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Strong Conservative majority leaves a West Kootenay island of orange

by Nikko Snyder

Following a decisive Conservative majority in the recent BC provincial election, the ridings of Kootenay Central and Kootenay-Monashee find themselves the only two NDP ridings in the entire BC interior. (At press time on October 29, the riding of Kelowna Central was still too close to call.)

Incumbent NDP MLAs Brittny Anderson (Kootenay Central) and Steve Morissette (Kootenay-Monashee) have been re-elected. However, it's clear from the numbers that their support, like that of the BC NDP provincially, took a major hit leading up to the October 24 vote.

At first glance, Brittny Anderson's support appears unchanged: she received 39.5% of the popular vote this time around, compared to 39.63% in 2024. However, preliminary numbers also show that she received 1,098 fewer total votes than she did in 2024. Overall, 2,707 fewer Kootenay Central voters turned out to the polls than in 2024.

In Kootenay-Monashee, 1,872 fewer votes were cast, and Steve Morissette himself received 1,676 fewer votes than in 2024. His proportion of the popular vote fell from 52% in 2024 to 48% in 2026.

Lower voter turnout

Across the province, lower voter turnout amounted to 310,000 fewer votes cast, with overall turnout dropping significantly, from 58% in 2024 to 48% in 2026.

Brittny Anderson thinks the back-to-back elections could be what led to the lower turnout. The decision to hold the snap provincial election just one week after local elections was a calculated risk that backfired – resoundingly – on outgoing premier David Eby.

"I spoke with many folks that said, 'You know, I've been a BC NDP supporter all my life. I really like you, Brittny, but I'm angry,'" Anderson told the *Valley Voice*. "So, obviously there were those sentiments rippling through not just our riding, but the province, and instead of deciding that they were going to take time out of their lives to engage in a democratic process, they just stayed at home."

Steve Morissette echoed this sentiment: "I can tell you what I heard on the doorsteps is that people were upset there was an early election," he told the *Valley Voice*. "That's what I heard several times. So I expect that's the reason that people stayed home, but I don't know that."

What happens next?

In the days following the election, both Anderson and Morissette travelled to Victoria to begin the transition from governing party to official opposition. It's uncharted territory for both of them.

"I expect it to be a lot different, not having sat in the opposition," says Morissette. "Myself, I'm not a particularly partisan person, and I'm happy to work with anyone and everyone. So I'm committed to building relationships with the new government and bringing my constituents' voices to Victoria and advocating for their priorities."

But before any of that must come some initial big decisions. "We have to do a lot of reflecting on how we can do better," says Anderson. "The

PHOTO COURTESY: BRITTNY ANDERSON FACEBOOK

BC NDP incumbent Brittny Anderson was re-elected as the MLA for Kootenay Central.

PHOTO COURTESY: STEVE MORISSETTE FACEBOOK

BC NDP incumbent Steve Morissette was re-elected as the MLA for Kootenay-Monashee.

continued on page 19

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Big and small changes for local governments following civic elections

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Communities across the *Valley Voice* coverage area are seeing some big and small changes to their governance after the general local elections on October 17.

Municipalities

A completely new council will take the reins in the **Village of Slocan**, with 200 of the possible 326 voters having their say (61.3%).

Jamie Ingram won the mayoral race with 106 votes (53%), beating Joel Pelletier (75 votes; 37.5%) and Eunice Ludlow (16 votes; 8%).

New councillors are Dave Fredrickson (137 votes, 68.5%), who has previously served in elected office, and first-timers Delaine Hird (126 votes; 63%), Katie Strong (117 votes; 58.5%), and Brenden Murray-Nellis (108 votes; 54%).

Unsuccessful candidates include Therin Rhaintre (96 votes), Alex Cendese (72 votes), Beth Campbell (59 votes), and Darcy Lindsay (17 votes).

The **Village of New Denver** had the best voter turnout of the *Valley Voice*'s readership – of a possible 446 voters, 331 made it to the polls (71%).

Mayor Leonard Casley was acclaimed for a third term.

Incumbent Councillor Colin Moss will return (193 votes; 58.3%). Newcomers Kathy Hartman (181 votes; 54.7%) and Daphne Budding (154 votes; 46.5%) will join Casley and Moss, along with previous councillor Vern Gustafson (153 votes; 46.2%).

Three New Denver candidates were unsuccessful: Steve Deakoff (133 votes), Melvie Buenacosa (128 votes), and Jude Louwerse (95 votes).

A new mayor will be leading the **Village of Kaslo's** council this term. Erika Bird won the election with 467 votes (77.6%). Bird ran against incumbent Suzan Hewat, who received 128 votes (21.3%). Bird previously served one term as a councillor.

Two incumbent councillors will once again sit around the table: Matthew Brown (441 votes; 73.3%) and Molly Leathwood (249 votes; 41.4%). Two newcomers will join: Sarah Sinclair (423 votes; 70.3%), and Linden Gibbons (312 votes; 51.8%).

Five councillor-hopefuls will have to try again: Jim Holland (219 votes), MerryJill Milne (209 votes), Rick Nay (166 votes), Donna Cormie (94 votes), and John Rasmussen (92 votes).

Voter turnout in Kaslo was 62.7% – 602 ballots cast out of a possible 960.

The new **Nakusp** council is all familiar faces.

Incumbent Mayor Tom Zeleznik returns by acclamation.

Three former councillors and one incumbent made the cut: Cameron Leitch (722 votes; 71.5%), Ken Miller (384 votes, 65.7%), Joseph Hughes (352 votes; 59.7%), and Aidan McLaren-Caux (262 votes; 44.4%).

At 255 votes, incumbent Dolly Edwards put up a good fight, but fell short by seven votes. Incumbent Tina Knooihuizen (144 votes), and fresh faces David Dudar (176 votes) and Tania Quigley (170 votes) were also unsuccessful.

Of the 1,482 possible voters in Nakusp, only 590 cast their ballots (39.8%).

Every member of **Silverton's** newest council was acclaimed. Incumbents Mayor Tanya Gordon and Councillor Don Broughton will serve another term alongside first-time councillors Troy Bennett-McCrea, Arlen Duquette, and Dustin Hill.

Silverton has 172 voters who could have gone to the polls.

Regional District

Three electoral areas of the **Regional District of Central Kootenay** lie within the *Valley Voice* coverage area.

Aimee Watson was acclaimed as the director for **Area D (North Kootenay Lake).**

Incumbent Teresa Weatherhead will once again represent **Area K (Arrow Lakes)**. Weatherhead was up against Tina Knooihuizen, who was running concurrently for Nakusp council. Weatherhead won the election with 435 votes (86.1%). Knooihuizen received 64 votes.

Area H (Slocan Valley) had three candidates in the running for director, with Will Parker winning over Kevin Shaw. Parker received 794 votes (70.5%), while Shaw garnered 302 votes (26.8%).

Jae Hamilton publicly withdrew from the race for Area H director; however, his name still appeared on the ballot since the official withdrawal date had already passed. Hamilton received 16 votes.

School Districts

The **School District 8 (Kootenay Lake)** board of education had two trustee candidates for the Village of Kaslo & North Rural Zone - Area D Ward. Nicole Rhynold won the election with 467 votes (64.4%). Rhynold beat long-time trustee Dawn Lang, who received 232 votes (32%).

School District 10 (Arrow Lakes) had two candidates in the running for Central Zone trustee. Frances Swan received 401 votes (63%), overtaking incumbent Steve Gascon, who pulled in 228 votes (35.8%).

Dark mornings mean extra care needed on the walk to school

by Nikko Snyder

With BC remaining on permanent Daylight Saving Time, sunrise will arrive later this winter. That means more school walks, morning commutes, and school drop-offs will take place in darkness.

Rain, fog, and glare from oncoming headlights can further reduce visibility. The combination can make it difficult for drivers to see pedestrians and lane markings.

"The roads you drive may be familiar but the risks are changing," cautions Trace Acres, Program Director for Road Safety at Work. "In darkness or low light, it's harder to spot hazards on the road and react."

Prolonged morning darkness also affects natural sleep cycles and may contribute to driver fatigue. This compounds the risk as drivers need to be especially alert to spot and respond to hazards when visibility is poor.

"Fatigue can reduce concentration, slow reaction time, and affect decision-making," Acres says. "Those are exactly the abilities drivers need when they can't see as far ahead."

Safety for students

Be seen. Wear bright or reflective clothing and consider carrying a flashlight or light.

Cross at marked intersections whenever possible and avoid taking shortcuts across busy roads.

Look before you cross. Stop, look both ways and make eye contact with drivers before stepping onto the road.

Phones down, heads up. Put away phones and earbuds when crossing streets so you can see and hear what's happening around you.

Walk together. Whenever possible, walk with a friend, sibling or group, especially when it's dark.

For parents

Help your children **choose the safest route to school**, not necessarily the shortest one.

Make sure backpacks, jackets or shoes have **reflective material** or add a clip-on light.

With younger children, **walk the route together** and point out safe places to cross.

Remind children that even when they have the right-of-way, they should **never assume a driver has seen them**.

If you're driving your child to school, **slow down** around schools and crosswalks and watch for children who may be difficult to see.

And let's not forget about drivers

Slow down, stay alert and take that extra moment to look for children and youth during the morning commute.

Leave more distance between your vehicle and the one ahead.

Watch for pedestrians, cyclists, wildlife, and roadside workers who can be harder to see in the dark.

Make sure headlights, tail lights, windshield wipers, and defrosters are working properly and that windows, mirrors, and lights are clean.

Be rested and alert before getting behind the wheel. Take breaks on longer trips.

New digital emergency response system rolling out across BC

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

A modernized 911 network is launching across the province, laying the foundation for faster, more effective communication during emergencies, say the BC RCMP.

Next Generation 911 (NG911) is a digital internet protocol (IP) system replacing decades-old analogue infrastructure to better reflect today's mobile phone technology. It's designed to support safer, faster, and more informed emergency responses.

The RCMP recently announced the launch, which is rolling out gradually.

For the first phase of the transition to NG911, there won't be any noticeable differences in how communities can access help from 911. An E-Comm 911 call taker will still answer, then ensure the call reaches the appropriate emergency agency – police, fire, or ambulance.

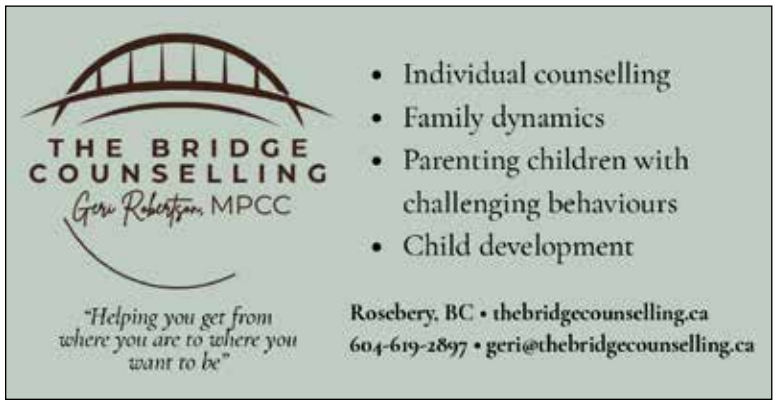
The only immediate change affecting the public is the introduction of an automated callback system for 911 calls that are quickly disconnected or abandoned. If a call disconnects before it reaches a call taker, the automated system will call back to confirm whether help is needed or not.

The new automated callback system is fully managed and maintained by E-Comm 911. The callback number won't show up as 911; rather, it will display a standard 10-digit number from a 604 area code.

The RCMP Southeast District, which includes the Nakusp, New Denver, Slocan, and Kaslo detachments, transitioned to NG911 on October 29.

Future NG911 capabilities will allow the public to send real-time text and share streaming video with 911. First responders will also get more accurate location information.

The CRTC (Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission) mandated the switch to NG911, with a March 2027 deadline. CRTC is the federal regulator of all telecommunications service providers that connect emergency calls to first responders.



Dr. Brenda Beckwith receives KCP West Kootenay Conservation Leadership Award

submitted by Kootenay Conservation Program

Kootenay Conservation Program (KCP) is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2026 Conservation Leadership Awards, honouring individuals in both the East and West Kootenays who have shown exceptional leadership, innovation, and dedication to conservation. The awards were presented at the annual KCP Fall Gathering, which was held in Nelson this year.

In the West Kootenay, the 2026 award was presented to Dr. Brenda Beckwith, who is being recognized for her leadership with the Kootenay Native Plant Society. She received a framed photograph by Janice Arndt of a silver spotted skipper nectaring on spreading dogbane.

Brenda, owner of KinSeed Ecologies, has been involved with the Kootenay Native Plant Society on many projects for over 12 years. She champions native plants, including designing and bringing to fruition the Butterfly Habitat Learning Garden at Syringa Provincial Park and the Monarch Waystation at Beaver Creek Provincial Park. She has forged strong partnerships with various organizations in the Kootenays working towards common goals of maintaining and expanding green spaces, environmental protection, and climate change adaptation. These include NTBC, The Land Conservancy, BC Parks, Selkirk College, Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society, and the Sinixt Confederacy.

Brenda studied camas extensively for her PhD and is considered an expert in the field. She has been instrumental to the Kootenay Camas Project as their science advisor, sharing the value and local history of camas, resulting in the City of Castlegar creating a camas conservation area in Millennium Park.

Brenda has mentored many young people, including as a well-loved instructor of field botany at Selkirk College. She has taught hundreds of schoolchildren in Castlegar and School District 20 about camas in a way that is so engaging, camas now has a young local fan club of protectors. She shares her sought-after knowledge with adults through guided botanical walks, seed-collecting seminars, and local design sessions, continuing to inspire people through her absolute dedication and passion for achieving ecological restoration with native plants.

"Brenda is an outstanding mentor, from supervising internships under Selkirk College to dazzling schoolkids with her excitement about the secret lives of plants" says Caroline McChesney, Chair of the Kootenay Native Plant Society. "She is an outstanding researcher who is bringing valuable scientific study to an understudied natural resource: native plants and their pollinator relationships."

In the East Kootenay, Suzanne Bayley was recognized for her leadership with the Columbia Wetlands Stewardship Partners and she received a framed photograph by Pat Morrow of a beautiful sunrise over Columbia Lake. Marcy Mahr was also presented with a special award for her outstanding contribution to KCP over the years, receiving a framed photo by Tyson Ehlers of Slocan Lake.

PHOTO COURTESY: KOOTENAY CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Brenda Beckwith with her 2026 West Kootenay Conservation Leadership Award.

Widespot: We're gonna die

by Therese DesCamp

The late Kathleen Dowling Singh – hospice worker, psychotherapist, and author – once spoke of an altercation she'd observed while flying to a conference. A man had reclined his seat so far that he was nearly lying in the lap of the woman behind him. The woman asked him to sit up straighter; when he refused, she started kicking the back of his seat. This went on for almost the entire trip, while Kathleen resisted the urge to lean over and say to them, "You know you're going to die, right?"

Her point being, the awareness that this is all going to end should be adequate incentive to treasure every moment of life, every being in life.

Conscious awareness of death is the opposite of the instinctual awareness of death. It's instinctual awareness that consumes me with the fear of losing something I have or not getting something I want. Whether I'm afraid of losing my health, my home, my community; or afraid that the government's gone crazy or that my kids face a precarious future, fear is a corrosive worm in the soul devouring all kindness. Being aware that we're going to die can cause us to value each moment and each being. Unexamined, instinctual awareness of death – hardwired into our amygdala – gets acted out as fear, driving us to lash out, to harm others.

I've been thinking about fear lately, in relationship to our common life. Also in relationship to big, beautiful Betty.

Betty is our new-to-us dog. Thrown away in Oregon's high desert, covered in sores and mats, she's some kind of poodle mix who went through a lot to survive. While she is crazy about us – source of treats, rubs and kindness – she is terrified of most everything else. Noises, people at the door and especially other dogs: all terrify her. Having fought for her life, she's still fighting for her life. Tapping the table can panic her. This isn't awareness, this is reactivity. This is instinctual fear.

Like many anxious beings, her fear looks like something frightening. She has a big mouth, big teeth, a roaring bark. So we're getting help to train her. We're learning to reduce her overall anxiety. We're walking her on leash to keep everyone safe. We're loving her and trusting that, like all the dogs we've rescued, the day will come when she's not so fearfully and instinctually reactive; that she'll learn to trust in the joy of the moment.

Betty is not the only big loud being in my awareness these days. It feels like our collective political life is rife with bullies, public lies, fearmongers and divisive rhetoric. When I see people acting like this, I assume they're running on instinctual fear. But maybe they're not; maybe they're just trying to whip up others' instinctual fears.

Whatever the cause, fear isn't any way for any of us to live. Calling names, telling lies, kicking seats, barking and growling: surely we can do better. Surely we can consciously remember that we're going to die. Surely we know that each moment, each being is precious.

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Parks, trails, and water access strategy adopted: RDCK board, October 22

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

A new strategy will ensure the region's parks, trails, and water accesses are improved, managed, and stewarded responsibly.

The Parks, Trails, and Water Access Strategy establishes a shared vision and clear direction for the future of the RDCK's 31 regional parks, trails, and water accesses. It provides a long-term road map to guide planning, management, stewardship, and sustainable growth over the coming decades. It was developed through extensive research, site assessments, stakeholder engagement, Indigenous outreach, public consultation, and collaboration with RDCK staff and the board of directors.

Strategies include: improve equitable access; increase and enhance water access; expand trail connectivity; strengthen outdoor recreation and visitor experience; protect and conserve ecologically significant land and areas; plan for climate change resilience and hazard preparedness; reconciliation; advance inclusion, equity, and accessibility standards; stewardship, interpretation, and environmental education programs and partnerships; develop signage and wayfinding branding; and strengthen regional and community partnerships.

The strategy is supported by a 10-year implementation plan.

Directors expressed concern over the budget implications of the strategy. Seven of the 11 electoral areas will welcome new directors in November, and new mayors and councillors may bring changes to municipal directors; approving a plan right before a big turnover didn't seem right.

General Manager of Community Services Trisha Davidson assured the board that adopting the strategy doesn't approve every action or establish any regulatory requirements. Implementation will occur over time, subject to the future board's decisions, available funding, staff capacity, grant opportunities, and applicable regulatory requirements.

The board adopted the strategy.

Visit engage.rdck.ca/projects/regional-parks-trails-and-water-access-strategy.

Imagine Kootenay

There's a one-stop website for those looking to live, work, and invest in the Kootenays: Imagine Kootenay.

Rafaela Erban, Project Manager, shared the regional website, how it works, and how the Central Kootenay region benefits.

She asked the RDCK to consider investing $20,000 in the project, per year, for three years.

Imagine Kootenay is a free-to-use regional hub, a "gateway to information about the Kootenays," said Erban.

The website features community profiles with lifestyle resources; job boards for local, remote, and seasonal workers; and business listings to support succession and investment.

"We're stronger together; that's the essence of the Kootenays," said Erban.

Every community in the RDCK offers something different, she said. Individually, they are wonderful places to live and do business, but together they make the whole region more attractive.

"With regional collaboration, we're trying to maximize public investment, reduce the risk of duplication, and create a stronger position for us to compete as a region, with other regions," said Erban.

Imagine Kootenay aims to make the region attractive for people to move to; specifically, it's a place where you can "live, work, and invest where you play."

"Every person who relocates contributes through local spending, property taxes, income taxes, and long-term participation in the community," she said.

Imagine Kootenay makes this possible through business listings, which also promote business succession.

"One successful business sale can preserve jobs, protect municipal tax revenue, and keep an important local service operating for years to come," said Erban.

The service is currently offered through funding from the Economic Trust of the Southern Interior (ETSI-BC). The Regional Districts of Kootenay Boundary and East Kootenay have both committed to funding Imagine Kootenay.

Central Kootenay communities currently featured are Nakusp, Kaslo, Nelson, Creston, and the Creston Valley. Erban said these communities expressed interest and came on board during the last iteration of the website. Should the RDCK invest in Imagine Kootenay, every community in the RDCK would be added, in time.

Suzan Hewat, Village of Kaslo Director, was on the steering committee. She told the board that the site is only as good as the information it receives. It's up to communities to let Imagine Kootenay know what should be included.

"You advocate for yourself," said Director Hewat. "This is a vehicle to do that."

Old South Slocan Schoolhouse Pavilion

The RDCK applied to the Columbia Basin Trust's Gathering Area and Town Hub Enhancement and Revitalization (GATHER) grant for $350,000 for the Old South Slocan Schoolhouse Pavilion project.

The Old South Slocan Schoolhouse was originally built circa 1918. It was the local schoolhouse before the RDCK purchased the land in 1987 and it became a multipurpose community gathering space. Due to the condition of the building, however, it was demolished in 2023.

The community formed the Old South Slocan Schoolhouse (OSSS) Working Group to raise funds to revitalize the land as a community space, emphasizing its past history and culture.

The RDCK and the community revitalized the park and playground space in 2022-2024, and would now like to build a pavilion on the old schoolhouse foundation.

Structural, civil, and septic designs are complete, and all necessary building permits are obtained, but there is still a significant funding shortfall – between reserves, community works grants, small local grants, and funds raised by the OSSS Working Group – to complete construction in 2027.

The CBT GATHER grant provides funding to local governments and First Nations to revitalize, restore, and enhance outdoor community gathering spaces. It funds 90% of total project costs, up to a maximum of $650,000 for populations less than 2,500.

Floodplain exemption

The board approved a site-specific floodplain bylaw exemption near Rosebery – but not without some caveats.

Owner Darrell Steenhoff's property is within Wilson Creek's designated floodplain, subject to the requirements of the RDCK's Floodplain Management Bylaw. The bylaw requires a minimum flood construction level of three metres above the natural boundary of the creek, and a minimum setback of 30 metres from the boundary.

The primary residence falls within a moderate flood hazard area, based on the Floodplain and Steep Creek Study completed by BGC Engineering in 2020. The building was also constructed without a permit; permitting this structure requires a site-specific floodplain exemption.

Steenhoff and his lawyer appeared before the Rural Affairs Committee on October 21, and the board approved issuing the exemption, subject to the property owners, at their own expense, preparing and registering a modification of the Flood Covenant, registered in 2002.

The owners must also sign a comprehensive waiver of liability, release, and indemnification of the RDCK; acknowledge the dangers in building and occupying lands subject to flooding; and acknowledge and agree that disaster financial assistance funding is not available for the existing unlawfully constructed development, or any others in contravention.

Any future reconstruction of the primary residence must meet the flood construction levels and setback requirements.

The property owners must also prepare an emergency plan, and continually monitor the primary residence's structural integrity.

Outgoing director recognition

The board recessed its meeting to thank outgoing directors for their time, dedication, and contributions to the RDCK and the communities they represent.

Village of Kaslo Director Suzan Hewat and Village of Slocan Director Jessica Lunn both dedicated 12 years of service.

Area H Director Walter Popoff contributed 18 years of service.

Area G Director Hans Cunningham said goodbye after 40 years of service, Area A Director Garry Jackman after 18 years, Area I Director Andy Davidoff after 15 years, and Village of Salmo Director Diana Lockwood after eight years.

Cheryl Graham (Area E), Maria McFaddin (Castlegar), Arnold DeBoon (Creston), Kelly Vandenberghe (Area C), Roger Tierney (Area B), and Henny Hanegraaf (Area J) all contributed four years of service.

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

Voices from the Valleys

UNDRIP be damned?

Indians still can't count on State and County Courts to respect individual Indian and tribal rights.

Many months have passed nearing a year, and a recent follow-up call with Washington Department Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) police, officer in Spokane Valley, presents what Indians know: the State and Counties don't give a pooh about non-Indian violators on Tribal Lands or against Indian Peoples.

WDFW police took the case because of the racist policy that Indians are denied jurisdiction over non-Indians (white People in this case, as usual). The white poachers who illegally took a Whitetail buck on "Takes-giving Day" 2025 from tribal land, are also from Western Washington and WDFW has jurisdiction there. As it turns out, these white poachers were, according to WDFW police, prosecuted for Washington fish poaching violations in early 2025, and presumably successfully prosecuted.

Every animal illegally taken from Indians, from Indian lands, is another animal not available for food subsistence for Indian children and families.

For the racist jurisdiction reasons mentioned above, the Colville Tribal Enforcement Officer who initially acted upon the complaint was certain the facts support successful prosecution. The WDFW police also agreed a prosecution would succeed. Yet WDFW police say, and I paraphrase here: the Ferry County Prosecutor won't take this case."

United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is the laughing stock from greedy white settler-colonist (invites poachers, seeks leasing-occupying Tribal Land) ranchers to billionaires destroying the natural world; salmon, water, land, deer, wolves, huckleberries, to whales.

Lou Stone
Autonomous Sinixt
Inchelium, WA

Freedom and Democracy

Freedom House's 2026 assessment gives Türkiye 32 out of 100 and classifies it as "Not Free." It cites the imprisonment of political opponents, pressure on independent journalists, and restrictions on civil society.

Canada's latest Freedom in the World index score is 97 out of 100, rated "Free" by Freedom House in its 2026 report.

Human Rights Watch also documents the detention of opposition leader and Istanbul mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, prosecutions of journalists and restrictions on peaceful protests.

Deniz Göktaş, a 32-year-old Turkish stand-up comedian, was imprisoned after making jokes about President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. His case has become a prominent example of the tension between political satire and freedom of expression in Turkey.

Göktaş maintained that his comments were satire, not criminal insults. During his trial, he argued that calling a political leader a dictator was a political characterization, not inherently an insult. A court convicted him of insulting Erdoğan and insulting religious values. He received a combined sentence of 19 months and 10 days. One of his jokes described Erdoğan as having evolved from a "shy dictator" into a dictator who was more confident in his identity. After three months in prison Göktaş is out on appeal, but he ain't free yet.

Turkey accounted for less than 0.3% of Canada's merchandise trade in 2025, according to Reuters.

Yeah, Canada the hypocrite will flash all its freedom credentials and then slum it in the gutter with Türkiye: nice turkey move Carney! The new partnership explicitly invokes democracy, individual liberties and the rule of law, even as rights groups continue to raise concerns about repression of opposition figures and journalists in Turkey.

Might as well drop the sanctions and trade with big, bad Russia, Carney. Russia has a Freedom House score of 12/100 and is not free but open for business! Da, we have diesel and gas comrades! Amerika, our best trade partner after China. Democracy and freedom sure is weak in 2026.

Careful whose money you take off the table, Carney.....

Nick Chatten
Crescent Valley

Pot + Math = ?

As I listened to CBC's news on October 8, 2026, the low math achievements of Canadian students were bemoaned. Make an experiment with yourself: take any of the two numbers between 11 and 19 and multiply them with each other in your head, when you are sober, like 13x19 or 14x17. Repeat the same multiplication, in your head again, after smoking a joint.

Do you get the same answer as before? Notice: after the joint, you can't concentrate. You can perhaps play jazz, paint abstract or surrealistic paintings, write fantastic letters to your friends, make wild vacation plans, dance like you never did before; but do math?

Did I smoke pot? Yes I did, after the age of 27, when I had learned "my" math. And then occasionally, not like what I smell today, walking through town, at all times of day. I gave up pot over 30 years ago, because it interfered with my breathing and tended to confuse me.

Get rid of pot and see not only math achievements go up.

Richard Eichenauer
Nakusp

Forests are the engines of the water cycle 26

Old-growth trees water all of BC by transporting the Pacific Ocean moisture all the way to the Rocky Mountains!

Once a 'primary' or an 'old-growth' tree reaches a critical mass, its canopy transpires hundreds of litres of water a day from the moist earth along with released volatile organic compounds, which act as seeds to form rain clouds that blow in the wind from 500 to 5,000 kilometres via tree corridors, before falling again to earth as rain or snow.

Primary forests influence the weather, where water comes onto the land and air, where it flows, and where it exits. Wildlife and all communities are dependent on the forest ecosystem for regulating the water cycle that provides consistent rains and fresh water, for purifying the air and water, and keeping the earth cool, serving as a buffer by mitigating the impact and adaptation to fossil fuel-caused climate change.

When mature forests are clearcut, this tree/rain symbiotic balance shatters. The fewer massive old-growth trees growing, the less moisture there is in the air, the clouds and rain are of less intensity, less rain is transported from forest to forest, which over time alters entire weather patterns.

When BC loses our old-growth forests, the potential for drought increases and wildfires become more prevalent. Deforestation diminishes surface cooling by 5-10 degrees Celsius, intensifying heat waves that dry up wells, damage key crop regions that humans rely on for sustenance, drying rivers and fish-spawning streams, the tragedy that is happening now.

The overharvesting of the old-growth trees is directly connected to the BC-wide drought of these once-verdant temperate rainforests.

If you do not hear politicians and experts speaking of the necessity of preserving our water supply by preserving the old-growth primary forests, setting aside trees to be designated as the next 'old-growth,' you will know that these voices are short-term and profit-oriented, rather than respecting the 'fall-down-on-your-knees brilliant intelligence' that the Earth so generously gifts all living with.

No promise less that restoring the tree/water balance is worth voting for.

With gratitude to Peter Wohlleben and the Howard County Forestry Board.

Susan Eyre
Sirdar

What a sad state of affairs in New Denver

What a sad state of affairs when some feel the need to attack candidates in the media. It becomes clear how uneducated they are on the whole story.

When researching for any retaliatory comebacks from the targeted candidates, there aren't any. It's obvious they refuse to stoop to such levels.

I have attended many council meetings, and some that are stooping to such levels had never attended when

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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*.

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I was present

Many don't know that Leonard [Casley] and Colin [Moss] have been on the front line for over a decade representing our community

This has included many meetings on their own dime and time with the powers to be to make sure we don't lose our services and to hopefully get back the level of care we once had.

They did this before they were elected to office and that in itself shows the passion in the care that they have for our community.

When attending rallies at the hospital to show support, I have not seen any of the noise makers or even some council members at the time

During the previous election some candidates didn't have a clue about the fight to save the services and how close we came to losing them.

The fight continues. Most long timers and lifetimers are fully aware of what we have gone through with the hospital. We can't afford to lose it. We deserve to have the golden hour as many do.

We have a high population of seniors and recreation injuries, especially in the summer. Waiting for hours for an ambulance can be the difference between life and death.

The mayor and council before Leonard and Colin were elected made a proposal to destroy the helicopter pad, which is ranked above required standard.

The goal was to rezone the hospital land where the helipad is and put in low-income housing, which were manufactured homes already built and ready to go.

The location did not support the concept in that it was not a suitable location, as it was the furthest point to access the amenities in town.

They didn't expect the response they got as the whole town showed up in support of not destroying the helipad.

I had never witnessed the community come together to stop the destruction and the lowering of our emergency services. It was obvious that there was a different plan. It was a ruse to change the zoning and have control on the best piece of property in town.

I think it's important to know exactly what Vern [Gustafson] and his family have heavily invested in personally to serve the community.

This includes the New Market grocery store and the condos beside Canco. Again this speaks volumes on the dedication he has in serving our community.

Both Vern and Colin, as mentioned in this letter, have humbly shown up for the betterment of our community. There are some new faces in this election and it would great to have them at the table.

Let's keep the momentum going.

Sabrina George
New Denver

Fear-based bear living

I am writing in response to a letter to the *Valley Voice* [Oct. 22 issue] by Tanya Gordon. Her letter is a great illustration of a fear-based way to live in bear country.

When she says "something needs to be done about these bears," that is asking for them to be put to death for simply being bears and following their hunger during this time of hyperphasia and fattening up for hibernation.

Perhaps she is unaware that doing "something" to black bears here very rarely means relocation. She goes on to say that "someone is going to get severely hurt." Per the North American Bear Centre, you are 45 times more likely to be killed by a dog, 120 times more likely to be killed by bees, and 60,000 times more likely to be murdered by another human – than to be killed by a black bear.

Our black bears have no intention of attacking you or your children. Did you know that they are about 85%+ vegetarian, and supplement their diet with proteins made up of grubs, bugs, bees, etc., and an occasional found dead animal. Now this is not to say they aren't capable of great harm, but their nature is diminutive and shy; they put far more effort into getting along with us, than we them.

Gordon then discusses the "unacceptable" vision of seeing two mothers with three cubs in a two-block radius, "roaming so freely" in a municipality. Mother bears with cubs often seek safety from larger males amongst people. We should take a pause, and give that some respect. These villages were settled 100+ years ago. This has been bear territory for 10,000 years. When we plop a community in the middle of bear territory, and ask that they all must be kept out, we might want to reconsider – if we cannot be tolerant and respectful enough of our wildlife – if this is where we should be living.

The Bear Smart program is an effective effort that has been proven to reduce human conflict, and specifically addresses the importance of bylaws; they are an important tool. Fruit trees are responsibly maintained with simple electric fencing, and there may even be subsidies available to cost share.

She is right: our provincial policies do need to change in a way that kills fewer bears, and so do the attitudes of those who want to live in our wild places.

Katie Graves
Nelson

Trump should be charged with treason

The definition of treason is giving aid and comfort to an enemy. That is exactly what Trump is doing with Russia, by buying Russian oil. Aiding and abetting them by defying his own orders to sanction any country buying Russian oil. Also by delaying shipments of Patriot missiles to Ukraine, already bought and paid for by NATO countries. Also by deliberately cutting off Ukraine's access to Starlink, which they need to defend themselves from Russian drones, etc.

Why isn't he being arrested for treason? He is destroying his own country and the world around him while the Republicans sit idly by and allow him to do whatever he wants to the people of America and the rest of the world, while he makes his family and himself richer every day with his corrupt actions.

What is wrong with the Republicans that they allow it to go on? Trump's actions are hurting their fellow Americans, yet they sit back and do nothing. I have a new slogan for Trump's followers: instead of "Make America Great Again," it should be "Chumps for Trump."

Len Heppner
Nakusp

A tribute to Doug Roberts – a man we could all emulate

When I came up with the idea of a Jazz Festival in Kaslo in 1991, Doug was the first person to jump in with me. After the first two seasons, when the venue proved to be too small to comfortably accommodate the required infrastructure, I presented him with the idea of a floating stage; just days later he came back to me with a plan.

Then for the 1994 Festival, as I struggled with 2 x 4s and rolls of black plastic to build a cover for the stage – a super hokey endeavour – he said, "Y'know… if it's worth doing, it's worth doing well." A few days later he came back to me with a plan for an aluminum-frame stage cover, locally fabricated, and had it ready to assemble for the following festival in 1995. He designed it, built it and found a structural engineer to approve that cover, the profile of which is now the trademark image of the Kaslo Jazz Festival!

Kaslo Bay Park, the site of Jazz Etc., forms a natural amphitheatre surrounded by trees, with an exquisite view of Mount Loki across the lake. Doug approached me again and said, "Y'know… it would really enhance things to light up the trees around the park." Of course, by then all I could do was agree, "You've got that right." The next year my friend unleashed his creative flare once again and Kaslo Bay burst into a magically lit night space full of music and celebration.

On Saturday, October 3, Doug Roberts left us. He was a quiet and unassuming but tireless force in our community – helping elevate Jazz Fest, developing the Family Bike Park and mountain bike trails, and working 23 years as bicycle repairman "Doug-the-Bike-Guy." He was also a woodworker, craftsman, musician and entrepreneur: the founder of Figments Fine Canadian Crafts (1985-1997) and Westminster Wind Chimes. In the last two years he dedicated his energy to seeing Village land protected, and advocated for a land swap to preserve natural areas at South Beach for future generations. His last act as an engaged resident of Kaslo was to submit his vote for the municipal election by mail-in ballot.

Doug will be missed as someone whose positive energy, quest to change things for the better, and dedication to worthwhile causes we can all take inspiration from.

Jim Holland
Kaslo

What will Will do with my vote?

In a letter in the Oct 8 issue of the *Valley Voice*, the two RDCK candidates were brought up and a preference was stated along with the ostrich incident and "COVID restrictions." The one clearly true item in what the author writes relates to "continuity." In others words, do everything that you can to maintain a status quo even when it means look the other way.

The "Edgewood debacle" cost over $6 million. Good example. This was based on testing two birds on one occasion with a faulty PCR test that even the creator of the test, Kary Mullis, spoke about the limitations of this as a testing tool. The CFIA chose to not have any other testing done, including from third parties. Incredible abuse of power and overreach and over-spending.

The author goes on about: "based on science" with respect to the COVID response. I'd like to pose some questions. Are you aware of the Allison Inquiry here in Canada? Have you followed the US hearings with Fauci, which focus largely on the facts that it was a Gain of Function (GOF) lab leak and that he randomly came up with masks and social distancing mandates that were not based on science let alone evidence.

Were you aware that David M. Morens (senior NIAID official and Fauci consultant) was indicted on charges including conspiracy, record falsification, and obstruction related to COVID-19 research records. He pled guilty and faces sentencing Nov. 12. Have you heard of the case right now going on in the Netherlands? It's so critical at this time to face the fact that the COVID response was based on manipulated science and we are seeing the attempts to correct for the wrongdoing.

As for our local election, I was glad to see two people that I have had interactions with in the valley. It was a challenging decision for me. I appreciate Will Parker – he lives like I live and shares a common connection to this community. Congratulations on your win. I do have questions for you Will: will you represent the 30% that didn't vote for you? The one thing that drew me to Kevin Shaw was that he, rightly so, wants to address government overspending and overreach. This isn't simply a matter of costs of living going up.

Corinne Mori ran for Nelson MLA two years ago and she did a presentation here in the valley about RDCK overspending and positions being created. While I find myself not agreeing with her on several political points, the information she uncovered and presented appeared well research and very thorough. So, what will you do about the recent wave of excessive government spending and the rise in property taxes?

Todd Orlando
Winlaw

continued on page 19

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Winlaw Home Hardware expands to offer locally milled lumber

by Nikko Snyder

A long-standing family friendship has led to a new business partnership that's bringing locally harvested and milled wood to customers in the Slocan Valley.

Matt Dutoff and Rami Rothkop have known each other for years, and their families go way back. Nowadays, Matt owns the Slocan Valley Home Hardware in Winlaw, and Rami manages Harrop Procter Forest Products (HPFP).

HPFP, which has been operated by the Harrop Procter Community Forest since 2011, is a local sawmill that processes fir and cedar logs from the community forest. Though customers can buy from the mill directly, recently Rami has been seeking out additional retail opportunities for HPFP products. That's how the partnership with Slocan Valley Home Hardware (SVHH) came to be.

"How this happened was me contacting Matt and asking if I could come out and talk about it," says Rami. "I tried quite a few different retailers around here and far away to see if they'd be interested in having some of our wood, and [SVHH] is the first one. And our values, I would say, are pretty similar."

Those values, Rami and Matt agree, include supporting local, strengthening the regional economy, and the community forest model, which in the case of Harrop Procter, focuses on local employment over profit.

The quality of HPFP products is also high. Since he started carrying their lumber in August, Matt says that he's been getting a lot of positive feedback from customers.

"We'll show you the difference in wood," Rami said when the *Valley Voice* visited SVHH in Winlaw to learn more about the partnership. "It's quite different than conventional. It's a lot heavier and a lot of people like working with that, because that's how wood used to be before we had super mills."

New to the lumber game

Matt's Home Hardware didn't carry lumber at all before this past summer, and the expansion and HPFP partnership has been somewhat serendipitous.

"Interestingly, when I phoned Matt he said, 'Oh, that's kind of good timing, because we've never had lumber before, but we have a building just about finished,'" said Rami.

The structure he was referring to, which now houses SVHH lumber, was recently built from lumber that Matt's father, Fred Dutoff, logged and milled with another community member two years ago. Fred passed away in January 2026.

"We had [the wood] sitting there and we were kind of hemming and hawing on what we wanted to do with it," said Matt. "And then when he [Fred] passed we decided that we would put this up in his honour."

Because SVHH is new to lumber, Matt is still experimenting with supply, demand, and margins. But for him, it's a great opportunity to give Valley residents an excuse to buy local.

"My goal has always been, how can we save people from driving?" said Matt. "Why do we have to go into Nelson? If someone can get their 2 x 4s here, all of a sudden [...] they're gonna shop here in Winlaw and not go and get everything they need in town. So it's a way to keep the community a little more community focused."

It's also an opportunity for Matt to shift the way he does business. Hauling local lumber from Harrop Procter using his electric truck helps him lower both his transportation costs and the carbon footprint of his business.

People over profit

From Rami's perspective, the partnership helps HPFP prioritize what's most important to them. "The goal of big mills is to put as much wood through as fast as possible with as few people as possible," said Rami. "And our thing is to employ more people, and the costs are way higher. So we've chosen [products] that are higher value that we can be competitive on, like siding, decking, flooring, panelling, higher end surface wood."

Rami went on to say that on average in BC, processing 1,000 cubic metres (40 truckloads) of wood amounts to 0.8 jobs. In comparison, HPFP employs five to six people to process the same volume. Although employing people is expensive, the non-profit community forest model allows HPFP's emphasis on employment to be an asset as well as a cost.

"If we're going to have five more people working and break even, then it's successful," he said.

All told, the new partnership between two established West Kootenay businesses (and families) looks to be a win-win situation for HPFP, SVHH, and local residents alike.

PHOTO CREDIT: NIKKO SNYDER

Harrop Procter Forest Products (HPFP) manager Rami Rothkop (left) with Slocan Valley Home Hardware owner Matt Dutoff (right) in Winlaw. HPFP has been supplying Winlaw's Home Hardware with lumber milled in Harrop since August.

Slocan Valley HOME HARDWARE

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Jesse Anderson

July 19, 1951 – September 27, 2026

Jesse Anderson, 75, of Slocan, BC, passed away in his home on September 27th. Born to Irv and Lou Anderson, Jesse spent his entire life in Slocan. He worked at the sawmill from 1968 to 2013.

To honour Jesse's wishes, a public service will not be held. The family invites you to remember him in your own way, maybe over a cup of coffee at Mountain Valley Station.

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Brent Kennedy Elementary School gets a splash of colour and local joy

submitted by Brent Kennedy PAC

If you have driven past Brent Kennedy (BK) Elementary School lately, you have likely noticed a major punch of vibrant new energy.

Over the summer, two magnificent colourful murals took over the school's exterior walls, completely revitalizing the space and brightening up the whole neighbourhood.

The artwork was brought to life by talented local artist and school parent Matty Kakes, who poured his passion into the project.

For anyone walking by who wonders about the meaning behind the imagery, the art brings the school's core values to life. The first mural is a beautiful visual representation of the BK PATH, which stands for peacefulness, accountability, thoughtfulness, and humility.

The second mural is a joyful celebration of wildlife.

This beautiful community addition wouldn't have been possible without some incredible local teamwork. The BK Parent Advisory Council offers massive thanks to Matty Kakes for gifting his incredible vision and creative talent to our school.

A huge shout-out also goes to the team at Slocan Valley Home Hardware, who generously donated supplies to bring these walls to life.

And thank you to Steller Vista for their support and contribution. It is local business support like this that makes our community so special.

We extend our gratitude to Principal Danielle Klassen for fostering creativity at our school and supporting this mural from start to finish.

Next time you are passing by Brent Kennedy, we invite you to slow down, take a look, and soak in the positive energy!

PHOTO COURTESY: BRENT KENNEDY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PAC

PHOTO COURTESY: BRENT KENNEDY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PAC

Brent Kennedy Elementary School parent Matty Kakes created two colourful murals on the school this past summer. The murals celebrate wildlife and the school's core values of peacefulness, accountability, thoughtfulness, and humility.

MINES ACT NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A PERMIT APPROVING THE PROPOSED MINE PLAN AND RECLAMATION PROGRAM FOR SAND AND GRAVEL EXTRACTION AREA

Take notice that Grant Piljek of Pass Creek Holdings Ltd. has filed with the Chief Permitting Officer under Section 10(1) of the Mines Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 293, a proposed mine plan together with a program for the protection and reclamation of the land and water courses related to property located at 49.4155130, -117.6569850, on lands legally described as LOT 4, DISTRICT LOT 8649, KOOTENAY DISTRICT, PLAN NEP84342 and an Undivided 872/1000 share in LOT 3, PLAN NEP84342.

A copy of the permit application, including supporting documentation, is available for public viewing at: Castlegar Public Library, 1005 3rd Street, Castlegar, BC, V1N 2A2.

Any person affected by or interested in this program has 30 days to make written representation to the Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals, c/o Southeast Regional Office, Suite 202, 100 Cranbrook St. N., Cranbrook, BC V1C 3P9 or by email MMD-Cranbrook@gov.bc.ca, (facsimile: 250-417-6133), with a copy to piljek@shaw.ca and baylie@keefereco.com.

Application information and instructions for submitting comments to the Ministry are also available on the Mines Public Engagement Portal at 'www.gov.bc.ca/minesengagement' or scan the QR code below.

Slocan Valley Housing Society

New Housing in Slocan

ḱmqiń Headwaters

Information Meeting on Application Process

Saturday, November 28
3 to 7 pm • Slocan Legion

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Locals rally against logging in Cai Creek

submitted by Save Cai Creek

Nearly 100 people hiked into Cai Creek on Saturday, October 24 to show their opposition to logging that recently began in the watershed outside Castlegar.

People of all ages came from across the West Kootenay to hike the three-km trail that leads up Cai Creek and into the forest slated to be logged. Visitors came from Castlegar, Trail, Slocan, and Nelson, with some coming from as far as Vernon and Penticton just to join the event, which was organized in less than 48 hours.

Hikers wrote messages and pinned them on trees inside the cutblock boundary to show their opposition to the logging in Cai Creek. Some wrote messages advocating for forestry reform, while others wrote messages to the foresters that planned the cutblock, or the loggers hoping to harvest the trees.

"A beautiful and unique home to many creatures. It would make a great haven to leave this area intact" read one message. "Please leave this ecosystem untouched for all of us and our children" read another.

Hikers pinned messages to cedar, fir, and pine, many of the trees over one metre in diameter and over 250 years old. Despite a fire in Cai Creek in 1934, thousands of old trees survived the fire leaving a diverse and mixed-age forest. Hikers passed beside trees both young and old on their way to a viewpoint at the north end of the watershed.

"Cai Creek has a bit of everything. There's so much more value in this forest than just timber. Everyone hiking in this forest today can clearly see that" said Matt Casselman, a local biologist who organized the hike and has been advocating for the protection of Cai Creek since 2021.

Casselman said the event was an opportunity for the public to send a message to BC Timber Sales (BCTS), the Provincial agency that planned the cutblock in Cai Creek, the Sutherland Group of Companies, that secured the logging rights from BCTS, and Interfor, that will be receiving the logs from Cai Creek.

"People came today because their calls for the protection of Cai Creek have been ignored," said Casselman. "Through petitions to government and comments to BCTS, community members from all backgrounds, including local mill workers, have clearly said that Cai Creek should not be logged."

Cai Creek was sold for logging by BCTS in March 2025. The sale occurred despite a complaint that Casselman filed with the Forest Practices Board in October 2024, alleging that BCTS failed to consider public input on logging in Cai Creek.

BCTS carried out public consultation on the planned logging in Cai Creek in June-July 2024. According to Freedom of Information documents, 93 out of 97 comments expressed opposition to the logging. However, BCTS made no meaningful changes to the block layout and proceeded with the logging, says Casselman.

"People were overwhelmingly opposed to the logging. But the day after public comments closed on Cai Creek, BCTS moved the sale of Cai Creek ahead in their schedule. That was a clear indication to me the managers at BCTS had no intention of changing their logging plans or considering public input" said Casselman.

Cai Creek has since become a local tourist destination for hikers wanting to see BC's largest Ponderosa Pine, which is located in Cai Creek. Casselman established the route to 'Lieutenant Dan' in 2023 as a way to encourage people to explore the forest. He estimates the trail register at the tree has recorded over 1,000 visitors since 2023, not including the 87 people that made the hike on Saturday.

Although logging has started in Cai Creek, Casselman is hopeful there's still a chance to stop any further logging.

BCTS and Interfor toured the block with Casselman and other concerned citizens on October 30. During the tour, Casselman highlighted areas of forest where old-growth trees were not marked for retention, contradicting BCTS' statements that old-growth trees in the block would be retained.

"So long as the trees are still standing there's an opportunity for BCTS, Sutherland, and Interfor to do what's right for the community and save Cai Creek."

A mother and daughter hug a Ponderosa pine in Cai Creek.

A group of hikers stand above the intact Cai Creek watershed.

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First Poppy of 2026

PHOTO COURTESY: ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION BRANCH #20

The first Poppy of 2026, presented by Cheryl Truax, Poppy Chairperson, to Nakusp Mayor Tom Zeleznik. This year is the 100th Anniversary of the Royal Canadian Legion's in Canada. New memberships are free for 2026 in celebration of the Centenary year. December 2 will mark the 100th Anniversary of Legion Branch #20, Nakusp.

Arrow Lakes Search and Rescue prepares for winter season

submitted by Arrow Lakes Search and Rescue

Arrow Lakes Search and Rescue is preparing for the winter season! We have reviewed our winter response gear and made some switches to our 24-hour personal packs as the seasons start to change to winter.

We also reviewed our new avalanche transceivers that we were able to purchase with a generous grant from the Nakusp and Area Community Foundation. Thank you to the NACF for their contribution.

These four transceivers are a huge upgrade for our team in advanced technology to keep our responders safe, and also increase search and rescue effectiveness when responding to an avalanche rescue.

Next, we will be doing winter training scenarios and utilizing this new equipment.

If you plan to recreate this winter, remember to: take the essentials; leave a trip plan; and take proper training to keep yourself and your friends safe.

Arrow Lakes Search and Rescue is a volunteer-run group that responds to emergencies 24/7, 365 days a year in the Nakusp, Galena Bay, Monashee, Arrow Lake, and Slocan Lake region. We are trained in ground response; winter response; flat ice and flat water rescue; tracking; drone operations; and medical rescues.

PHOTO COURTESY: ARROW LAKES SEARCH AND RESCUE

Arrow Lakes Search and Rescue members participating in the Avalanche Skills Training Level 1 course.

Healthy Community Society celebrates 20 years at Harvest Dinner, November 14

submitted by the Healthy Community Society of the North Slocan Valley

This year's Harvest Dinner at the Silverton Memorial Hall on Saturday, November 14 from 5 to 8 pm is going to be extra special because the organization that brings you this event every year is celebrating its 20th anniversary! The Healthy Community Society of the North Slocan Valley (HCS) has been bringing people together and supporting a healthy, connected and sustainable community for two decades.

The Society's current projects include Share Teach Grow, which involves the Garden/Greenhouse educational program at Lucerne School and some of the community's favourite annual events: Harvest Dinner, Seedy Saturday and Harvest Festival. HCS also manages the Community Composting Program in New Denver and Silverton.

Over the years, the Society has undertaken an impressive range of projects. Early initiatives included a Housing Needs and Demands Survey, a Welcoming Guide for new residents and visitors, an economic forum with Mike Stolte, and a Community Greenhouse Feasibility Study with Marcy Mahr.

The Society's work evolved to focus on food, gardening and community celebrations. The first Harvest Festival was held in 2008, followed by many years of Harvest Dinners, Seedy Saturdays, and Earth Day activities. HCS also delivered healthy breakfast and lunch programs at Lucerne School for many years.

Other initiatives have included the Village Hearth farm-to-table restaurant, the Culinary Tool Library, and the Bounty Share program, which helped local gardeners sell surplus produce at the Friday Market. Through the New Horizons for Seniors program, the Society launched Connecting Generations, bringing youth and elders together through school gardening, garden tours and the *Talking Spade* book project.

The Society's work has also helped inspire other community projects, such as the Fireweed Hub, Bread and Roses Bakery and local affordable housing efforts.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of the Society's many past board members, staff members and volunteers. Their ideas, time, energy and willingness to help have shaped the organization and allowed its work to continue for 20 years.

The Society extends sincere thanks to the funders, organizations, businesses and individuals who have provided grants, partnerships, expertise and direction. Support has come from Columbia Basin Trust, Villages of New Denver and Silverton, Area H, New Horizons for Seniors, the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission, the RDCK, Recreation Commission 6, Kootenay Savings, Slocan Valley Legacy Society, Farm to Cafeteria Canada, Farm to School Canada, Lucerne School, Hills Recreation Society, private businesses and many individual community supporters.

Everyone is invited to Harvest Dinner on November 14. This is a free community potluck. Turkey will be provided, along with live music and a special 20th anniversary presentation. Community members are asked to bring a favourite dish or dessert to share. Bring along a neighbour, too! Society memberships may be renewed for $5 and donations are welcome.

The Society's annual general meeting will take place just a few days after Harvest Dinner, on Tuesday, November 17, at 6 pm at Fireweed Hub in New Denver. Homemade turkey soup and sourdough bread by Kate Smyles will be served. New board members are urgently needed. Anyone interested in helping guide the next chapter of the society is encouraged to attend the AGM and learn more.

For information, email hcsnorthslocanvalley@gmail.com or find the Healthy Community Society of the North Slocan Valley on Facebook.

SLOCAN LAKE ARTS COUNCIL

SLOCAN LAKE ARTS COUNCIL

invites Expressions of Interest for

ADMINISTRATIVE AND/OR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROLE(S)

For details, visit

slocanlakeartscouncil.ca

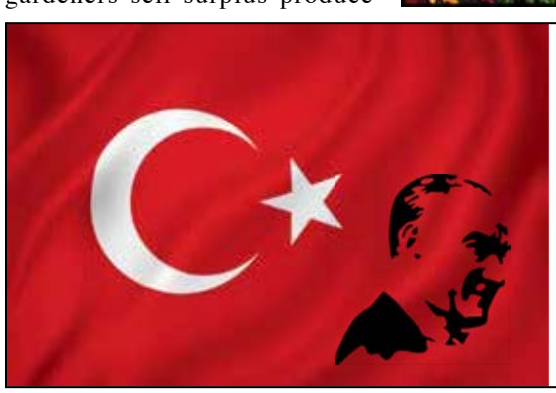
New Denver

On November 11, we pause to honour the courage and sacrifice of those who served for our freedom.

LEST WE FORGET

All are invited to attend the New Denver Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Cenotaph on Eldorado Avenue, by Slocan Lake.

10:45 a.m. Procession Begins From the Fire Hall (115 Slocan Ave)
11:00 a.m. Moment of Silence



This year on October 29, Turkish people across the world proudly celebrated the 103rd anniversary of the **Proclamation of the Republic of Türkiye**, honouring with deep gratitude the founder of our Republic, Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and the heroic veterans of the War of Independence.

Today, with its strong democratic values, dynamic population, resilient economy and principled humanitarian foreign policy, **Türkiye continues to stand as a pillar of peace, stability and prosperity** in its region and beyond. Türkiye remains a leading contributor to global humanitarian efforts and continues to host the largest number of refugees in the world.

We, the Turkish-Canadian community, proudly share in the joy and pride of this historic day and extend our warmest greetings and best wishes from Canada. Visit **www.mfa.gov.tr** for Turkish foreign policy news.

Kamil Aksoylu, New Denver

Rosebery wildfire risk reduction projects discussed at Rosebery Community Association event

submitted by Rosebery Community Association

A Rosebery Community BBQ and Information Session was held at the Slocan Lake Golf Course on October 17. The Rosebery Community Association (RCA) organized the event to update the community on local wildfire risk reduction and FireSmart projects, and to treat community members to a delicious barbecue by local chef Vincent Obre.

Kay Schweitzer, RCA president, welcomed the crowd of about 50 people to the event. She thanked Columbia Basin Trust for funding the first phase of the wildfire risk reduction project and for approving funding for the upcoming second phase.

Amanda Murphy, CBT community liaison for the area, said the 2024 Wilson Creek fire was a reminder of how quickly conditions can change and how important it is to be prepared. She said the Rosebery projects were a great example of neighbours helping neighbours and taking steps today that will help tomorrow.

Caribe Niemann, registered forest technologist at Cabin Resources Management, has been overseeing the Rosebery project over the last two years. She said phase two would be done very similarly to phase one. The crew will reduce surface fuels that are 7-20 centimetres in diameter, thin out the understory layers, and do some pruning. Debris will be chipped and removed or dispersed, or burned in piles. The work performed is only done on Crown land.

Niemann explained that bigger logs and branches are left on the ground because they don't contribute to wildfire hazard, and they provide moisture, shade and wildlife habitat.

The goals of the project are to reduce the potential for extreme fire behaviour, create a defensible space (which will assist firefighters), enhance ecosystem health, and protect life and property, critical infrastructure, as well as ingress and egress routes.

RDCK FireSmart Program Coordinator Aquila Brown said Rosebery is a great example that other communities can look to for inspiration. Many Rosebery residents have had their homes assessed through the RDCK's Wildfire Mitigation Program – and Rosebery Highlands, Rosebery South and Rosebery North are all FireSmart Collectives (formerly known as FireSmart Neighbourhoods). Collective champions are Dave McCulloch (Rosebery Highlands), Kay Schweitzer (Rosebery South) and Lori Bradish (Rosebery North).

Brown acknowledged that FireSmarting individual properties can be expensive, and the RDCK rebate program has been very successful. However, funding has been reduced this year, so there will probably not be a rebate program in 2027.

FireSmart Collectives are eligible for $500 per year if they do some work to reduce wildfire risk in their neighbourhoods. One resident reported that Rosebery South didn't have their work day this year because the Rosebery transfer station couldn't accept large loads. Brown said he was aware of this issue and was working on it. Another resident suggested funding through RDCK for the community to buy a chipper, which could be located at the transfer station, while Schweitzer suggested that the RDCK offer two months of free yard waste disposal in both the spring and fall.

Jake Roos, co-owner of Loki Tree and Forest Service and a wildfire fighter for 25 years, said his company specializes in FireSmarting private properties. They also offer basic wildfire fighting training courses (S-100 and S-185).

"Community resilience is what we are talking about in the face of climate change and longer, hotter, drier summers," he said. "People want to feel empowered, and people who take the basic training are empowered with knowledge and can speak the [BC Wildfire Service] language."

Dry fire hydrant project

RCA Director Dave McCulloch spoke briefly about a dry hydrant project the RCA is working on, to enable tanker trucks to be filled quickly in case of a house fire or a wildfire. Two potential locations for the hydrant have been identified near the Wilson Creek bridge. RCA is working on a grant application for this project.

Asset mapping

Schweitzer said another project in the works for RCA is asset mapping. Asset mapping would compile inventories of residents (full-time and seasonal), seniors, livestock, roads, waterways, heavy equipment, pumps, generators, etc. She said the information would be kept confidential and only shared with authorities in the case of an emergency like a fire, flood, or hazardous spill on the highway.

Silverton Community Club
SCC
Working Together

The 2026 Slocan Valley Veterans Project is now complete!

The project includes a veterans crosswalk in Slocan, a veterans memorial design in front of the New Denver cenotaph, deep cleaning of the New Denver cenotaph and manufacture and installation of a fallen veterans memorial plaque added to the New Denver cenotaph.

Thank You to all who contributed financially to this project

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Regional District of Central Kootenay, Village of Slocan, Village of Silverton, Village of New Denver

ORGANIZATIONS

Columbia Basin Trust (ReDi Grants), Slocan Legion Branch #276, Silverton Community Club

BUSINESS

Canco Fuels
Camp Café Silverton
New Market Foods
New Denver Pharmacy
North Slocan Mining Group Ltd.
Reitmeier Logging
Reitmeier Transport
Sedgwick Strategies
Silverton Building Supplies
Silverton Transport

SLOCAN VALLEY RESIDENTS

The Silverton Community Club thanks the many Slocan Valley residents who contributed financially to this project.

— JOB WELL DONE! —

Hear the stories behind the stories and support a just peace in Palestine-Israel

submitted by KFoST

On November 14, the Kootenay Friends of Standing Together (KFoST) will present *Palestine 36*, a sweeping historical epic tracing the origins of a story still unfolding today in Palestine-Israel.

Starring Saleh Bakri, Hiam Abbass (*Succession*), Oscar winner Jeremy Irons and Liam Cunningham (*Game of Thrones*), *Palestine 36* reconstructs the Arab revolt against British colonial rule in 1936. Tensions rise in Jerusalem and Palestinian villages amid British crackdowns prompted by the arrival of Jewish immigrants escaping antisemitism in Europe. All sides spiral towards conflict in what will become an historic moment for the British Empire, its western allies, and the future of the entire region. The film provides essential historical background to the situation in the region today. With a 15-minute standing ovation at the Toronto Film Festival and a short-listing for the Academy Award Best Foreign Film Feature, it has received praise for its scale, emotional depth, and powerful storytelling.

According to KFoST member Bessie Wapp, "there is a certain historical amnesia that sometimes leads people to think all this bloodshed started on October 7 [2023]. But the violence has been going on for well over a century, and it has diverse and messy roots. These include the historical persecution of Jews in Europe who genuinely needed refuge, and the messianic settler movement that is currently brutalizing Palestinian villagers in the West Bank daily, with full military support. A lasting peace will only be possible if we acknowledge that both peoples have suffered terribly, and that there is a grievous power imbalance."

KFoST describes Standing Together as the largest grassroots peace movement in Palestine-Israel: co-led by Jews and Palestinians, it actively campaigns against forever war by engaging in co-resistance to what it sees as Israel's illegal occupation, apartheid, and genocide in Palestinian territories. At the same time, they call out the violence of Hamas and other militant groups who target civilians in the name of national liberation. KFoST says Standing Together rejects extremist calls for the forced expulsion of either Jews or Palestinians from the land.

Through joint struggle and shared values, these activists find hope. "We are not looking for middle ground," they say, "We are creating new ground."

The future of Palestine and Israel must be decided by those affected.

Proceeds from the film screenings will go to Standing Together's Solidarity Guard, which works in the West Bank and Israel to help protect Palestinians from increasingly violent settler attacks.

Palestine 36 will screen at the Nelson United Church on November 14 at 7 pm. Doors open at 6:30.

Tickets are $15 and available online at simpli.events/e/Palestine-36-film-screening, in person at Otter Books, and at the door.

For more information about KFoST: kootenayfost@gmail.com.

Erratum

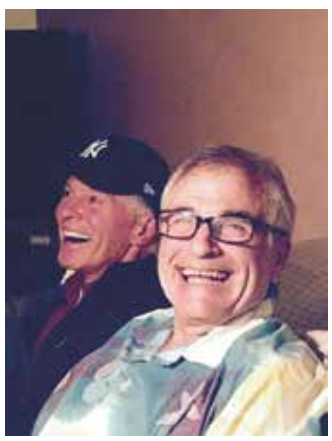
In the October 22 issue of the *Valley Voice*, an article was submitted regarding the New Denver Nursery School seeking new Board members. The Slocan Lake Early Learning Society would like to amend and apologize for an omission made regarding the origins of the Program.

In 1978, Heather Simpson and Gay Houston co-founded the New Denver Nursery School and ran the preschool together.

In Memoriam

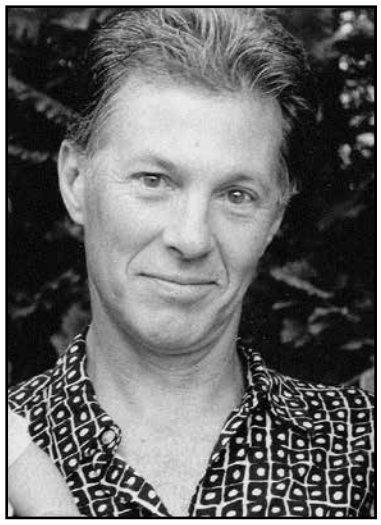
Kevin and Mike, 80
Born November 6, 1946

There once were boys
born the same day,
brothers from different
mothers were they.
Best friends did they be,
from PA to BC,
"Wherever thou goest will
he."



(Daniel) Kevin Murphy

November 6, 1946 – August 18, 2026



Kevin Murphy of New Denver, BC, passed away this summer, just shy of his 80th birthday, his wit intact to the end.

Son of Dolores and Daniel Murphy, he grew up in Levittown, Pennsylvania, with his sisters Geri and Pat. He was a star athlete throughout high school and at St. Joseph's College. When Nixon and the war in Vietnam closed in around him, he left with a group of idealistic, educated hippies who were looking for paradise. One of a wave of young protesters seeking somewhere else to build a safe future, he found it in the West Kootenays. He never regretted the choice.

He and his friends lived first in a commune in Pennsylvania, then together in a series of cabins in Kaslo, Galena Bay, Edgewood and the Slocan Valley, full of music and adventure. Many remained his closest friends for life.

In a Kaslo café he met his brown-eyed girl. He and Jane were married for 52 years. Together they raised two children, Jeremy and Amanda, on a steady diet of healthy food, sports, service to community, curiosity and a love of learning and adventure. After living and working in several Kootenay communities, they came at last to rest in New Denver.

For more than 30 years he was a teacher, and he always said he taught children, not subjects. He used music, movement, sports, language and the news of the day to help them reflect and connect. He had a particular gift for the ones who struggled to find their place, and endless patience for children, though less for fools.

He loved a gentle provocation, and he played with words, songs and stories to comment on the world and on the peccadilloes of his friends and colleagues. He believed in public education and in democracy, and to that end he served as a teachers' union representative, chaired local organizations and was a New Denver councillor for eight years.

He had a sport for every season and relished a good contest. He played, taught and coached many sports throughout his life. He remained a lifelong Yankees fan ever since his father took him to games as a boy. He was up for a game of bocce just weeks before his passing. He rode his bike for as long as it would carry him.

Other joys included singing, music and time with his family, particularly his grandchildren, Senna, Yonah and Iris. He treasured all the moments he shared with them.

He bore his long illness with dignity and grace, never losing his humour. His family thanks the staff at the Slocan Lake Community Health Centre, Kelowna General Hospital and the Arrow Lakes Community Health Centre for their care and kindness.

He is survived by his wife, Jane; his children, Jeremy (Taira) and Amanda; his grandchildren, Senna, Yonah and Iris; his sisters, Geri and Pat; and a wide circle of dear friends.

At Kevin's request, there will be no public service. If his life touched yours, his family asks that you consider a donation to the New Denver Scholarship Fund, Wildsight or the Slocan Valley Legacy Fund, so that future local generations can also benefit from education, nature and adventure.

He gave his whole heart to creating a just and vibrant world. Losing him has broken ours.

The Valley VOICE
valleyvoice.ca

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Meadow Creek Store on its way to becoming a cooperative

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

A group of Lardeau Valley residents have come together to create a more sustainable and resilient future for the area – by purchasing the Meadow Creek Store as a cooperative, and keeping the asset community-owned.

Larry and Coriene Greenlaw opened the Meadow Creek Store after their Howser store closed when Duncan Dam flooded the area in the '60s. Since 2003, Mark and Kristine Healy have operated the store.

"Calling it a store doesn't address all that it is," said the area's RDCK Director, Aimee Watson, at a recent online meeting on October 27.

Meeting attendees agreed: the Meadow Creek Store is much more than a store. It's a community hub, where residents and visitors alike go to meet people and stay connected. With its generator, propane refills, and Wi-Fi access, it is also essential in remote areas like the Lardeau Valley, where emergencies happen more frequently and take longer to resolve. It connects community members to what they need, both practically and socially. And, it's even the post office.

So when Mark and Kris wanted to explore a new venture and transition away from private ownership to a cooperative structure, it wasn't tricky to get a steering committee rounded up – Lila, Kate, Jenn, and Violet. The group received funding from ETSI-BC (Economic Trust of the Southern Interior), the RDCK, and Rural BC for a feasibility study, community engagement, admin assistance, and business coaching from Co-operatives First – a non-profit organization that provides co-op start-up resources.

A co-op is a business or organization owned by a group of people with a common goal. Members appoint a board of directors, make decisions together, and share the business's profits.

The Meadow Creek Cooperative will also offer opportunities to purchase investment shares, but will retain the hallmark of co-ops:

"One member, one vote," said Cathy Edwards, business coach and entrepreneur-in-residence with Co-operatives First. "The quality of voice is not driven by the weight of investment."

The Meadow Creek Cooperative Store will be community-owned by its membership. It will stay under the same management, but will work under a board of directors instead of private ownership.

The board of directors represents the community and addresses day-to-day decisions. Any bigger changes are made with community engagement.

Profits within co-ops are distributed in several ways, including returned to member-owners through patronage dividends, reinvested into the business for future growth, or donated to local community groups.

The building will be purchased through a mix of grants, loans, and community support. The most important component is community support. The more money the community can raise, the more financially stable the new co-operative will be.

The Meadow Creek Cooperative Store is already legally incorporated. The meeting in October welcomed a larger community audience to discuss core values, brainstorm mission and vision statements, and contribute ideas for a membership agreement and an investment share valuation.

PHOTO COURTESY: MEADOW CREEK COOPERATIVE FACEBOOK

The Meadow Creek Store, which is a Lardeau Valley community hub, is being transitioned from a privately owned business to a community-owned cooperative.

Get involved

A draft mission/vision statement, membership agreement, and investment share structure, along with a business valuation will be presented at another community meeting on November 12.

Watch for communications being circulated in the community. For more information, or to get involved, visit the Facebook Page 'Meadow Creek Cooperative Store' or email meadowcreekcoop@gmail.com.

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Friday Nov 6 / Saturday Nov 7 @ 7 pm
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At The Langham ~ Tix @ Sunnyside $20
2026
Eric Moon Jay Danley Reid Smith
Tina McLaren Yvonne Boyd Crystal Moon
Nancy Ryde Lynn van Deursen
& Gordon Portman

Community Fund of North Kootenay Lake Society invites local philanthropy

submitted by CFNKLS

As the year draws to a close, many residents of the North Kootenay Lake region are reflecting on what makes their communities thrive. The Community Fund of North Kootenay Lake Society (CFNKLS) is welcoming donations to its permanent endowment funds, offering a unique opportunity for locals to leave a lasting legacy across the region.

Unlike a donation to a single charity, gifts made to CFNKLS are permanently invested with the Vancouver Foundation. The earned interest is then distributed back into the community every spring. Earlier this year, CFNKLS awarded over $50,000 in grants to a wide range of vital community initiatives, supporting local projects from Ainsworth in the south to Argenta in the north.

"The spirit of philanthropy and a deep love for our communities is at the very heart of why our funds were founded," says Honora Cooper, CFNKLS Board President. "When individuals consider their year-end giving, they often look for ways to support their specific passions. A direct donation to a local charity is an excellent choice for immediate, specific needs. However, if you want your gift to benefit the entire community for decades to come, CFNKLS ensures that your passion continues to give back in perpetuity."

Managed by a dedicated, local volunteer board of directors, CFNKLS operates an unrestricted General Endowment Fund alongside targeted field-of-interest funds. These include funds dedicated to the environment, children, youth and families, arts, culture, heritage, and seniors. This diverse approach ensures that any local passion can be supported through the society's grant cycles.

Donations to the endowment fund are welcomed at any time of the year. CFNKLS operates under the wing of the Osprey Community Foundation in Nelson, which allows donors to receive official charitable tax receipts for their contributions.

To learn more about how you can support thriving, resilient local communities or to make a donation, visit the CFNKLS website at nklcommunityfund.org or contact the society via email at cfnkls.info@gmail.com.

Big bear year for WildSafeBC: Kaslo council, October 27

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Kaslo's WildSafeBC Community Coordinator Nikita Bouwmeester worked hard from May to October to keep wildlife and the community safe.

Bouwmeester said many people mistook her for a conservation officer.

Conservation officers respond to conflicts with dangerous wildlife where there is a risk to public safety, including situations when dangerous wildlife has become habituated (no longer afraid of humans) or food conditioned (dependent upon human-provided foods) and now present a risk to public safety.

There are only two officers serving North Kootenay Lake, the Slocan Valley, and North Arrow Lakes. Bouwmeester said they really rely on reporting to know when there's wildlife conflict and to keep track of repeated encounters.

She understands that it's an emotional subject, and noted that not all reported animals are destroyed.

WildSafeBC's objective is to use education to prevent human/wildlife conflicts, and hopefully decrease the number of animals in urban centres – and therefore the need to call conservation officers.

One technique for managing conflict is fruit and nut gleaning – important always, but especially during big bear years like this one. With a low berry crop in the wild, bears were coming to town in search of food. Bouwmeester did extensive gleaning to keep the tasty treats out of ursine paws; about 300-500 lbs of apples were brought to the Food Hub and distributed around the community. To protect volunteers from wildfire smoke, she did much of the picking on her own.

South Beach sewerage dispersal

During the October 13 meeting, Councillor Matthew Brown brought forward concerns from a member of the public regarding the sewerage dispersal assessment for the proposed RV park at South Beach.

As part of the conditions in the Purchase and Sale Agreement, the developer must submit a sewerage dispersal assessment, performed by a qualified professional and scrutinized by a third-party.

Resident Anne Malik noted in her September 28 letter to council that, though the site of the proposed development is located on a floodplain, the preliminary assessment doesn't mention it at all. She also asked who is the third-party, qualified professional scrutinizing the assessment.

An assessment was completed by DeansTech Consulting Ltd. in 2023, but has not officially been submitted to fulfill the condition in the Purchase and Sale Agreement.

At the October 13 meeting, Councillor Brown asked that the DeansTech assessment be sent to the Liquid Waste Monitoring Committee (LWMC) for comment.

CAO Robert Baker said that reviewing the assessment may not be in the LWMC's purview. Staff was directed to research whether the LWMC is the appropriate body, and brought the results to the October 28 meeting.

The LWMC ensures the commitments of the approved Liquid Waste Monitoring Plan are carried out. The plan is the Village's long-term, Minister-approved strategy for managing liquid waste. It addresses the municipal sewer system, and decentralized and private on-site systems.

Neither the committee's Terms of Reference or Operational Certificate give it the authority to approve private wastewater systems, conduct engineering design reviews, or determine whether an individual development should proceed. The Village also doesn't ordinarily refer wastewater servicing plans for individual developments to the LWMC.

Since it's unclear whether the DeansTech assessment is the final document, council took no further action.

ESS training, equipment grant

The Village will be included as a sub-applicant in the RDCK's regional application to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) Emergency Support Services (ESS) Equipment and Training funding program.

CEPF provides provincial funding, administered by UBCM, to strengthen local emergency management capacity. The ESS Equipment and Training stream supports volunteer recruitment and retention, training, exercises, and essential equipment.

The RDCK delivers ESS through its regional emergency management service. It is coordinating a regional application on behalf of participating municipalities.

Proposed activities include purchasing and outfitting a mobile ESS reception centre; acquiring a 40-foot storage container for regional ESS equipment and supplies; providing incremental funding for an ESS coordinator; supporting attendance by regional ESS volunteers at the Network of Emergency Support Services Teams conference; and continuing regional training events.

Tax exemptions for Community Services, Innovation Centre

Council adopted 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.

North Kootenay Lake residents have their say in RDCK land use planning discussions

by Rachael Lesosky, Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The RDCK has wrapped up phase one of the Area D Community Planning Project, which is exploring the needs of North Kootenay Lake communities and which – if any – desire zoning, or other land use planning tools.

Phase one included nine community outreach events this summer, bringing in 129 participants, and a survey that garnered 143 responses.

Phase two will involve a series of engagement activities to review results from round one with communities. The end goal of phase two is to have enough information to begin drafting amendments to the Area D Comprehensive Land Use Bylaw.

However, at the RDCK Rural Affairs Committee meeting on October 21, Area D Director Aimee Watson asked that the decision to proceed to phase two be referred to the December meeting. The results are detailed and she would like more time before moving forward.

Area D is a vast geographic region in the northern reaches of the Kootenay and Duncan River Basins. At 5,781 kilometres squared, it's the largest electoral area in the RDCK. 1% of the land base is made up of 2,143 privately owned parcels on 6,864 hectares – with 95% of those parcels classified as residential.

1,462 residents make their homes in the many dispersed unincorporated communities, which include Lardeau, Argenta, Howser, Gerrard, Cooper Creek, Poplar Creek, Ainsworth, Mirror Lake, Marblehead, Johnsons Landing, Shutty Bench, and Meadow Creek.

From 2016 to 2021, Area D's population increased by 9%. It's expected to increase another 33% by 2041. The population of adults aged 25 years and older is expected to grow, with the 85+ population growing the most. The population of young adults and children (0-24 years) is expected to shrink.

Based on community engagement results, residents want to keep communities as they are; they don't want them to change. Community members differed on whether no change means adding land use regulations to achieve that continuity, or if it means no additional regulations.

Residents prefer communities to stay mostly rural residential with limited tourist accommodation and commercial use. They also value having decision-making authority on their properties with limited government oversight. And they like to problem-solve as a community.

Communities have a variety of water systems but all expressed concern about water and water capacity.

Residents were also concerned that public land activities are impacting private rural lands, and that communities have no ability to have a say.

There is also a desire for better environmental protection, especially along Kootenay Lake.

To view the results, and for more information, visit engage.rdck.ca/projects/area-d-planning.

THE COMMUNITY FUND OF NORTH KOOTENAY LAKE

CFNKLS delivers for the community!

Kaslo Food Hub received a grant for the 2026 Kaslo and Area Incredible Garden Tour:

"Thank you for CFNKL'S support of the 2026 Kaslo and Area Incredible Garden Tour. Your support helped us with advertising/promotion, volunteer recognition, printing costs, and honorariums. We couldn't do it without you."

- Patrick Steiner, Co-Executive Director
Kaslo Food Hub

For grant information:
visit nklcommunityfund.org or email cfnkls.info@gmail.com

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Kootenay Central and Kootenay-Monashee provincial election results

continued from page 1

first step is caucus needs to determine who our interim leader will be. And then there are other roles that are key in our leadership team that will be determined." Shortly before our press deadline, it was announced that New Westminster-Coquitlam MLA Jennifer Whiteside will be the NDP interim leader, while Mike Farnworth will be the house leader and Niki Sharma will be caucus chair.

Anderson is also looking to learn from the past, and specifically from the NDP's devastating 2001 election loss, which swept the BC Liberals into power and stripped the NDP of official party status. Following this new blow to the party, Anderson spoke with Joy MacPhail, who was one of only two BC NDP MLAs elected in 2001.

"Joy gave me a lot of great advice on how to be a great opposition MLA, how to continue to support and advocate for your community," says Anderson. "A lot of work as an MLA and particularly as a minister meant that the work that I did was behind the scenes. It was in direct conversations with ministers or with the premier. And in this case now, because I'm in opposition, that work can be much more public.

So I think folks will see a shift in how I communicate. And that is not because I have shifted in my advocacy. It's just that my role has shifted and that provides me a different opportunity on how I'm able to advocate."

Morissette is also reflecting on what can be learned from the past. "I have talked to a couple of former MLAs from that era [...] and they said it's just important to focus on what your values are," says Morissette. "Be honest, transparent, upfront, and work on those values, and don't back away from them."

As of our press time on October 29, the BC Conservatives were leading or elected in 63 ridings and had received 48.06% of the popular vote. The BC NPD were leading or elected in 28 ridings, with 37.37% of the vote, and the BC Green Party was leading or elected in 2 ridings, with 10.97% of the vote. Elections BC's final count is scheduled for November 6-10, 2026.

Voices from the Valleys

continued from page 7

Keeping YOU safe

It's really dry in Alberta, especially near Wainright. No doubt the people around that area are trying, for the most part, to be careful not to set the place ablaze. Just like we do here in BC when there is a high fire danger.

But the military pays no heed to the situation because they are exempt from such things. They have more important things to do, like keeping YOU safe. Same goes when it comes to the climate change that is likely causing the drought. When all the countries head to Paris or Tokyo or whatever other world city looks like a nice place to party they agree to cut their carbon footprint ... but the military is of course exempt. They, after all, have to keep YOU safe.

When we, the good guys, decide to bomb other countries, blowing up oil facilities and oil tankers because we don't agree with the way they are running their countries, we don't even consider the effect of such on the planet's climate. We are happy to deny our own citizens the right to heat their homes with natural gas, to save the planet, but we can't stop making war on our so-called enemies, because that is how we keep YOU safe.

Our Prime Minister has the gall to muse about our glorious military's role in fighting the Korean war ... a war that killed 20% of the people in North Korea and turned the country into a pariah state. Our brave soldiers had to do that ... to keep YOU safe. The military has a vested interest in declaring any nation that doesn't do things the way we do them as an enemy, in order to keep the money rolling into the military/industrial complex, and keep their paycheques coming in. War is a highly profitable game for those without a conscience. Wake up people. Mother Earth is getting angry, and she's less concerned about keeping YOU safe.

Rod Retzlaff
Glade

The Forest Fall-Down Effect

Boom then bust when the resources disappear. Over 30 years ago, BC Forest Service phrased the term the "fall-down effect." At the annual rate the BC forest industry was cutting trees, there were other competing land use values. Human urban sprawl, water, wildlife management and the most forested habitat loss was due to range-land cattle ranching. With the tech-automation of non-value-added expansion of lumber mills and the shipping of raw logs out of the country, it was forecasted that the forest companies would soon run out of economically viable timber fibre per hectare in the near future.

Another forester at the same time came up with a community solution ecosystem-based plan for the Slocan Valley. With watershed groups in the Valley in favor, the Ministry of Forest and Slocan Forest Products, a $400 million+ annual profit forest company at that time, said no and logged further into domestic watersheds.

Now 30 years later at the road end of the "fall-down effect," over cutting mature old-growth to less than 3% left in BC. The forest industry using the same clearcut forest practice regulations for second and third generation trees, the Council of Forest Industries is asking the BC government to increase the Annual Allowable Cut by 33% to 45 million cubic metres of timber, which the Community Forest Association has signed onto.

This is not community economic equality sustainable forestry.

Mike Simpson
Rural New Denver

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SCHROEDER CREEK RESORT held a Fishing Derby in September. We would like to thank all the Kaslo and area merchants that donated to the Derby's success. Their support means so much to all the participants. Thank you to Kaslo Building Supplies, Zion Trucking, Kaslo Sourdough, Kaslo Golf Club, Jones Boys Boats, Kaslo Hotel, Ship to Shore Gourmet Foods, Double Barrel Bar, Fruitvale Hotel, Revelstoke Rod & Gun Club. Your support to this event is much appreciated and invaluable.

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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

CHRISTMAS IN THE VALLEY CRAFT FAIR Saturday, November 21 at the Slocan Valley Legion Hall, 502 Harold St. Slocan, 10 am to 3 pm. Toonie admission. We hope you will come out to support your local artisans. We look forward to seeing you!

GRAMMAS CHRISTMAS AT THE PASSMORE HALL November 28, 10 am to 1 pm. Join the Slocan Valley Grassroots Grammas for baking, lunch, socializing, jewellery, treasures, decorations and re-gifting ideas. Support the projects of grandmothers in Sub-Saharan Africa through the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

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

TEXAS HOLD'EM TOURNAMENT Saturday Nov. 7 at the Slocan Valley Legion Hall, 502 Harold St. Slocan, starting at 6:30 pm 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!

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From the archives: Taking the stage

submitted by the Arrow Lakes Historical Society

993.011.15 Musical: Girls on stage in costume during performance of *I Want a Dolly I Can Call My Own*, Canadian Girls in Training (CGIT) stage show, Nakusp Opera House, 1951. L-R: Rae LaRue, Rosemarie Portelance, Shirley Oxenham, June Gardner, Gwynneth Brown, Lil Cargill, Doreen Woldum, ?, ?, ?, ?, Lou Coates, Florence Maxwell, Betty Miller, Alma White, Marg Spiers, Edith Middlemass, Joy Oxenham, Bea Brotherton.

993.011.1A.7 Warren Larson – Victor Smith in *Cavalcade of Song*: Warren Larson (left) and Vic Smith (right) perform on stage at *Cavalcade of Song*, Opera House, Nakusp, 1951. Shirley Robinson or Mary Middlemass plays piano at right. Doreen Woldum in doorway at back. Event was held by Nakusp CGIT chapter to raise funds for Robertson Memorial United Church piano fund. Photo by Ichiro Shiino. Inscription on rear by Rev. Basil Hartley: 'Return to Rev B Hartley, Nakusp. Warren Larson – Victor Smith (Miss Shirley Robinson PH Nurse) [I think Mary Middlemass – Milton Parent] in *Cavalcade of Song* put on by Nakusp CGIT in Opera House in aid Robertson Memorial United Church piano fund. I. Shiino photo'.

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SS Moyie Ghostwalk radio play shows at the Langham Nov. 12

submitted by Debra Barrett

SS Moyie Ghostwalk is a radio play that was lovingly put together by a group of two dozen Kaslo community members, young and old, and recorded on-board the SS *Moyie*. There will be an audio broadcast of the play, including projected images, at the Langham Theatre in Kaslo on November 12 at 7 pm. Voice performers will be in attendance, the run time is one hour, and admission is free (with donations welcome). If the audience exceeds 70 people, there will be a second showing the same night.

The production of *SS Moyie Ghostwalk* was supported by the Kootenay Lake Historical Society, and funded by RDCK community development funds (through the Village of Kaslo) and the Kootenay Savings Credit Union.

The radio play was written by Debra Barrett, with vocal dramatics coached by Rick Galbraith and audio recorded – with full sound effects – by Christian Campbell. Musical interludes were arranged to fit the dialogue and the time frame of 1929. Visual enhancements have been added by Jayse Waynest.

The SS *Moyie* was extensively restored to historic standards beginning in 1988, and was designated a national historic site in 1989. Robert Turner wrote her history in 1991 and published an enhanced version in 2026.

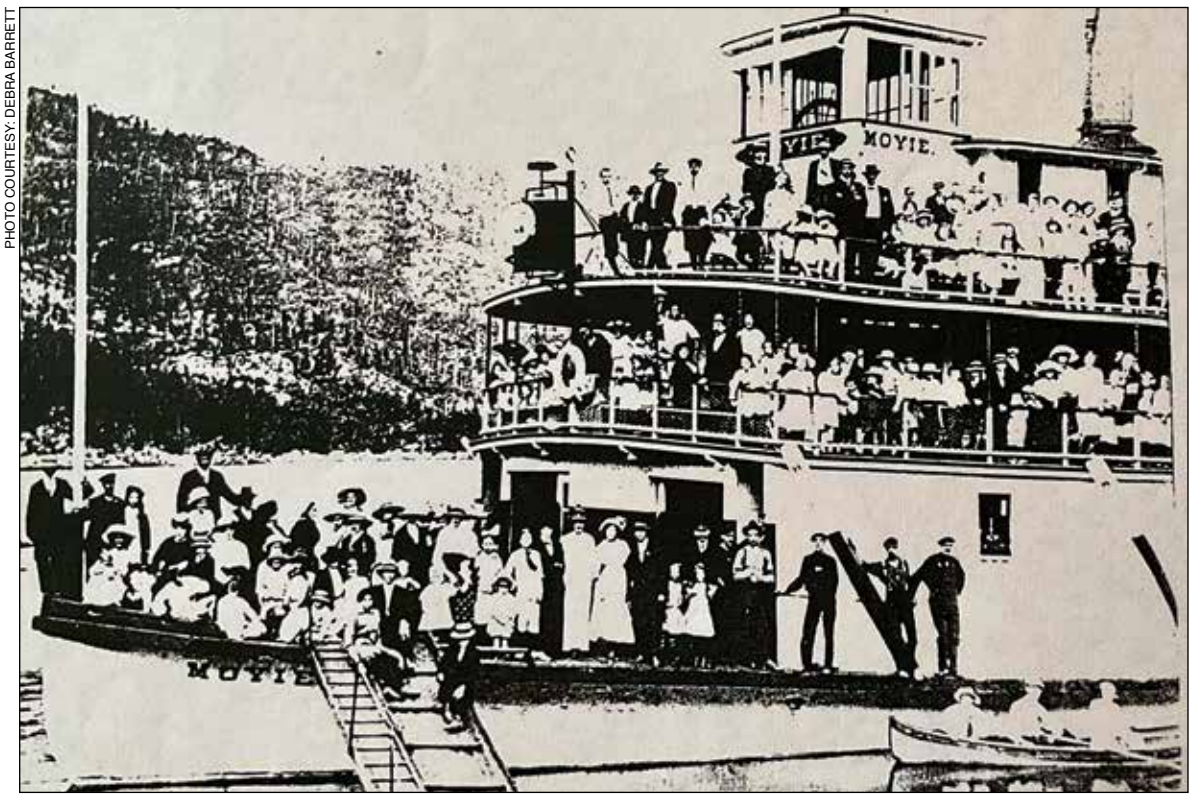
This boat is the oldest surviving intact sternwheeler steamship in the world, and our *Moyie* has the longest service record of any sternwheeler in Canada. She served to develop the Kootenay Lake communities and residents in many ways from 1898 to 1957. Kaslo residents attending the opening performance on November 12 will learn things they never knew about the *Moyie*.

Lively and unique stories, mostly based on fact, follow the ship and enliven the production. Crew members and passengers' lives, both joyful and sad, are portrayed through the characters.

"We hope it motivates many tourists to come and see the actual settings of these tales, and leads many to reflect on the colourful past of the 1920s," said Debra Barrett, the playwright.

Local radio stations and Canadian podcast producers are invited to contact the producers about presenting this piece of creative historical drama. For more information, contact Debra Barrett at barrettd103@gmail.com.

PHOTO COURTESY: DEBRA BARRETT



The radio play *SS Moyie Ghostwalk,* written by Debra Barrett, will show at the Langham Cultural Centre in Kaslo on November 12 at 7 pm.

Borealis String Quartet brings world-class chamber music to Silverton

submitted by Slocan Lakes Arts Council

The internationally acclaimed Borealis String Quartet will perform on November 25 at 7 pm at Silverton Memorial Hall.

Founded in Vancouver in 2000, the ensemble has earned praise for its fiery performances, passionate style and refined musical interpretations. The quartet has toured throughout North America, Europe and Asia, performing for sold-out audiences in cities including New York, Los Angeles, Rome, Shanghai, Beijing, Toronto and Montreal.

Known for expanding the traditional chamber-music experience, Borealis combines innovative programming, visual elements and engaging conversation from the stage to welcome audiences of all ages. The ensemble has appeared at New York's Metropolitan Museum, Seattle's Illsley Ball Nordstrom Hall and Vancouver's Aboriginal Pavilion during the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. Its recordings have also received international recognition, including a Golden Melody Award nomination in Asia.

The *Globe and Mail* wrote: "The four musicians from British Columbia practically flew out of their chairs, so vigorous and physical was their playing."

Audiences are invited to experience the artistry and energy of the Borealis String Quartet on November 25 at 7 pm at Silverton Memorial Hall. Ticket price on a sliding scale from $20-40.

North Kootenay Lake Arts Council AGM to feature live theatre, Nov. 13

submitted by NKLAC

The North Kootenay Lake Arts Council (NKLAC) invites the public to attend their AGM at the Langham theatre on Friday November 13, 2026 at 6:30 pm.

There will be a short annual review, door prizes and live entertainment, including scenes from a one-act play called *The Death of Me* by Norm Foster, featuring Matt Brown, Colette Enns, Amber Byatt-McIntyre and Webster. Memberships are only $10 and will double as a ticket to see the show!

What does NKLAC do, you ask?

NKLAC has been supporting a vibrant arts community in Kaslo & Area D since 2000.

Its work includes Front Street Banners, Legacy Park Sculpture, Art in the Market, CKCA Grant adjudication, Grad Student Scholarship, Members Visual Art Show & Sale (opening on Friday, January 15, 2027) and the Salon of the Arts Performance Showcase (Saturday, February 13, 2027).

Legacy Park sculpture expressions of interest

November 13 is also the deadline for local artists to submit their expressions of interest regarding the Legacy Park sculpture. This annual one-year lease (April to April) of local art is done in partnership with, and made possible by, the Village of Kaslo.

The sculpture must be "family-friendly" in composition and allow safe clearance for viewers to walk around/under. It must be constructed from non-breakable, weather-durable materials and be securely spot-welded to a 24" x 24" metal mounting base which is embedded into a 30" x 30" concrete plinth, 33.5" high. Conceptual drawings and examples of previous work should be submitted to nklarts@kaslo.org.

PHOTO COURTESY: NKLAC

Last year's Legacy Park sculpture artist, Jan Vreys, with his carved piece "Ursa Minor."

New Vallican Whole gallery exhibit features Slocan Valley Threads Guild members

submitted by the Slocan Valley Threads Guild

Why bother to make things when the world is full of stuff already? Perhaps you imagine something different – an item specific to your purpose, designed from your very own thoughts. Well then, you have to make it yourself.

The path from concept to reality is craftsmanship. You must learn about materials, and the techniques to handle them. You practice, gain dexterity, and the world of possibility expands. You can have things that don't come wrapped in plastic from far away – you can make things yourself.

Members of the Slocan Valley Threads Guild embrace this approach, and apply it in many disciplines. Weaving, spinning, dyeing of all kinds, knitting, basketry, crochet, embroidery, quilting, rug making, toy craft, paper making, sewing, and even upholstery – there are people among us who practice these crafts. Together we are a living library of knowledge and skills. Opportunities for sharing enrich us all.

For the first time, the Threads Guild will showcase member work in the gallery at the Vallican Whole Community Centre. Everyone is invited to an opening reception on Sunday, November 8, from 3 to 5 pm.

PHOTO COURTESY: SLOCAN VALLEY THREADS GUILD

Shown here: an all-wool knitted toy by Barbara Mack. An exhibit of Slocan Valley Threads Guild member work will open at the Vallican Whole Community Centre on November 8.

Light refreshments will be served, and the event is free. The address is 3762 Little Slocan South Rd.

The exhibits will be diverse, from practical items to fine art. Many Guild members will be present, so come and enjoy the people as well as the crafts.

The gallery will also be open every Monday, 11 am–3 pm, from November 9 through December 7, with at least one Guild member on-site to answer questions.

For more info, contact Helen by email at jamesfrench@uniserve.com

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Stop AI impersonation scams during National Community Safety & Crime Prevention Month

submitted by the Canada Safety Council

Artificial intelligence is transforming how we work, communicate and access information. Unfortunately, it is also giving criminals new ways to deceive.

This National Community Safety & Crime Prevention Month, the Canada Safety Council is encouraging Canadians to recognize the growing threat of AI-enabled impersonation scams. By combining artificial intelligence with familiar scam tactics, criminals can create convincing phone calls, emails, text messages, images and videos that appear to come from someone we know and trust.

These scams rarely rely on sophisticated hacking. Instead, they exploit something far more personal: trust. Whether it is a phone call that sounds like a family member in distress, an email appearing to come from a supervisor requesting an urgent payment, or a fake video promoting an investment opportunity, the goal is the same: create urgency and pressure victims into acting before verifying the request.

According to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, Canadians reported more than $704 million in fraud losses in 2025, though authorities estimate only 5-10% of incidents are ever reported. Federal agencies have also warned that fraudsters are increasingly using AI to impersonate government officials and other trusted individuals to steal money and personal information.

"Artificial intelligence is making some scams more convincing, but the most effective defence remains the same: pause, verify and think before you act," said Gareth Jones, President & CEO of the Canada Safety Council. "Fraud succeeds when criminals exploit trust and urgency. Taking a moment to independently confirm an unexpected request can prevent significant financial and emotional harm."

AI impersonation scams can affect Canadians of any age. Older adults may receive a call that appears to come from a grandchild asking for emergency financial help. Employees may receive an email that seems to come from a supervisor requesting an urgent wire transfer. Parents may receive messages claiming their child needs immediate assistance. While the technology has changed, the criminals' objective has not.

Protecting yourself from AI impersonation scams

Slow down. Fraudsters rely on urgency. Pause before responding to unexpected requests involving money or personal information.

Verify independently. Contact the person or organization using a trusted phone number or website rather than replying directly to the message.

Create a family verification plan. Establish a code word or security question to confirm someone's identity during emergencies.

Question what you see and hear. Audio recordings, photographs and videos are no longer reliable proof of identity on their own.

Limit what you share publicly. Information posted online can help criminals create more convincing impersonation attempts.

Talk about fraud. Sharing information with family, friends and colleagues helps others recognize warning signs.

Report suspected fraud. Contact your local police service and the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, even if no money was lost.

AI will continue to create new opportunities and new risks. By recognizing common warning signs, verifying unexpected requests and talking openly about emerging scams, Canadians can make it much harder for criminals to succeed.

The Canada Safety Council encourages Canadians to remember one simple principle during this National Community Safety & Crime Prevention Month: think before you trust. A brief pause today could prevent a devastating loss tomorrow.

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valleyvoice.ca

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