperkid.org/2026/keagan-fe11.

Slocan Valley Historical Society AGM

Saturday, Nov. 7
1 pm
Vallican Heritage Hall

(The little red schoolhouse at 4192 Slocan River Road)

Guest speaker is local writer Tom Wayman, recent recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Literary Excellence.

His presentation is titled *Filling it In: The Trickiness of Written History*.

Valley View's Fall Golf Tournament a huge success

submitted by Valley View Golf Club

The Valley View Golf Club's annual Fall Golf Tournament on Saturday, October 3, was an incredible day for everyone involved. It started with a crisp, typical autumn morning, but the sun broke through just in time for the golfers to wrap up a fantastic day on the course.

With 13 teams taking part, there was plenty of fun, friendly competition and great golf throughout the day!

Congratulations to our Flight 1 winners: Brycen, Kyle, Kelin and Darla Verigin – with an impressive score of 51.

Congratulations to our Flight 2 winners: Mark Cochrane, Logan Payne, Joshua Workman, Sebastian Donald and Jason – with a score of 52.

A huge thank you to everyone who came out to play, cheer on the golfers and volunteer their time. We especially want to recognize our amazing greens crew, cart maintenance team and fundraising committee members. Your enthusiasm, dedication and support helped make the tournament such a success!

And, of course, we couldn't have done it without the following amazing sponsors, whose generosity and support mean so much to the Valley View Golf Club and community: Bears Furniture; Kaleznikoff Lumber; Kootenay West Contracting; Nelson Ford Sales; Silverton Building Supplies; Timberback Construction Ltd.

We would also like to give a special shout-out to the generous local businesses and individuals who donated prizes and support to our tournament. Your contributions helped make the day extra special for our golfers, and we truly appreciate your support: Castlegar Mr. Mike's; Esthetics by Di; Gilbert Auto Parts; Golden Golf Club; Larry St Thomas; Mark's Castlegar; Mallard's Source for Sports; Moonrise Boutique; Nelson Building Centre; Pennydale Junction – BC; Riondel Golf Club; RONA Maglio Nelson; Salmo Golf Course; Slocan Valley Co-Op; Slocan Valley Home Hardware; Stewart's News; Taghum Shell; Trail Home Hardware; Uncle Bernie's Coffee; VH Sport; Valley Performance

Please support these businesses whenever you can – their support helps keep Valley View Golf Club thriving in our community.

PHOTO COURTESY: VALLEY VIEW GOLF CLUB

Thirteen teams took part in Valley View Golf Club's Fall Tournament on October 3.

The World in One Hall brings sounds and flavours to Taghum Hall

submitted by Taghum Hall

Local residents can travel to some of the world's most interesting countries in just one day at The World in One Hall, a multicultural gathering at Taghum Hall on Sunday, November 8.

"There are two parts to this event," explains coordinator Rumi Lee. "We will have an Open House from 10 am to 12:30 pm, where you can connect with people from other cultures through displays and performances. There are also two cooking classes – South Indian cuisine and Korean kimchi – open for registration."

The Open House begins with a Taiko Drumming demonstration right at 10 am. Presenters include Zen Wang with a Chinese Brush Painting demonstration, Rumi Lee demonstrating Korean Calligraphy, Ogunleye Bukola and her family with music from their Nigerian homeland, and more.

Additionally, booths hosted by community organizations offer information and activities. These are: the Nelson Izu-shi Friendship Society, the Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy, and West Kootenay Local Immigration Partnership, and Intercultural Kootenays. Admission to the Open House is by donation.

Two unique culinary workshops offer opportunities for participants to expand their kitchen repertoire. Both require registration at www.Taghumhall.ca/events, with a low registration fee of $45 per workshop – all ingredients supplied.

Ciraj Premanantham, the visionary behind Nelson's beloved restaurant Kootenay Tamil Kitchen, will teach the first workshop from 11 am to 1 pm. Participants will learn how to cook two Tamil Nadu dishes: Chicken Salna, a fragrant coconut and spice curry, and aromatic Ghee Rice.

PHOTO CREDIT: ANNE DEGRACE

Ciraj Premanantham, seen here dishing up during The Tamil Kitchen's free Thanksgiving Day community meal, will teach a South Indian cooking workshop at Taghum Hall on November 8.

"I have a deep passion for traditional spice blends," says Ciraj. "This workshop is a great opportunity to learn about the art of balancing complex spices, elevate your home cooking, or discover the secrets behind your favourite local dishes."

A Red Seal Chef, Ciraj started the Kootenay Tamil Kitchen in 2012 out of a desire to offer authentic South Indian cuisine in the Kootenays. Ciraj, with his wife Martina – who will join him at the workshop – also own the KTK Masala Shop and KTK Rosemont Market.

Kimchi-making is an art in South Korea, and Sabine and Jinhee will guide participants through the steps in a workshop to learn how from 1 pm to 4 pm. Gimjang, the cherished Korean tradition of making kimchi for the winter, is a practice honoured by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Sabine and Jinhee, who have brought their roots from South Korea to Nelson, will share stories and techniques as participants chop, season, and pack their jars to take home 500 ml of kimchi to ferment and enjoy. With limited space, the workshop promises to be cozy, connected, and full of flavor.

"With something for everyone, it will be a beautiful day of learning and celebrating," says Rumi.

Halloween Family Dance Party at the Vallican Whole, October 24

submitted by the Vallican Whole

The nights are getting darker, the veils are getting thinner, and the papier-mâché is drying on your epic costume… That spookiest time of year must be approaching!

Start the season off with a night at the Vallican Whole, for the Halloween Family Dance Party!

As the moon nears full on Saturday, October 24, the Whole doors open at 6 pm, with music by N-Deep playing until 11.

The Kitchen Witch will have concessions and a cash bar open, with dinner, snacks and drinks for sale. From 7-8:30, the sculpture park will host a spooky, guided-story walk through lantern-lit paths – bring your own lantern to contribute to the light! Groups will gather & travel through the park at regular intervals.

There will be lots of other kid- and family-friendly Halloween activities going on throughout the night, and of course, costumes are encouraged.

Entry is $15/person or $40/family, and volunteers (and their family) can get in for free! Email info@vallicanwhole.com to sign up for a volunteer shift. Jobs include door-minding, kitchen and bar tending, lantern-walking, helping with decor, and the ever-important clean-up.

Kootenay-Monashee candidates continued

continued from page 4

on processes.

Every community has its telegraph network. I am tapped into some of these and would reach out to tap into others. PAC, Chambers of Commerce, markets, arts, social media, dedicated times for visits and chats, advisory groups - each community is unique. Knowing what is important means making the time to listen. Understand and follow through.

Conservative Party – Warren Mirko

I'm running to represent Kootenay-Monashee to ensure our communities have a strong voice in Victoria. After nine years of the same government, we're seeing less transparency and accountability as costs rise, our provincial economy stagnates, and access to public land is restricted. I want to ensure my kids can grow up and make a living here in the future, while seniors who built our communities can afford to stay and enjoy the quality of life they worked for.

BC is running enormous deficits and taking on more debt, and every additional dollar spent servicing that debt is a dollar that cannot go into healthcare, schools, roads or other services rural communities depend on. For forestry, mineral exploration, and more, we need to remove permitting delays while restoring investment certainty in this province. Doing so brings in revenue to help strengthen rural services, so residents are not disadvantaged by where they live. Rural students deserve access to good teachers, trades and skills training, and educational opportunities without always having to leave their community or travel long distances. On power generation, I want BC producing more energy, and places like Sandon show the problem with a system where a small local hydro producer can generate clean power but struggle to get a workable agreement to sell it.

I am dismayed at the current government's lack of transparency on land-use issues in the province; from secret deals to road closures and access restrictions without public engagement, including here in the Kootenays, like at Rady Creek or the Columbia and Western Rail Trail. I support more open engagement with representative associations, communities and impacted groups when major changes to land and governance in BC are undertaken.

I spent most of my career working for organizations with a public protection mandate. I took what I learned to found and lead Public Land Use Society, a non-profit focused on transparency and accountability in land-use decisions in BC. I've built coalitions, developed policy positions, worked with media and brought together people with very different perspectives around shared concerns. I would bring that combination of experience to the role of MLA for Kootenay-Monashee.

I would show up, actively engage and solicit feedback, and listen directly to people. But that's only part of it. The other step is actually bringing those local concerns back to Victoria. I have a track record of advocating for the public and interest groups throughout BC, and would continue to do so for Kootenay-Monashee.

Janice Elaine Robinson

June 29, 1940 – October 3, 2026

Janice "Elaine" Robinson, age 86, passed away peacefully on Saturday, October 3, 2026 at Vernon Jubilee Hospital. She was born on June 29, 1940 in Nelson Hospital to Ken and Connie Bowles.

Elaine was the oldest of eight girls. Her seven sisters were Maureen Settle, (late) Keri Lochhead, Sandra Stunzi, Jennifer Gavelin, Valerie Larsen, Sylvia Hamilton and Candy Gagnon.

She had six children, Deenie Ottenbreit, Debbie Robinson, (late) Kenneth Seafoot, Brenda Blanchette, Clayton Seafoot and Beth Robinson.

Elaine was a loving sister, mother, grandmother and great grandmother, as well as a caring friend to many. She loved her motorhome, and from early spring until late fall she drove it to whatever destination called her. Spending time with her family and friends was her everything. She was a well-known seamstress, knitter and loved crocheting for family and friends. She loved country music and there was always a tune playing. In Lumby she enjoyed going to the Legion as well as the Old Pensioners Hall to play cards and whatever else was going on.

For more information and to leave a message of condolence, please see the Thompson Funeral Service website at https://www.thompsonfs.ca.

SD 8 Oct. 13 board meeting continued

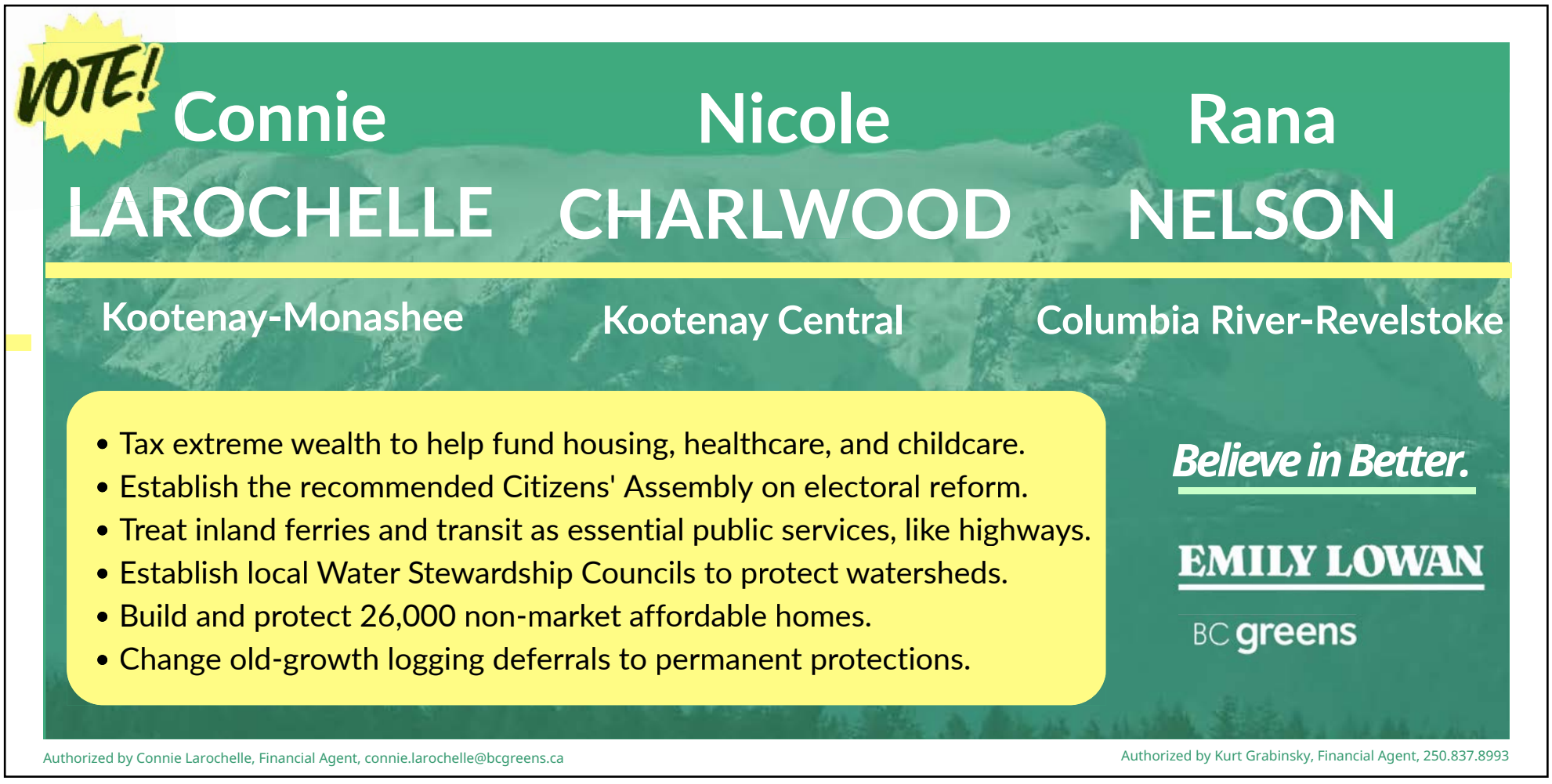
continued from page 9

with students baking around 300 cookies to sell. The school raised over $450 and collectively ran 400 km, with the longest run by a student being eight kilometres.

The volleyball season is very active, with multiple teams and tournaments. On October 9-10, the senior girls team travelled to UBC Okanagan for a tournament where 32 other teams attended. Many clubs are up and running, including drama club, chess club, green team, Pride club, and juggling club.

Graduating students are beginning work on post-secondary and scholarship applications, and an annual overnight trip to Kelowna and Kamloops is planned to tour local post-secondary schools.

The next meeting of the SD 8 board is November 10, 2026.



Kaslo Fire Department invites new members

submitted by the Kaslo Fire Department

It has been a big year for the Kaslo Fire Department! We are building our capabilities towards the Interior Operations service level, and are proud to see several of our members achieve professional firefighter qualifications. The Lardeau Valley First Responder service is also up and running now, serving the communities at the north end of Kootenay Lake with front-line medical response. The commitment of our members to training and professional development strengthens our communities, providing a high level of service when you need us most.

But we need more members! We are at a critical point and would love to see four to six new faces join the team for our next training cohort this fall. We are looking for community-minded people who are interested in learning new skills, working as part of a team, and helping their neighbours. No experience necessary! We provide all training and equipment. You provide your time and commitment to help serve and protect Kaslo and area. You can do it!

Did you know? The Kaslo Fire Department is our first line of defence in the event of a wildfire. We provide medical assistance as licensed First Responders and a wide range of emergency response services. Our firefighters are also paid for all callouts and training time. Earn professional certifications to boost your career, build your self confidence, pride and friendships. It's also a lot of fun!

This Fire Prevention Week, we encourage everyone to take a moment to think about fire safety at home – and if you've ever thought about becoming a member of your local fire department, consider taking the next step and joining us. Visit www.kaslofire.ca/recruiting/ or email Deputy Chief Ian Dunlop at idunlop@rdck.bc.ca to get your journey started.

Kaslo Fire Department (L-R) Firefighter Kailen Coghlan, Firefighter Miranda Halliday, Firefighter Aiko Jackson, Deputy Chief Ian Dunlop, Chief Mick Skuce, Firefighter Maegan Wall, Firefighter Geoffery Halliday, Firefighter Chriss Peters, Lieutenant Nathan Woodcox, Lieutenant Kendrick Lawless, Firefighter Jesse Hanson. Missing: Captain Orion Cooper, Firefighter Marty Cyr.

An update from the Hills Fire Brigade

submitted by the Hills Fire Brigade

In recent years, Hills Fire Brigade has focused on acquiring training and equipment to deal with wildfires that may threaten the community. Funding for this has come largely through grants from Columbia Basin Trust with support also from the RDCK. The Hills Firehall/Community Hall also houses a fully-equipped pumper truck retired from the New Denver VFD and donated to Hills by the village. Hills Fire Brigade has no tax-based funding and is supported mainly by a percentage of proceeds from the annual Hills Garlic Festival. Members meet monthly in the winter and more often in other seasons. New members are always welcome.

Hills Fire Brigade (L-R): Heather Wurtele, Zeb McClure, Lou Lalonde, Phil Babakaif, Dylan Jones, Lawrence Schiavon, John Herrmann (retired), Richard Allin, Trevor Wurtele. Missing: Tyler Bradley, Mat Phillips, Gordie Jones, Ishi Jordan, Scott Allen, Blake Allen.

A heartfelt thank you to Kaslo firefighters and volunteers for their hard work and commitment to keep us safe
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THANK YOU TO ALL OUR FIREFIGHTERS!
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Congratulations and thank you to all the volunteer firefighters. Keep up the good work!
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Ainsworth Hot Springs Resort would like to thank the firefighters for all they do to keep us safe.
Ainsworth hot springs resort

Many thanks to all of the Volunteer Firefighters! We appreciate all that you do!
ROYAL LEPAGE
Selkirk Realty

Fauquier Volunteer Fire Department

Fauquier Volunteer Fire Department (L-R): Al Brown, Donovan Montgomery, Sylvia Montgomery, Bub Patience, Dave Snyder.

The Village of Silverton
would like to acknowledge the dedication of our local volunteer fire department for their continuing community spirit and efforts in protecting our municipality.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to the volunteer firefighters in our communities!
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On Behalf of The Village of New Denver
THANK YOU
NEW DENVER FIRE RESCUE VOLUNTEERS
For your ongoing service, commitment, bravery, and so much more. Your contributions are immeasurable and do not go unnoticed.

Burton Volunteer Fire Department

Burton Volunteer Fire Department (L-R): Katie Jones, Jerome Goodman, David Doncaster, Fire Chief Brian Harrop, D/C Rob Scott, Cory Hewko, Sheena Jackins, Chantal Hewko, Jason Grudzinski, Reed Grudzinski (future member), Dawn Grudzinski, D/C Chris Jackins, Andy McIlrath. Missing: Isabelle Bergeron, Kamini Stroyan, Derek Stroyan, Willy Garcia.

Edgewood Volunteer Fire Society

Edgewood Volunteer Fire Society (Front, L-R): Kit Roebuck, Jenifer Irmen, Floyd Webber, Bill Dummett, Lois Wood. (Rear, L-R): James Rose, Lucien Michaud, Kel Kabotoff, Shameen Prentice, Dave Herdman, Wes Boyne, Harry Tensen, Damian Fenton, Lance Ulmer, Cory Jones, Lorne Haggart, Darcy Rose. Missing: Karen Dummett (treasurer), Debra Peon (secretary), Ben Bontron, Lisle Edwards, Andy Holmberg, Dooley Pringle, Joe Tetro, Blair Volanski, Owen Mullins, Kurtis Hopp, Jim McFarlane.

Slocan Fire Department

Slocan Fire Department (L-R): Cliff Froehlich, Rick Bergmann, Sage Fouquette, Andrea Patz, Jerry Harrison, Devin Lindsay, Melissa Garnier, Cody Garnier, Naama Amramzon, Brent Oversby.

Winlaw Fire Department

Winlaw Fire Department. Front row (L-R): Lou, Sarah, Ryan, Sean, Steph, Jason, Mark.
Back row (L-R): Em, Yohann, Jon, Sid, Syd, Brennan, Kevin, Neil. Missing: Cory, Nik, Sierra, Evan, Reyna.

New Denver & Area Fire Department

New Denver & Area Volunteer Fire Department (L-R): Doug Fischer (Deputy Chief), Robby James, Bree Lillies, Kaitlyn Hall, Andrea Savill, Derek Hicks (Chief), Patrick Simpson. Missing: Leonard Casley (Training Officer), Alvie Bouillet, Jordan Deakoff, Calvin Reitmeier, Timothy Eden, Richard Harwood, Clinton Casley, Jonas Hrebeniuk, Roy Duncan (Captain), Mercedes Hicks (Captain), Tyler Paynton, Brad Logan.

Passmore Fire Department Medical First Responders

submitted by Passmore Fire Department

This photo of the Passmore Medical First Responder team was taken during one of our recent training sessions, where our team members gathered to practise and strengthen the skills needed to respond to medical emergencies in our community.

Our First Responders are dedicated volunteers who train regularly to provide timely, compassionate emergency medical care to residents and visitors throughout our local response area.

According to their Facebook page, the Passmore Fire Department provides emergency response for structure fire, interface fire, motor vehicle incidents, swift water rescue, evacuation, and Medical First Responders calls.

Passmore Fire Department Medical First Responders: Back row (L-R): Kim Daley, Mark Van-Giessel, Nicole Miller, Phil MacDonald, Oliver Clovis, Alex Bayoff. Front row (L-R): Nina Hilburn, Eddie Seth, Wanda Zbeetnoff, Bradley Kinakin, Julie Winter, Cole Clark, Chantal Knight
Missing: Corrina Cuthbert, Sebastian Venema.

Nakusp Fire Rescue

Nakusp Fire Rescue (L-R): Lee Orr, Tom Zeleznik, Captain Richard Caan, Michael Le Couteur, Melissa Rode, Terry Warren, Daniel Abraham, Sean Johnson, Bri McQuair, Keara Sheppard, Kevin Starratt, Keith Green-Half, Captain Craig Kiyono, Craig Courchesne, Lieutenant Taylor Cooke, Operations Chief Reg Gustafson, Training Offer Scott Baker, Deputy Chief James Peterson, TJ Boast, Andrew Groat, Chief Wade Forster. Missing: Captain Greg Bobicki, Lieutenant Art Olson, Captain Shawn Noury.

SLOCAN VALLEY
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Thanks to our local volunteer firefighters for their dedication and commitment

Thank you all firefighters for the great job that you do.
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We wish to thank the members of our local volunteer fire departments!
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The Nakusp & District Chamber of Commerce: Working for you!

submitted by the Nakusp & District Chamber of Commerce

The Nakusp & District Chamber of Commerce continues to play an important role in supporting local businesses, strengthening community connections, and helping our region thrive. With 144 active members, the Chamber is proud to represent a diverse business community committed to building a vibrant and sustainable local economy.

Over the past year, the Chamber has focused on creating more opportunities for collaboration, networking, and business development. Working alongside WorkBC and the Nakusp and Area Development Board, the Chamber has helped bring local businesses and community partners together through a variety of events and initiatives.

Highlights include the Trades and Construction event, opportunities for contractors to connect and share ideas, business meet-and-greets, and other activities designed to encourage partnerships and strengthen relationships within our business community. These events help create valuable connections, promote local expertise, and support the growth and success of businesses throughout the Nakusp and Arrow Lakes region.

The Chamber continues to advocate for local businesses, encourage community involvement, and find ways to support its members. Whether you are an established business owner, a new entrepreneur, or looking to connect with other professionals, the Chamber is here to help.

Supporting local businesses starts with all of us. Shop local! Choosing local businesses keeps money circulating in our community, supports local jobs, and helps maintain the services and amenities that make our region such a wonderful place to live, work, and visit.

The Chamber also operates the Nakusp Visitor Centre year-round, welcoming visitors and providing information about local attractions, accommodations, businesses, and activities. The Chamber office is located at the Nakusp Visitor Centre, making it a central point of contact for both local businesses and visitors. During the summer, the Visitor Centre operates full-time hours, with reduced hours during the winter season. Winter hours are Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, from 9 am to 4 pm.

Want to learn more about how the Chamber can support your business or help you get involved? We would love to hear from you! Together, we can build a stronger local business community!

Contact the Nakusp Chamber at chamber@nakusparrowlakes.com or 250-265-4234.

The **Nakusp & District Chamber of Commerce** is a non-profit organization that maintains a role of leadership and advocacy in the Nakusp and District business community.

Our mission is to **promote and support economic development and tourism** in partnership with community stakeholders. We believe that **by working together, we can create a thriving local economy that benefits everyone**.

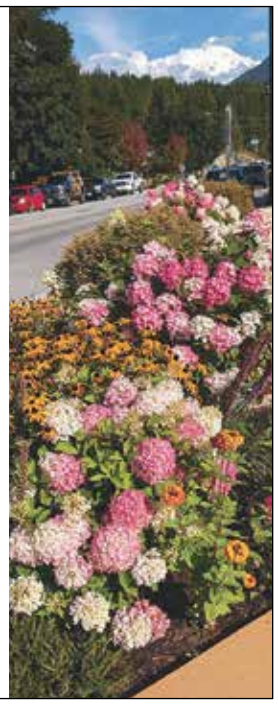
Our team is dedicated to providing resources and support to help local businesses grow and succeed.

Join us in our mission to build a stronger community.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE • NAKUSP AND DISTRICT • VALLEY OF HOT SPRINGS

For information contact us at:

chamber@nakusparrowlakes.com or call 250-265-4234



Kaslo Chamber supports local business, builds community

submitted by Kaslo & Area Chamber of Commerce

As we celebrate Small Business Month, we're taking the opportunity to reflect on another year of supporting local businesses, bringing people together and helping keep our community vibrant.

While we're perhaps best known for organizing some of Kaslo's favourite community traditions, much of our work happens throughout the year, finding ways to connect businesses, provide resources and make doing business in our small community a little easier.

One of our new initiatives this year was our first Job Fair, held in April at J.V. Humphries School. Nine local businesses participated, connecting with students and community members to share employment opportunities and introduce young people to careers available close to home. Positive feedback from participating businesses has encouraged us to consider making the Job Fair an annual event.

We also hosted two informal Chamber socials, providing opportunities for local business owners and representatives to get together, share ideas and build connections. Recognizing the importance of access to training in a rural community, we continue to organize first aid courses, helping fill a gap left when Selkirk College closed. This year's October course is fully booked, demonstrating the ongoing need for accessible training close to home.

Another important way we support local businesses is through our Chamber Cash program. By encouraging residents and organizations to give Chamber Cash as gifts, the program helps keep thousands of dollars circulating within our local economy. It's a simple but effective way to support participating businesses while giving recipients the opportunity to shop locally.

Of course, our long-standing community events remain an important part of what we do. Kaslo May Days once again brought residents and visitors together for a weekend of activities, entertainment and celebration. These events contribute to the character of our community while bringing customers to local shops, restaurants and other businesses.

We also organized an All Candidates Forum ahead of October's municipal election, giving residents an opportunity to hear from candidates and learn more about their priorities.

Looking ahead, the popular Great Gift Give-Away and Light Up celebrations will return as the holiday season approaches, encouraging residents to shop locally and celebrate the season together.

Throughout the year, we've continued welcoming new members and supporting our existing membership. Whether through community events, business connections, training opportunities or advocacy, our goal remains the same: to help make doing business in Kaslo and the surrounding area a little easier.

As Small Business Month reminds us, our local businesses do much more than provide goods and services. They create jobs, support community organizations and contribute to the character of the place we call home. Supporting them helps keep our entire community strong.

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FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED

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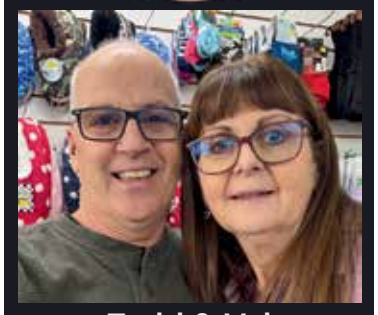
SINCE 1947



Todd & Val
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New and upcoming for the Slocan Valley Chamber

submitted by the Slocan Valley Chamber of Commerce

The Slocan Valley Chamber of Commerce continues to build momentum, with new initiatives and opportunities designed to strengthen our local business community, encourage collaboration, and support a thriving regional economy. As the Chamber looks ahead to 2027, its focus remains on connecting businesses, increasing community engagement, and finding new ways to support local economic growth.

One of the Chamber's newest initiatives is Slocan Silver, a local voucher program designed to encourage residents to shop locally and support participating businesses. By keeping more spending within our communities, the program helps showcase the diverse products and services available throughout the Slocan Valley while encouraging residents to invest in the local economy. Participating member businesses can join the program at no cost and receive full-value reimbursement for redeemed vouchers within 15 days. Slocan Silver reflects the Chamber's ongoing commitment to supporting local businesses and strengthening the connections between businesses and the communities they serve.

The Chamber has also visibly increased its efforts to connect with the community by attending local events. From the July 1st Outdoor Market in Silverton to Garlic Fest and Merchants' Night, these opportunities allow the Chamber to meet residents, connect with local business owners, share information about its programs, and hear directly from the community. Building these relationships is important to ensuring the Chamber's work reflects the needs and interests of the people and businesses it represents.

Looking ahead, one of the Chamber's biggest upcoming projects is Slocan Valley Business Connect, taking place Saturday, March 20, 2027. This business event will bring together businesses, entrepreneurs, organizations, and community partners for a day focused on connection, learning, and collaboration. Attendees will have opportunities to exchange ideas, showcase local businesses, and build relationships that support future growth. Supported by the Slocan Valley Economic Development Partnership and funded by ETSI-BC, Business Connect aims to foster a stronger, more connected business community across the region. Further details about programming and participation will be shared in the coming months.

The Chamber is also looking forward to bringing back its Business of the Year Award, recognizing a local business that makes a meaningful contribution to the Slocan Valley through its service, innovation, community involvement, or dedication to its customers. The award is an opportunity to celebrate the businesses that help make our communities such special places to live, work, and visit. More information about nominations and the upcoming award will be announced as plans take shape.

As the Chamber looks toward the year ahead, collaboration remains at the heart of its work. Whether by participating in Slocan Silver, attending Business Connect, nominating a deserving business, becoming a member, or sharing ideas for future initiatives, there are many ways to get involved.

For more information about Chamber membership, current programs, and upcoming events, visit www.slocanvalleychamber.com or follow the Slocan Valley Chamber of Commerce on Facebook and Instagram.

Slocan Valley Economic Development update

submitted by Ron LeBlanc, Slocan Valley Economic Development Coordinator

You may have noticed some bright new lights in our business community, sprinkled throughout the Valley, and we'd like to welcome them all and wish them much success.

The Slocan Valley Chamber of Commerce has also got some enthusiastic new board members and is stepping up to be more of a voice for our business community.

October's dual local and provincial elections are giving residents lots to think and talk about. There will be some new faces in local government, bringing new perspectives, but it does take time for them to get up to speed. Small business owners can help by discussing challenges with them and by providing constructive feedback and ideas. Understanding what topics are within the local government's scope of responsibility and power to influence or change is an important first step.

Small business owners in the Slocan Valley continue to be battered by challenges and uncertainty this year. Despite some rough seas, it may provide some comfort to know there is support out there, from within our community and through regional partners like Community Futures, Basin Business Advisors, Columbia Basin Trust and others.

Work continues for the Slocan Valley Economic Development Partnership (with representation from RDCK Area H and the Villages of Silverton and Slocan; the Village of New Denver is currently taking a hiatus from SVEDP) and Community Futures Central Kootenay to support small businesses and create opportunity here in the Slocan Valley.

Over the past year the Slocan Valley partnership was kept busy by helping develop the regional film sector, updating our local food guide, strengthening agri-food resilience with our neighbours in Nakusp, supporting holiday artisan markets, updating our community website, helping shape Selkirk College's regional cannabis innovation project, emergency economic resiliency planning support, and local music industry sponsorship.

Moving forward, we are digging into the Valley's food and beverage industry to learn more about its challenges and opportunities, including ways to improve amenities for visitors and residents. Valley food service entrepreneurs are showing up in creative new ways, through food trucks, pop-up cafes and by expanding their offerings.

Non-profit Community Futures Central Kootenay supports Slocan Valley businesses through its Small Business Training, Business Loans, Start Up Business Advisor, Export Navigator and Disaster Preparedness & Recovery programs.

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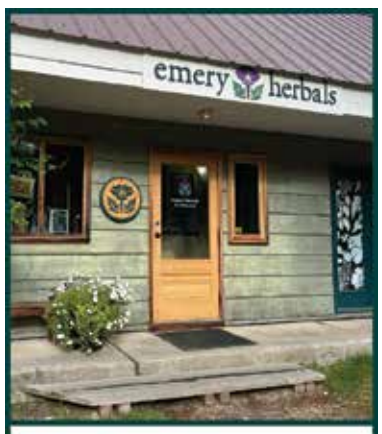

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Staged reading features new work by local playwright

submitted by Slocan Lake Arts Council

Nelson-based playwright Kelly Rebar will be presenting her new play *Chick and Dove, True Love* in a staged reading at the Silverton Gallery on November 15 at 2 pm.

The reading, performed by local theatre artist and former university drama instructor Val Campbell, will be an opportunity for Rebar to hear her new work and gauge audience response. This will be the second opportunity for Rebar to receive feedback on the play.

"This is part of the playwright's process. I had great feedback from the first readings and now it will be good to have the audience energy – to get the sense of it," says Rebar.

Staged readings, also known as reader's theatre, have a long-standing tradition in theatre. Unlike full-blown theatre presentations, which often take months of preparation, staged readings are much simpler to present. Campbell says this is a good forum for playwrights who are in the process of finalizing their stories. "It's good for the writer to actually hear the lines and to have the audience there. It's critical to the process."

Rebar, originally from Alberta, was very involved in the emergence of theatre in western Canada in the 1980s and '90s. She is best known for the play and film *Bordertown Café*, which is set in a café on the Canadian side of the Alberta/Montana border. This comedy-drama is about a family whose members are torn between their unrealized goals and dreams, and family obligations. She has written numerous plays which are often set in western Canada in small prairie towns. Rebar has also written for Canadian television series including *Jake and the Kid, Wind at My Back* and the film adaptation of *Lives of Girls and Women*.

In the one-act, one-person show *Chick and Dove, True Love*, the female artist tells the multi-generational story of a family and its connections. It explores the situations faced by women from the early 1940s through to recent years and the people who flow through each other's lives over that time.

Admission will be by donation, on a sliding scale from $10-$20. For more information visit slocanlakeartscouncil.ca.

PHOTO COURTESY: SLAC

Local theatre artist Val Campbell will perform a staged reading of Kelly Rebar's *Chick and Dove, True Love* at the Silverton Gallery on November 15.

StellerVista celebrates Credit Union Day with $50,000+ in grants

submitted by StellerVista Credit Union

StellerVista Credit Union is celebrating International Credit Union Day by investing in the people making a difference close to home. Nineteen non-profit community groups and initiatives across the Kootenay and Boundary regions have been awarded StellerImpact community grants ranging from $1,000 to $5,000, totalling more than $50,000.

"Credit Union Day is a great reminder of why the co-operative way of banking matters," says Jody Burk, CEO of StellerVista Credit Union. "We're owned by our members, not outside shareholders, so the decisions we make and the money we earn stay right here, working for the people and places we call home. There's no better way to celebrate the day than by investing back into our communities."

International Credit Union Day has been celebrated around the world on the third Thursday of October since 1948. The day recognizes what sets credit unions apart: they are owned by the members they serve, and concern for community is one of the seven co-operative principles they are built on.

The StellerImpact grant program, now in its fourth year, supports community-focused projects in the areas served by StellerVista Credit Union, including Cranbrook, Castlegar, Fernie, Sparwood, Elkford, the Slocan Valley, and the West Boundary.

"Every day, people and organizations in our communities are rolling up their sleeves to create positive change," says Burk. "As a credit union, it's part of who we are to stand beside them, and investing in their efforts is one way we help our region thrive. It's inspiring to see the variety and creativity of the projects being led by local groups. In the hands of dedicated volunteers, these grants go a long way, and their impact is felt in our communities long after the cheques are handed out."

The program accepts applications from July to September each year and is designed to fund impactful projects taking place in the Kootenay and Boundary regions of BC. Organizations interested in the next round of StellerImpact grants can apply starting in July 2027.

More information about the grants awarded will be shared online as the projects get going.

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The Slocan Lake Golf Club would like to thank everyone for an outstanding season this year. Whether it's on the course or in the Clubhouse restaurant, your support is truly appreciated.

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Many thanks expressed at this council's last meeting: Slocan council, October 13

by Jan McMurray

The meeting began with opening remarks from CAO Michelle Gordon, thanking the mayor and council members "for your commitment, the perspective you brought to the table and for the trust you placed in staff."

She recognized each member of council and their contributions, and then spoke at length in honour of the mayor.

"Thank you for your leadership, your vision and your extraordinary commitment to Slocan," she said. "It's been a privilege to work alongside you and the legacy of your service will be felt in the community for several years."

Gordon presented Mayor Jessica Lunn with a Legacy Award to recognize her 18 years of service on council – six as councillor and 12 as mayor. The award was similar to the one Mayor Lunn presented to CAO Gordon, Councillor Madeleine Perriere and Public Works Supervisor Lachlan McGreal at Slocan's 125th anniversary celebration.

Gordon's speech inspired a standing ovation from council.

Mayor Lunn thanked the CAO and council. "My heart is so full of love," she said. "I'm so excited for the next group. This community is precious – I always describe us as 'a little diamond in the rough.' The heart of this community is our people."

Lunn advised the new council to work together, listen to each other, and bring conversations to the council meetings rather than having "meetings outside meetings."

During public participation, residents thanked mayor and council for their public service.

"It's been an honour and a pleasure. It's a labour of love," Mayor Lunn said.

CAO Gordon said that early in the new term, a meeting will be scheduled between this current council and the new council to bring them up to speed on projects and plans.

Financial matters

CFO Nathan Russ gave the report for July-September.

"Overall, the Village remains in a sound financial position at the end of the third quarter," he concludes in his written report.

Capital spending at September 30 sat at $206,000. The largest project was the Springer Creek Bridge repair and erosion work, coming in at $137,600, with the rest spent on Harold Street revitalization, waterfront breakwater and dock repairs, and some small projects.

Russ also presented a preliminary draft operating budget for 2027. The $978,517 budget would require an 8.5% tax rate increase, or about $90 for the average homeowner.

Brownfield Revitalization funding

Council directed staff to prepare an application to the Columbia Basin Trust's Brownfield Revitalization Program for the old mill site. Mayor Lunn suggested staff connect with the Village's environmental consultant, who is very knowledgeable about the site, when working on the application. The program offers up to $500,000, with an application deadline of December 1.

More logging plans near Slocan

A letter from Interfor notifies the Village of its planned cutblocks and road development located upstream of two Village water licences on Springer Creek, and invites input until December 8 at 4 pm via email (Kootenay.referral@interfor.com). The development is in the Dayton Creek and Specultor Creek areas, with the New Ottawa Forest Service Road as the main access. The letter says the work is scheduled for "the near future."

Public Works report highlights water issues

The Public Works report included a section on the water plant and distribution system. A leak at Hume and Arlington, caused by substandard materials, was repaired on October 2. A similar repair was done in the same block in August, and ongoing failures are expected, the report says. During the repair work, unmapped and unused water service was discovered and disconnected. The report says that "multiple 'dead leg' service lines have been discovered in the 1100 block of Hume."

Councillor Madeleine Perriere said she had one last request of Public Works before she leaves council, although she had asked about it before – to address the drainage issue in front of 1004 Hume Street.

Legion fence request

The Legion would like to install a new fence around the rear section of the property, and asked council if the Village would pay for the materials. After a site visit, Public Works determined that further investigation is required before the fence installation is approved. The main issue is access, particularly via the laneway.

Public Works noted that the lane opening is blocked by a hydro pole in the Delany right-of-way. Councillor Ezra Buller said he has observed several utility poles blocking lanes in town. Council directed staff to do an inventory of all such utility poles.

Campground Operations Manual

Council approved a Springer Creek RV Park & Campground Operational Procedures Manual, designed to help future contractors operate the campground and the Tourist Information Booth. The 13-page document is a comprehensive operating guide for campground contractors.

Fitness Centre fees revised

Staff presented a draft Fees & Charges Amendment Bylaw, to revise Fitness Centre fees. The amendment reinstates three-month, six-month and yearly passes, and sets fees for a one-month pass at $25, a three-month pass at $65, a six-month pass at $125 and a yearly pass at $240. The amendment bylaw was read three times.

Tree Management Policy

The Boulevard Tree Management Policy was approved. The purpose of the policy is to establish a consistent process for reviewing requests to remove trees on Village-owned property and municipal rights-of-way. CAO Gordon said staff has been following this process, but it has never been formalized as a policy before now.

"The proposed policy confirms Village ownership and authority, prioritizes preservation, and limits removal to trees that are dead, dying, structurally hazardous, pose an ongoing public safety risk that cannot reasonably be mitigated, or conflict unavoidably with essential municipal infrastructure," states CAO Gordon in her report on the policy.

Baseball diamond proposal

Resident Joel Pelletier wrote with concerns about the proposed full-sized baseball diamond at Expo Field. Mayor Lunn said the letter flags that there will need to be more discussion on the proposal by user groups.

IH missing in action

Council received a copy of correspondence to Interior Health from the Slocan Community Health Care Auxiliary Society, which has raised funds to put towards the purchase of an ultrasound for the health centre in New Denver. It was agreed that the society would provide Interior Health with $16,000, and IH would buy the equipment. Society President Dawn Lindstein says she has not been able to reach her IH contact on this, and asks for a new contact person.

Mayor Lunn said she would reach out to RDCK CAO Stuart Horn to ask if he would follow up with IH. Council also directed staff to write a letter of support for the society's efforts.

Emergency Preparedness funding application

The Regional District of Central Kootenay is preparing a funding application for a Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis and Risk Assessment, as required under the Emergency Disaster Management Act. The RDCK invited Slocan and other municipalities in the region to participate as partners in the application. Council agreed to participate.

The project is expected to result in findings relevant to each participating municipality, as well as a broader, regional assessment.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

KOHAN FALL RAFFLE DRAW: The draw of the Kohan Reflection Garden Society's Fall Raffle on September 18th had three lucky winners: Glen Palmer (a year's subscription to *Fine Gardening* magazine), Sean Butler (a gift basket of gardeners' tools) and Ben Wilkowski (the coveted 24-hour garden work party). Congratulations all!

BUDDY'S PIZZA, KASLO: Award-winning, hand-stretched artisan pizza. 250-353-2282.

FOREVER GREEN. Find out all about the Slocan Lake GREEN BURIAL SOCIETY online: http://greenburialnewdenver.ca/. Also on FB. Lifetime memberships only $20. e-transfer to slgreenburialsociety@gmail.com with contact info, or mail $20 cheque to SLGBS, Box 69, New Denver, V0G 1S0.

COMING EVENTS

VALHALLA WILDERNESS PROGRAM Bottle Drive – Sunday, November 8, 2025 from 9am-noon. Pick-up from Slocan Park to Slocan City. Call ahead for large pick-ups @ 250-355-2212. Thank you for your support.

KOHAN AUTUMN CLEAN UP: The dates for this year's Kohan Reflection Garden two-day Autumn Clean-up are Oct. 31 and Nov. 1. From 9 am-4 pm volunteers drop in to help rake leaves, trim perennials and generally put the Garden to bed for the winter. Everyone is invited to lend a hand and enjoy a free, hot soup lunch and door prizes.

THE METAL ARTS GUILD of Slocan Valley is pleased to invite members and the public to a free workshop: Chain Making Workshop, Sunday Oct. 25, 12-3 pm at the Slocan Valley Threads Guild, 7112 Perrys Back Road, Winlaw. Limited space, register atmagslovalley@gmail.com.

TEXAS HOLD'EM TOURNAMENT Saturday Nov. 7 at the Slocan Valley Legion Hall, 502 Harold St. Slocan, starting at 6:30pm sharp. $40 Buy-in. Advance tickets must be reserved by email at 276svl.president@gmail.com or phone 250-355-2376 or buy at the Legion on Friday or Sunday evenings. We look forward to seeing you!

KASLO GOLF CLUB AGM – Nov 1 at 1 pm at the Kaslo Golf Clubhouse. Everyone welcome.

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Reviewing conditions in the South Beach purchase and sale agreement: Kaslo council, October 13

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

As the February deadline inches closer, council is seeking better processes for how the Village will review the documents submitted to fulfill the conditions in the South Beach Purchase and Sale Agreement (PSA).

The proponent has until February 28, 2027 to submit the documents required to fulfill the conditions precedent in the PSA.

One of the Village's conditions is that the proponent must submit a land survey identifying the present natural boundaries of Kootenay Lake and the Kaslo River.

Councillor Bird brought the matter to attention after council received a letter from resident Anne Malik, who highlighted a land survey submitted by the proponent in 2023.

The survey was completed on June 6, 2017 and sets the high-water mark at 533.1 metres. However, Malik notes that high-water levels exceeding the 2017 survey line have been registered in many years prior to 2017, and again in 2018, 2020, and 2022.

In fact, Malik also notes that according to the International Kootenay Lake Board of Control's annual report, the maximum water level rose to 533.743 metres on June 9, 2017 – three days after the field survey.

"Choosing a year in which the Kootenay Lake water levels were relatively low as the basis upon which to determine the boundaries of the developer's property feels like the developer found a loophole that would at once satisfy the condition mentioned above, but also increase the land area in which he could develop," said Councillor Bird in her staff report.

Councillor Bird didn't want the 2017 survey to count as fulfillment of the condition in the PSA. Part of her intent with the motion, said Bird, was also to establish how and when a document submitted by the proponent would meet council's satisfaction and fulfill a condition.

Mayor Suzan Hewat noted that the proponent hasn't yet submitted any documents formally for the PSA; the 2023 land survey may not be a final document.

CAO Robert Baker said that one reason the land survey condition exists in the PSA is that when Village staff visited the South Beach site, they noted that the vegetation and debris of the natural boundary didn't appear to match the boundary depicted in the 2017 survey.

Council agreed that the process by which the conditions will be reviewed by council has not been defined.

Councillor Matthew Brown said it would be prudent to let the new council determine the process, since those members will be the ones making the final decisions. The matter will come to the new council for consideration on November 24.

Councillor Bird's motion was passed: that the land survey submitted by the proponent in 2023 not be considered as fulfillment of the conditions precedent.

Dog attack

The Village's Dog Control Bylaw will be brought forward during the new council's strategic priorities session.

The decision was spurred by a letter Councillor Brown received from Greg McRae, whose cat needed to be put down after it was attacked by neighbouring dogs.

Councillor Brown received prior correspondence from the resident regarding the same dogs.

"These dogs continue to pose a threat to us and our neighbours," said McRae in his most recent letter. "Does it have to be a kid walking by before council takes the necessary steps? What does it take to consider a dog to be vicious?"

When the matter came to the Village previously, CAO Baker said staff investigated, inquired with both McRae and the dogs' owner, and obtained legal counsel, who said that no provincial or Village legislature had been violated. The Village' Dog Control Bylaw has provisions for vicious dogs, but it doesn't apply in the case that a cat is attacked within a dog's yard, said Baker.

Councillor Bird noted that there have been other complaints about these dogs that have not been formally brought to the Village. If others come forward, perhaps it could be addressed.

In the meantime, the new council will review the Dog Control Bylaw during its strategic priorities session, to decide if it's time for a rewrite.

Air quality monitoring

Village staff will develop a detailed proposal for a two-year air quality monitoring pilot using one outdoor PM2.5 sensor.

Resident Bill Wells presented the idea to the Village in September, describing the citizen science website, Purple Air, that presents air quality readings detected by sensors across the world.

The Village doesn't currently provide air-quality monitoring, and therefore doesn't have bylaws or policies to govern it. It's not just a matter of purchasing the equipment, said CAO Baker in his staff report; it also requires council to define the purpose and scope, assign responsibility, establish operating and communication practices, and provide ongoing funding.

After looking into the logistics, staff recommended that the matter be referred to the RDCK, which has the regional knowledge and resources to better assess whether additional monitoring would add value, could fit within an existing program or service, or if other municipalities should be offered a chance to participate.

Councillor Brown worried that referring the matter to the RDCK could mean a two-year wait before the Village sees any action. One monitor in Kaslo seems relatively low cost and could help the health of residents, he said.

Council directed staff to prepare a plan for bringing a sensor to Kaslo.

The Village will also refer the matter to the RDCK's North Kootenay Lake Service Committee – a regional body that deals with issues related to Kaslo and Area D.

Tax exemptions for Community Services, Innovation Centre

Council gave third reading to amendments to the permissive tax exemption bylaw.

The amendments add a 100% exemption for Kaslo Community Services Society's new building at 330 B Avenue, and an 80% exemption for the Kootenay Lake Innovation Centre Society for rooms 108 and 108a at the Kemball Memorial Centre.

The estimated municipal tax total for both exemptions in 2027 is $3,232.53.

The exemptions will apply through to 2030.

BCWS license of occupation

BC Wildfire Service was granted a License of Occupation to use a small portion of Village-owned land for fuel storage. The license ends March 31, 2031.

Since the proposed use supports local wildfire preparedness and emergency response, the Village is charging nominal rent of $1.00 for the full term.

BCWS's existing license for the site expired in September.

Kaslo racquet club

The Village amended its lease with the Kaslo Racquet Club to reduce the minimum commercial general liability (CGL) insurance to $2 million (previously $3 million).

The racquet club leases the municipally-owned racquet court from the Village. The lease was signed on December 13, 2024. The club requested the change.

Staff reviewed the Municipal Insurance Association of BC's (MIABC) recommended minimum insurance requirements. Local governments use the MIABC's guidelines to determine appropriate insurance limits based on their risk tolerance.

MIABC recommends $2 million CGL insurance for minimal/low risk recreational activities, $3 million for medium risk, and $5 million for high risk.

Since tennis and pickleball are non-contact, relatively low-impact activities, council determined that $2 million CGL insurance is sufficient, provided the Village remains an additional insured, and the club maintains appropriate all-risk property insurance for its contents, equipment, and improvements.

Disaster risk reduction grant

The Village will participate as a sub-applicant in the RDCK's regional application to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) Foundations of Disaster Risk Reduction.

The grant provides 100% funding up to $500,000 for regional applications.

The funds would be used to update the regional Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA) and risk assessment. HRVAs provide a structured means of identifying hazards and vulnerabilities to support risk-based decisions in mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

The proposed project will generate Kaslo-specific findings while contributing to a coordinated regional assessment.

The funding is limited to climate-related hazards, so the RDCK will supplement the project with funding from the Local Government Climate Action Program (LGCAP) for an all-hazards approach.

The RDCK is also asking the Villages of Slocan and New Denver to participate in the regional application. Silverton, Salmo, and Yaqan Nukiy First Nation will have separate applications.

The RDCK previously applied to the provincial Disaster Resilience and Innovation Funding (DRIF) program for $995,000 to complete this work. However, the Province advised that there's currently no funding available and encouraged applicants to pursue other sources.

Service Canada

Service Canada offered two outreach programs in Kaslo in May and September, and used council chambers for the sessions.

Council approved a service agreement with Service Canada, which will pay a $132.64 rental fee per visit, for a total of $265.30 plus GST.

The agreement includes three one-year options for the future, with modest annual rate increases.

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New council officially declared: Silverton council, October 14

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The new Silverton council was officially declared on September 21.

All members were elected by acclamation and will consist of incumbents Mayor Tanya Gordon and Councillor Don Broughton, and first-time Councillors Troy Bennett-McCrea, Arlen Duquette, and Dustin Hill.

The inaugural meeting of the new Silverton council will be on Monday, November 2. New council members will complete their required oaths of office at or prior to the inaugural meeting.

The council will serve its term from 2026 to 2030.

Councillor Main's last meeting

It was Councillor Leah Main's last regular meeting.

Main has been a councillor since 2009. She was the Village's RDCK representative from 2011 to early 2026, and served on the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) for ten years.

"I have loved every minute of it and I'm going to miss it terribly, but it's time for me to move on and hand the reins over to some younger folks who have different ideas," said Councillor Main. "I'm really looking forward to seeing how the new council develops and takes on all of these challenges… I think I'm leaving Silverton in a really good place, and thank you to everyone for the support you've given me."

Accessible recreation grant for the Arena

The Village will apply for the Columbia Basin Trust Accessible Recreation Planning Grant for up to $10,000 for planning work to improve the Silverton Arena & Curling Club.

The grant supports projects that improve access to recreation and indoor physical activity opportunities for people with diverse abilities.

The Village would use the funds for planning, rather than capital construction. This could include a call for input from the community and hiring consultants, engineers, or architects to assist with design work – all with the goal of eventual improvements to the facility.

The Village and representatives from the Slocan Lake Arena Society and the Silverton Community Club have had preliminary discussions, and all parties are interested in collaborating on a long-term vision to revitalize the arena.

Fees for Gallery, Memorial Hall, extra tents and vehicles

Council gave third reading to an amended Fees and Charges Bylaw, which was then adopted during a special meeting on October 16.

The bylaw now includes rental fees for the Silverton Gallery and fees for additional tents and vehicles at the campground.

The amendments also update rental fees for the Memorial Hall. Fee increases reflect inflation, though the bylaw still maintains reduced rates for community user groups.

A full day Memorial Hall rental is now $200 (up from $150), and a half-day rental is $125 (previously $75). Kitchen rental rates are $75 (up from $50) and cleaning fees are $100 (previously $50 for half-day rentals and $100 for full-day rentals). Damage deposit fees are $150 (up from $100).

Now that the Village directly manages Silverton Gallery rentals, it was time to add the fees to the bylaw: $150 for full-day rentals; $75 for half-day; for community users, it's $100 for a full-day and $50 for a half-day; a $100 cleaning fee; and a $150 damage deposit.

Though the Village has been charging a $15 per night fee for additional vehicles and tents at the campground, it is now formalized in the bylaw.

Facility use policy

The Village adopted an updated Facility Use Policy.

The policy applies to the Memorial Hall, the Fire Hall, and now the Silverton Gallery. It establishes booking and damage deposit requirements, cancellation provisions, renter responsibilities, occupancy limits, and basic conditions for insurance, alcohol, fire safety, smoking, and open flames.

The update includes a new definition of 'Community User' – an organization or group that council has designated, by resolution, as eligible for a reduced rental rate.

The policy establishes criteria to consider when designating community users, such as community benefit, contribution to community life, local participation, use of event proceeds, and the reasonableness of using taxpayer dollars to subsidize the event. Organizations will no longer automatically qualify for a reduced rate based on charitable status alone.

Designated community users in the updated policy are Slocan Lake Arts Council, Valhalla Fine Arts Society, and Silverton Community Club. Council may add new community users at any time by resolution.

Canada Summer Jobs

The Village will submit a funding application to Canada Summer Jobs for one youth labourer position next summer.

Canada Summer Jobs is a federal program that offers a wage subsidy to employers for full-time positions for youth aged 15 to 30.

The Village would offer 35 hours of work per week at $20.40 per hour. The estimated subsidy would cover about 45% of gross wages, with the Village making up the remaining 55%, plus employer payroll costs, recruitment, grant administration, orientation, and supervision.

The youth employee usually mows parks and boulevards, and works as a labourer to help the public works crew with projects.

Arena occupancy

The Village and the Slocan Lake Arena Society have a new Occupancy Agreement for the municipally-owned Silverton Arena & Curling Club.

The new agreement replaces the old lease model from 2003 with one that more accurately reflects the current operational relationship between the Village and the society, and that recognizes the significant contributions made by society volunteers over the years.

The arena society will pay a monthly occupancy fee of $1,000 – or the approximate average winter hydro costs associated with operating the facility.

The society will continue to provide volunteer-led programming and operational support, while the Village will retain responsibility for capital asset maintenance and the long-term stewardship of the building.

The agreement is valid from November 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027.

continued on page 24

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Proposed Community Forest survey results published: New Denver council, October 13

by Jan McMurray

This was the last regular council meeting of this council's term. The inaugural meeting of the new council (2026-2030) will take place November 2 at 7 pm in council chambers.

Community Forest survey results

The results of the Community Forest survey are in. Council received a staff report summarizing the survey results at the in-camera portion of the September 8 council meeting, and directed staff to publish the report on the Village website. It can be found here: https://newdenver.ca/proposed-new-denver-community-forest/

The 11.2% response (66 responses out of 590 residents) is considered good, providing "a meaningful indication of community priorities, concerns and expectations," according to the staff report.

The survey shows support for the continued exploration of a Community Forest Agreement, and people want transparency and continued consultation. Residents who support continued exploration are most motivated by wildfire risk reduction, watershed protection, wildlife and habitat protection, and local involvement in forest management. Concerns included drinking water and watersheds, wildfire risk, timber harvesting methods, wildlife and habitat and governance/accountability.

"Opposition is numerically small but detailed and focused on governance, watershed protection, neighbouring jurisdictions, existing tenure holders, and the risk of community division," the report states.

Library Status Committee disbanded

The Library Status Committee was disbanded, marking an end to the pursuit of a public library service and a service agreement with the Nakusp Public Library.

In a report to council, CAO Cari Lynn Gawletz acknowledges the considerable work of the Library Status Committee, and says that establishing full public library service in New Denver is "legislatively complicated and cost prohibitive for the Village at this time."

Councillor Colin Moss said when the committee first began meeting three years ago, they started looking into how to share the costs of the library among Area H, Silverton and New Denver.

"The committee has decided the best way forward is to dissolve the committee and support the new society… Our work resulted in the Slocan Lake Community Library Society, and a much improved relationship with the Nakusp Public Library and provincial representatives… I think it's been a committee that's been well worthwhile."

Moss thanked all the volunteers and government representatives for their work on library status for New Denver.

Council agreed to maintain an appointee on the Slocan Lake Community Library Society board.

Nikkei Centre improvements

Council received two reports from Public Works about major improvements the crew made at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre in the spring. They repaired the office building and replaced the siding on the south side of the Kyowakai Hall.

The office building had "sinking floors, doors that wouldn't close and the odour of rotting wood," the report says, and the siding on the hall was original, and was brittle and torn.

The repairs were quite involved, as both projects unearthed water damage and rotten wood.

On the siding project, the crew used the traditional wood-burning technique known as Yakusugi to preserve the new wood that was used for the shutters and trim on the hall wall.

Both reports conclude saying that the projects were "extremely rewarding" to Public Works staff.

Councillor Moss said the funding for the projects came from the more than $1 million grant from the Japanese Canadian Legacies Society, which he said was obtained "largely due to the work of past employee Teresa Tremaine and Mayor Casley."

The Public Works reports will be posted on the Village website.

UBCM report

Mayor Casley reported that the ability to attend UBCM virtually this year was helpful. He said he met with Ministry staff to speak about the New Denver-Silverton trail and Idaho Peak Road. "Fingers crossed Idaho Peak access will be in the new year," he said.

Emergency Preparedness grant applications

Council agreed to participate in two funding applications led by the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK). Both applications are to the UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund. One is for a Regional Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis and risk assessment, which is required of local authorities under the Emergency and Disaster Management Act. The other is to improve Emergency Support Services capacity across the region.

Councillor Moss commented that he had been hearing that the Village does not cooperate with the RDCK, and these two funding applications show that this is not true.

Karelian bear dogs

A letter from resident Anne Champagne suggests that council look into using Karelian bear dogs to chase bears out of town. Councillor John Fyke said his "research assistant," Colleen Williams, had been in touch with J. Pedersen of the Wind River Bear Institute in Montana, who said he would be driving through the area in the next month and offered to meet with council.

CAO Gawletz said she had communicated with about 20 municipalities with bear problems, and all leave any kind of hazing (like with dogs) to the Conservation Officer Service. She said the effects of bear hazing diminish quickly with the bear's physical distance from forested cover.

Fees and Charges Bylaw

The Fees and Charges Bylaw was given three readings and is expected to be adopted by the end of the year, to come into force on January 1, 2027. See VV Oct. 8, p. 12 for details.

Councillor Fyke said the RDCK will likely increase tipping fees at transfer stations and landfills by 8% in 2027. He reported that the Ooteschenia landfill is being expanded at great cost over the next few years, implying that this will put pressure on tipping fees. New Denver is also increasing garbage fees by 8% – "just keeping pace with the RDCK," he said.

Fyke looked at the increases from 2023 to 2027, and noted that RDCK's fees increased by 39.1% while New Denver's increased by 21.2%.

Welcome sign contract awarded

The welcome sign at the east entrance of town will be created and installed by Koots Arts Collective of Argenta. The new metal sign will be quite large and have a 3D effect. The project budget is $20,000, coming from the Resident Retention Attraction Pilot funding.

The old sign, if it's in better shape than the ones at the north and south entrances to town, may be switched out with one of those. Otherwise, it could be sold.

Councillor Moss spoke in favour of adding 'Welcome to' or 'welcomes you' to the sign, but Councillor Fyke said he liked the design without the 'welcome' and Councillor Danika Hammond said she didn't feel strongly either way.

Memorial benches

Two applications for memorial benches were discussed. A bench for Tomiko Spain (Aoyama) in the area east of the All-Wheels Park, facing the glacier, was approved. Staff will work with the applicants for a bench for Frank and Maurine Ikle, as the proposed locations for the bench already have quite a bit of seating.

Recreation Commission 6

Councillors Hammond and Fyke reported on Recreation Commission 6. All fall grant applicants except one from outside the area will receive funding, although not as much as they requested. Requests came to double the amount available, Fyke said. The agreement with the school district to use the Lucerne School gym at no charge from October 27 to April 15 is very close to completion. Hamond said the RDCK has created a policy regarding facilities that don't have staff, like New Denver's community gym, and there is a lot of interest in the policy.

Recognition Requests Policy adopted

The Recognition Requests Policy was adopted. The policy was discussed at length at the September Committee of the Whole meeting (see VV Oct. 8, p. 12).

Letters

Council agreed to provide a letter of support to the Hospice Society to accompany its funding application for an electric wheelchair bicycle for the community.

Staff will write a letter asking the Province to reinstate the Local Government Climate Action Program.

Silverton council, October 14 continued

continued from page 23

ESS training, equipment grant

On behalf of the Village, the RDCK will apply for funds from the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) Emergency Support Services (ESS) Equipment and Training stream.

The grant provides 100% funding up to $30,000 per municipality or local authority. It is intended to enhance ESS activities in Silverton and throughout the region. Taking a regional approach will ensure ESS services are delivered consistently across jurisdictions.

Disaster risk reduction grant

The Village will work with the RDCK to prepare an application for up to $200,000 from the UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) Foundations of Disaster Risk Reduction.

The funds would be used for a Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA) and risk assessment. HRVAs provide a structured means of identifying hazards and vulnerabilities to support risk-based decisions in mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

The proposed project will generate Silverton-specific findings, while contributing to a coordinated regional assessment.

The RDCK has asked the Villages of Kaslo, Slocan, and New Denver to participate in a regional application, and will assist Silverton, Salmo, and Yaqan Nukiy First Nation with separate applications.

The RDCK previously applied to the provincial Disaster Resilience and Innovation Funding (DRIF) program for $995,000 to complete this work. However, the Province advised that there's currently no funding available and encouraged applicants to pursue other sources.

New Denver Nursery School expands

submitted by SLELS

The Slocan Lake Early Learning Society (SLELS), which runs the New Denver Nursery School, is looking for community-minded people to join its board of directors.

The New Denver Nursery School is a much-loved and appreciated service in our community, and has served many generations. It is the legacy of the late Gay Houston, who started the preschool 50 years ago. Her vision lives on today with dedicated staff and a program philosophy that nurtures the well-being and development of each child.

Located at Lucerne School, the preschool program runs two days a week with a focus on outdoor exploration and learning. SLELS is also in the process of creating a dedicated Forest School that would offer children ages 3 to10 completely nature-based learning experiences one additional day a week.

The preschool is governed by a dynamic board of directors that plays an important role in ensuring the viability and longevity of the program. With our AGM approaching, SLELS is calling out to the community for new board members.

Do you have some time and energy to support our youngest community members? Do you have skills with social media, leadership, secretarial work, fundraising or finances? These are an asset but not required. You do not need to be a parent or have a background in childcare to be a valuable member of our board. Perhaps you or your children are alumni of the New Denver Nursery School.

What is really needed is enthusiasm and energy to contribute to this worthwhile organization that helps build this community.

The Slocan Lake Early Learning Society AGM is on November 12 at 6 pm in the Lucerne School Library. Preschool-made pizza and refreshments will be provided. If you would like to know more, please reach out to us at info@slocanearlylearning.ca. We would love to hear from you.

New Denver Official Community Plan update

submitted by the Village of New Denver

The Village of New Denver is updating its Official Community Plan (OCP) to guide growth and development over the next decade and beyond.

The OCP is a long-term plan that sets policies, guides land-use decisions, and establishes development strategies.

Much has changed since the current OCP was adopted in 2007. The update will address key priorities, including housing, the environment, accessibility, and sustainability. It will also help New Denver meet provincial requirements to plan for 20 years of housing needs.

The OCP update will also bring the area added to the Village through the 2021 boundary extension into the Village's OCP planning framework. This area was previously outside the scope of the Village's OCP. The updated OCP will establish policies to guide future planning and development throughout the Village, including the extension area, with zoning work to follow.

The updated OCP should reflect who New Denver is today and how the community wants to grow. It will support sustainable growth, protect the natural environment, and address housing needs, mobility, and climate change.

Get Involved!

Your voice matters. Together, we are shaping New Denver's future. Decisions made during this OCP update will directly influence how our community grows and develops.

We want to hear how the updated OCP can best reflect your goals for New Denver over the next decade. Your participation is essential to planning a resilient and inclusive future for our community.

How to participate

Phase 1 of public engagement will take place from Monday, October 26, to Wednesday, October 28, with both in-person and online opportunities. See the ad on this page or scan the QR code for more information.

Japanese Canadian Monument, honouring internment survivors, celebrated with grand opening

by Jan McMurray

The Japanese Canadian Monument near Beacon Hill Park in Victoria was celebrated with an opening ceremony on October 3. The Monument is the grand finale of a series of projects carried out to ensure remembrance of the forced uprooting of Japanese Canadians during WWII.

The event was livestreamed in multiple locations, including Knox Hall in New Denver. A small group attended the New Denver livestream, including three descendants of survivors who came from out-of-town.

The opening ceremony was hosted by the Japanese Canadian Legacies Society (JCLS). The JCLS formed in 2022 to manage the $100 million BC Redress fund.

"The Japanese Canadian Legacies Society was created to develop a suite of legacies and programs," said society CEO Susanne Tabata, emcee of the event, in her opening remarks. "We want to recognize everyone who has helped move our initiatives forward."

Several of those legacy initiatives happened in our area, including many projects at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre in New Denver, a display about the internment in Sandon, improvements at the Langham in Kaslo, and the development of the Japanese Canadian Legacy Trail.

The grand opening of the Monument began with the showing of a video entitled, 'Japanese Canadian Monument – From Conception to Construction,' produced by the JCLS.

In the video, JCLS CEO Susanne Tabata says that Japanese Canadians arrived on the shores of what is now BC in the late 1870s. They were well into the third generations when they were uprooted in 1942. "They weren't treated as people, but as numbers and groupings, and rounded up like cattle, pushed through Hastings Park. What is so important about the Monument is their individual names will appear."

The Monument is a wall of 100 granite panels with the names of the nearly 22,000 people who were removed from their homes in 1942 along with the names of over 3,000 children born during the uprooting. The wall is in a beautifully landscaped garden, featuring the Pathway to Justice, delineated by five boulders along the northern edge of the park.

Several dignitaries spoke at the opening ceremony.

Paul Kariya, JCLS president, said Japanese Canadians had shaped the six pillars that are the core of the Redress settlement agreement. "You told us you wanted a lasting legacy, and nothing is better than stone for a lasting legacy."

The woman whose job is to dismantle racism in BC – Haiqa Cheema, Assistant Minister in the Ministry of the Attorney General – outlined the hardships Japanese Canadian internees endured. In 2022, the Province built on the 2012 apology and announced the redress package. "At the heart of this redress is this commemorative wall before us today… This is not just a place of remembrance. It is also a commitment to recognition, intergenerational healing, education and the ongoing work of confronting racism and xenophobia," she said.

The Consul General of Japan in Canada, Yoshiaki Takahashi, said what this injustice took away from people were their hopes and dreams. "For every name on this monument, there was a dream and there was a hope, but those dreams and hopes were fragile," he said. "Let us imagine the life behind each name. If we do that, this monument becomes much more powerful and I believe that power can help us build a society where people can live with dreams and hopes and confidence in the future."

JCLS CEO Susanne Tabata recognized Jack Kobayashi for providing assistance with costing and

PHOTO CREDIT: RICH LAM

The Japanese Canadian Monument in Victoria was celebrated with an opening ceremony on October 3.

predesign concepts for the Monument. The project then went out to Request for Proposals, and KPMB Architects and PFS Studio landscape architects were selected.

Bruce Kuwabara, internment camp survivor and founding partner of KPMB Architects, said the design team considered what monument could do justice to 22,000 Japanese Canadians who were displaced and interned for three years and nine months. "It's certainly about the names, the identity," he said. Kuwabara said he mistakenly thought the names would be organized by internment camps, "but Susanne and the JCLS turned that one on its head." The names are organized by the survivors' places of settlement prior to internment.

Kuwabara explained that the panels follow a pattern that suggests waves or ripples – metaphors for change, and for water and life. He said the design is made around the concept of intimate monumentality, where people will have an intimate relationship with those names.

"This wall is about the past but also the future. In the Buddhist tradition, every life is like a wave. As one wave passes, another one is forming," he said.

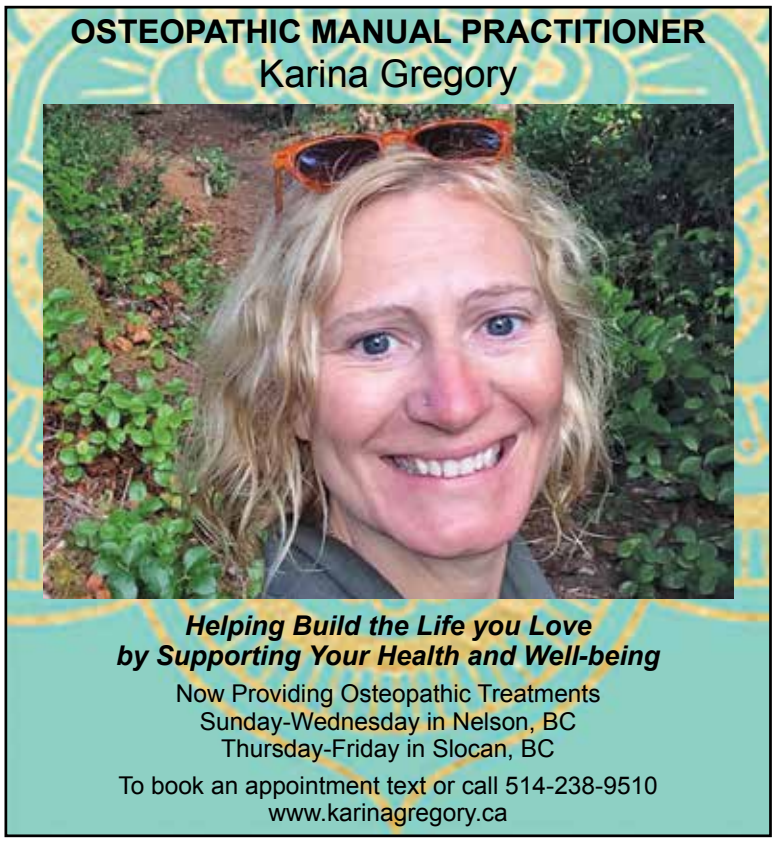
Keiko Mary Titagawa, prominent Japanese Canadian human rights advocate and internment camp survivor, spoke on behalf of the people named on the wall. She told the story of watching her father be arrested and brutalized, "beginning seven years of degradation and dehumanization of our family." She said each survivor's story is unique, but there was "a common feeling of betrayal by a country we were deeply loyal to."

Titagawa said she was very happy when she heard about the Monument. "I had dreamt about a memorial like this where each person who persevered through the horrors could be commemorated."

To wrap up the ceremony, 15 survivors came up to the podium individually and read through a set of the 195 communities that Japanese Canadians called home before the internment.

Tabata concluded by saying the Monument turns the narrative of Japanese Canadians being victims of social policy to one of builders of community.

Master shakuhachi flautist Alcvin Ryuzen Ramos closed the ceremony with the song, 'Hands Together in Prayer.'



Burton Thanksgiving Market a success, despite wet weather

submitted by Rosemary Phillips

Rain couldn't keep folks away from the Thanksgiving Market in Burton on Friday, October 9. Volunteer members of the Bee Happy Community Garden were celebrating the end of a very successful season of growing and providing food for the community.

While at times the rain was pretty intense there were intermittent sunny breaks and blue sky. Visitors and vendors came prepared with umbrellas and rain gear.

Organizer Pauline McMechan, with assistance from Liz Gillis, set up a really festive market providing hot foods, canned and frozen goods, fresh produce, and area crafts, enticing visitors with free cake and coffee. Food was the main theme. Visitors could enjoy hot soup from the Burton PAC table, or perogies from Backroad Kitchen, or take frozen products for the freezer at home.

Vendors came from far and wide: Backroad Kitchen Co.; Sausage People; Fire Valley Farm with pasture-raised pork; Mountain Pups Tasty Treats; Applegrove Farmacy; RKD Farm with samosas, sauces and cheesecake; Shonsha Tatlok jewellery; Your Green Kitchen and Brenda Buerge; Ellie with honey; Roza with watercolour cards and bookmarks; Fantasy Art by Shandra-Lee Grace; Creative Creations by Kazu; Vicky Ruth's Suncatchers and Whimsical Things; Carrie Collins sourdough sweets; and some cement creations.

Baskets were filled with goodies as door prizes, which were won by Jeanette Beason and Wendy Smith.

Liz Gillis states, "It was a great team effort. Community came out to support us, with many coming from Nakusp and Fauquier. Vendors did well, and the cake and coffee were a big hit."

PHOTO CREDIT: ROSEMARY PHILLIPS

Burton Thanksgiving Market volunteer Margret Simpson with fresh garden produce. Rain didn't stop people from enjoying the end of season celebration held on October 9.

Start your engines for the 2028 BC DragiT Challenge: Nakusp council, October 14

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

A unique Drag 'n Drive event may be coming to Nakusp in 2028.

Dianne and Mark Boutilier, owners and organizers of the BC DragiT Challenge, discussed the event, which combines drag racing with a road trip and brings together motorsport enthusiasts from across North America.

Participants drive their vehicles between different locations and compete at drag strips along the five-day route, without support vehicles.

The goal is to bring visitors into communities, showcase local areas, and create positive economic and community connections.

BC DragiT celebrated its fifth year. With 2027 already planned, the Boutiliers hope to add Nakusp to the 2028 roster. Past locations include Cache Creek, Lillooet, McBride, 100 Mile House, Merritt, Prince George, and Kelowna. This year it sold out at 100 cars.

Wherever possible, BC DragiT works with local non-profits in the communities it visits. Spectator entry fees are collected at the gate, and those proceeds support non-profit and community initiatives.

The drag races would take place at the Nakusp airport, which would need to be prepared with a special glue that helps with traction. Mark Boutilier said that many pilots they've spoken with appreciate the glue on the runway; it helps with traction.

Safety and insurance are a priority for the event, including $5 million liability with the Village listed as an additional insured.

Visit bcdragit.ca for more information.

Fees waived for dementia workshop

Council approved a request from Arrow Slocan Lakes Community Services to waive the $120 daily rental fee for the training room in the Emergency Services Building (ESB) to host a free dementia presentation and workshop on October 23.

Danielle Bywater, Nelson Coordinator with the Alzheimer Society of BC and Yukon, will present the workshop, from 10:30 am to 3:30 pm. Snacks, lunch, and coffee and tea will be provided.

Basin art call for submissions

The Village is putting out a call for submissions for permanent art from local artists. It applied for $5,000 from the Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance (CKCA) Columbia River Basin Public Art Grant to cover advertising and staff costs.

The advertising will include three ads in the newspaper, a paid seven-week Facebook social media ad campaign, and a project page on the Village website.

Council, or potentially a re-established Public Art Committee, will adjudicate the submissions in early 2027. After selecting a winner, the Village will apply for another grant to purchase and install the artwork.

Nakusp Brewing change to hours

Council approved a request from the Nakusp Brewing Company to change their liquor service hours to 12 pm to 12 am daily (previously 12 to 9 pm).

The brewing company said it doesn't intend to change regular hours of operation, but rather asked for extended service hours in case of events and special occasions so it wouldn't need to apply for a temporary licence each time.

Hot springs parking lot

The Village will use up to $20,000 from surplus to improve the hot springs upper parking lot and site stormwater infrastructure.

The gravel parking lot is worn down to larger aggregate that is difficult to shape or grade. Drainage ditches can't catch all the surface water, nor direct it to locations that can deal with it. In some years, the parking lot has channeled water onto the facility's stairs. Staff spend a lot of time shovelling and sweeping gravel from the asphalt road and repairing ditches that have been overwhelmed by water.

CAO Wayne Robinson said there is already a contractor on site so it's efficient to do the work now.

Permissive tax exemptions

Council adopted the 2027 Permissive Tax Exemption Bylaw.

Exemptions are estimated to total $5,483 – down from $29,831 in 2026. With the reduced exemptions, the average property owner will see their taxes down by 1.6%.

The Kinship Connection Society is the only organization that will receive a 100% exemption for the building located at 613 Broadway Street.

The Old Fire Hall Collective Society (90 5th Avenue NW) and the Royal Canadian Legion (94 4th Avenue, the hall and lower club portion only) will receive 50% exemptions.

Places of worship receive statutory exemptions for their buildings, but not for surrounding lands. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Nelson, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, and Trustees of the Nakusp Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses will receive 50% exemptions for the land around the buildings.

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RE-ELECT

STEVE MORISSETTE

FOR KOOTENAY-MONASHEE

Steve.Morissette@bcndp.ca
stevemorissette.bcndp.ca
778-460-1022
2009 Columbia Ave
Castlegar

RE-ELECT

BRITTNY ANDERSON

FOR KOOTENAY CENTRAL

Brittny.Anderson@bcndp.ca
brittnyanderson.bcndp.ca
778-774-2817
295B Baker Street
Nelson

BC NDP

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KEEPING THE KOOTENAYS STRONG

Protecting 30% of our land and water by 2030, preserving old growth and watersheds, expanding Youth Climate Corps funding to $4 million annually, expanding EV charging and heat pumps, and cutting methane emissions 75% by 2030.

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