

April 2016

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30th Focus on Youth
celebrates artistic talent
of all kinds

HISTORY

The metric system
comes to Creston

FESTIVAL

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HISTORY

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Submitted photos (above, cover)

COVER: FOCUS ON YOUTH

For 30 years, Creston's youth have been taking to the stage each spring to perform music and drama, and displaying art in a festival that has created a lasting legacy.



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The Magazine

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OPEN BURNING

April is here and now is
the time to obtain a permit

Please keep in mind that there are regulations set out in the Town of Creston Fire Services Bylaw no. 1774 when burning outdoors.

These regulations have been adopted to enhance the health and safety of our community and for the consideration of our neighbours when burning outdoors.

Violations can result in large fines and permits for open air burning may not be issued for a property where violations of the open burning regulations have occurred or to a person who has not adhered to those regulations.

Below are some of the requirements to be aware of:

- Open air (outdoor) burning is only permitted during the months of April and October and only where authorized by a permit issued by the Fire Chief under the Town's bylaw.
- A permit is not required for cooking fires contained within a barbecue or fire pit having a surface area not greater than .5 meter (half meter) in diameter and less than .5 meter (half meter) high, using natural gas, propane, charcoal or clean dry seasoned firewood with a screen covered fire area.
- The permit holder must post the permit on the site for which the permit was issued and keep it available for inspection at the request of a Member.
- No person shall burn during times for which the Ministry of Forests, the Ministry of Environment or other authority having jurisdiction to do so has issued a ban on open burning.
- No person shall use burning barrels.
- No person shall burn prohibited materials.
- No person shall burn material brought from another location or property except clean dry seasoned firewood as permitted by this bylaw.
- No person shall set, start or kindle open air burning or allow open air burning to continue to burn during winds strong enough to carry sparks to other combustibles.
- No person shall set, start or kindle open air burning except during daylight hours or as otherwise permitted by this bylaw.
- No person shall burn during periods of air stagnation.
- No person shall burn unless the ventilation index is favorable, as provided by the Ministry of Environment.
- No burning shall exceed a 4 hour duration unless otherwise permitted by this bylaw.
- All fires must be contained within a firebreak (bare ground) equal in size to the height of the pile.
- Fires shall be extinguished immediately if smoke or ash is a nuisance to neighbours.
- Burning shall be in open areas, no closer than 4.5 metres (15 feet) from combustibles, such as standalone trees, coniferous shrubs, fences and buildings and shall be 15 metres (50') from standing timber / tree line.
- Permission of the Owner, for permits under this bylaw, must be obtained in writing if the burning takes place on the Owner's property by another person, particularly if the property is rented or leased property.

There are 3 categories of permit, which are;

- Residential Leaves, foliage, weeds (permit fee is \$10.00)
- Freestanding grass and underbrush (permit fee is \$40.00)
- Large piles (permit fee is \$75.00)

For more information on open burning or to obtain a permit, please call or visit the Town of Creston Municipal Hall or Creston Fire Department during regular business hours.



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Focus on Youth

A celebration of the artistic talents of our youth

Submitted photos

Story by: Naomi Larsen

Students throughout Creston and area are busy tuning instruments and voices for the upcoming 30th edition of one of the valley's most talent saturated events, Focus on Youth, which begins the week of May 2 at Prince Charles Theatre.

"Focus on Youth is a unique opportunity for students of all ages to perform both individually and in class groups in a professional theatre setting as well as to display their art work at the art show," festival co-ordinator Laura From said.

Under the auspices of the school district fine arts committee, Focus on Youth grew from a weekend event for some private music students to a weeklong affair in which all schools from Jewett to Yahk participated along with private schools, home-schoolers and private music and dance students.

An estimated 900 to 1,000 students perform each year and this year, From said, they are looking to make the performances a little more special.

"We are looking for adults, who as kids, performed in Focus on Youth and are willing to perform again," she said.

(To get involved, fill out an application form at www.cvmta.ca.)

Concerts run during the day and in the evening and the art show is open daily at the Creston and District Community Complex. Usually the event hosts three concerts per day and one in the evening.

"There's some really good artwork and it's always a really, really nice display of art," From said. "The teachers do such a good job."

For the tens of thousands of kids that have performed over the past three decades, Focus on Youth was — and

still is — their chance to perform on a professional stage with professional lights and sound, past co-ordinator Margaret Lavender said.

“This allows kids to be showcased in the fine arts without it being a competition, but to celebrate fine arts but in both visual and performing arts,” she said. “The program grew considerably. We could have 21 or more concerts for the week. But we had lots of help and there was lots of money in the school district those days to encourage this type of thing.”

Lavender, who has been involved for 30 years, said performing gives the kids a “tremendous” amount of self-confidence and pride in what they could do.

“I’ve had students tell me that,” she said.

Frank Goodsir has had classes in the festival since 1988 and eventually he took on publicity and photography.

“I enjoy watching the kids perform,” he said. “Working with kids has been my life. ... You watch them progress over the years.

“For most kids, this is their only theatre experience. They not only perform for their parents and grandparents, but they perform for their peers. ... And

“It’s a huge volunteer effort and as a result we get to see the talent of our children as they perform on a professional stage”

they get to work with the lights and sound, and get that true theatrical experience.”

Goodsir said there is a lot of support from community, parents, grandparents and even people with no children

“It’s a valley institution,” he said.

Past co-ordinator Lynn Johnson was involved in Focus on Youth up until last year.

“I miss it badly,” she said. “It was a big part of my life for a lot of years.”

Johnson said it’s a highly organized event with amazing volunteers who work diligently to make sure the

festival is a success.

“It’s a huge volunteer effort and as a result we get to see the talent of our children as they perform on a professional stage in front of live, enthusiastic audiences. It’s wonderful and very unique in the province — nobody else has a festival like this.”



FUNDING ISSUES

Since its beginning in 1986, Focus on Youth has gathered momentum and popularity. It has battled through many obstacles and won; however, this year the battle is a little harder to fight.

According to From, Focus on Youth is not a production of the Creston Valley Music Teachers Association but rather a collaboration of members of the community, music teachers and teachers (many of whom are retired).

“Focus on Youth is, after all, a unique festival in this province that has enjoyed great success since 1986.”

Lavender explained over the years the school district has always offered their support but over the years the funding “has dwindled.”

“Historically the school district has always supported Focus on Youth, covering bus costs and the theatre technician, so it was shocking to be informed, with no consultation and no notification, that there was no budget for this event after the fact,” From said in an email. “We were totally unaware that School District 8 had withdrawn its support.”

From and the festival’s co-ordinators are requesting School Board No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) and their budget stakeholder engagement committee reconsider their decision.



“Focus on Youth is, after all, a unique festival in this province that has enjoyed great success since 1986.”

Although there isn't an admission charge to the various performances, donations are accepted at the door with all proceeds going to the festival costs including small honorariums to the professional technicians who donate their time to the festival each year. From said the festival costs between \$2,000 and \$2,500 to operate — not including the above busing costs.

“I think it’s going to be a struggle to keep it going, but it’s a wonderful way to support the fine arts and give students the opportunity to shine”

“This year, the stage technician will be around \$1,500 which uses up almost our whole budget.”

From said the best way to support the festival is to attend a performance or two or three and make a donation.

“I would really like to keep it going in its current form,” she said. “Next year is going to be a little bit more of a challenge.”

Lavender said this year could tell the tale for the following years.

“I think it’s going to be a struggle to keep it going,” she said. “But it’s a wonderful way to support the fine arts and give students the opportunity to shine. ■



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From the Mayor's Desk

Story by: Ron Toyota,
Mayor of the Town of Creston

Municipal Vs. Provincial Policing

In the April 2012 issue of I Love Creston, I wrote an article titled "Municipal Policing for the Town of Creston – a Growing Community." In the article, I explained that in B.C., when a community exceeds 5,000 in population, the requirement for a Municipal Police Unit Agreement (MPUA) is mandated and the municipality becomes financially responsible for 70 per cent of its community's policing costs. Beneath the 5,000 population, under the provincial policing model, municipalities are responsible for only (on average) 30 per cent of the policing costs. The 2011 Canada census officially announced that the Town of Creston grew to 5,306, crossing that population threshold with a 9.9 per cent increase from the 2006 census (4,826).

In 2011, my mother's property tax notice indicated a \$92 charge for provincial policing and in 2012 this charged increased to \$180 under the municipal policing model. In 2015, this charge was increased to \$386. This represents a 420 per cent increase over four years. This increase, though dramatic, was mitigated by a \$1 million policing reserve that was established to phase in this taxation

impact. The establishment of the policing reserve was a decision made years ago by a previous town council in anticipation of eventual population growth.

On Feb. 26, the B.C. Ministry of Justice sent a letter advising that BC Stats has indicated that Creston had a 2015 population of 4,744. If the 2016 Canada census confirms the town's population is less than 5,000, then Creston's MPUA would be terminated and the town would revert to a Provincial Police Service Agreement. In this structure, the town would once again pay for approximately 30 per cent of the policing costs. A cautionary note — in 2011, BC Stats population numbers were significantly lower than the Canada Census numbers; it was the latter data that was used to fix Creston's population as being in excess of 5,000.

In 2016, the town is paying \$938,000 for its net share of policing. If the 2016 Canada census establishes our population to be less than 5,000, then the policing tax could decrease significantly. Town council will address this very interesting possibility during its 2017 budget discussions. At that time, council could have a wide range

of decision making options available to them: reduce taxation, stay the course and fund the infrastructure shortfall, build reserves, undertake capital projects, or a combination of options. To date, there's been no formal discussion about what approach council may take if our population fell below the 5,000 benchmark.

In closing, I'd like to share an interesting tidbit. In 2012, a local citizen wrote a letter suggesting that people should be encouraged to leave our community during census time (with \$2,000 of compensation) as a means to keep the population below the 5,000 number. Such an approach is, obviously, not doable but I understand he supported his own idea by moving out of Creston anyway (without compensation). Personally, I believe that Creston is, increasingly, the place in the Kootenays where people want to visit and live!

Stay tuned for what the 2016 census holds for our community — needless to say, it will be an important outcome. ■

Reach Ron Toyota by phone at 250-428-2214 ext. 227, by email at ron.toyota@creston.ca or visit town hall at 238 10th Avenue North.

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Message from the Chief

Story by: Jason Louie, Chief,
Lower Kootenay Band

Bold Eagle

Ki'suk kyukyit (greetings).

Summertime for youth can be an exciting time. No school, no home work, no schedules. The weather is hot, so go to the river or go to the lake. Part of that excitement was also an opportunity to work, an opportunity to make your own money and spend it as you wish, as there really weren't any bills to pay as an adolescent. The opportunities for employment seem to have become more and more competitive. A job that you may have had last summer isn't necessarily guaranteed for the next.

I will be upfront and state that I no longer have ties to the Canadian Forces and am not a recruiter. I am merely presenting an opportunity for something different for First Nations, Métis, and self-identified indigenous youth.

The Bold Eagle program is a partnership between the Department of National Defence, First Nations and Aboriginal organizations from Western Canada. From its origins in Saskatchewan, it has expanded to allow participation by Aboriginal youth from all four western provinces and northwestern Ontario.

There are many ways to teach children the value of hard work and discipline.

The Bold Eagle program includes First Nations activities and is a key component to the success of the program. The goals of the program include self discipline, team work skills, building self-confidence and physical fitness.

The program begins with a culture camp, conducted by elders of different First Nations and Aboriginal groups. The focus is on common spiritual beliefs. The camp is designed to be beneficial to youth from all backgrounds and ease the transition from civilian into a military lifestyle.

Following the culture camp, the military recruit training begins. Recruits are enrolled into the Canadian Forces and start their training. The course is the standard Army Reserve basic training and taught by military personnel. Subjects include general military knowledge, weapons handling, navigation, first aid and survival skills. The importance of teamwork is stressed throughout. Successful graduates of the program have the option to become a Canadian Forces reservist but there is no obligation to do

so. Recruits can say thank you for the experience, and it looks good on a resume.

A limited number of candidates will be accepted from across Western Canada. Successful applicants will train in Wainwright, Alta., for six weeks commencing in July and concluding in August. The following will be provided: transportation to and from Wainwright, military clothing and equipment, meals and accommodations, and recruits will be paid at the rate of a private, earning over \$3,500.

Applicants must be at least 16 years of age, have completed Grade 10, require parental or legal guardian consent if under the age of 18, be a member of a recognized Aboriginal group in Canada, be a Canadian citizen, and be physically fit.

This program isn't for everyone. It is difficult but also rewarding. I strongly believe that it is our duty to give back to the country that has given us everything. Whether it is through programs such as this or in other ways, we all must contribute to make our country better. I once heard a saying that uncoachable kids become unemployable adults. There are many ways to teach children the value of hard work and discipline. This is just one option.

For further information, please visit www.army.forces.gc.ca/boldeagle Once again, I thank you for taking the time to read this article and wish you all well. **Taxas. ■**

Reach Jason Louie by phone at 250-428-4428 ext. 235, e-mail at mjasonlouie@gmail.com or online at www.lowerkootenay.com.

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The Metric-Housing Project



Story by: Tammy Hardwick

Manager - Creston & District Museum & Archives

It's April! I was tempted, as I am every year, to give in to the lure of April Fools' Day and write an article about an entirely-made-up local history "fact", just to see how long it took people to realize it was, indeed, entirely made up.

But, as I have often said, why would we make things up? Truth is so much stranger than fiction.

So, instead, I went in quest of some story appropriate to the month of April, and guess what I found? Canada's conversion to the metric system, which began April 1, 1975. I can hear some

of you thinking that was the worst April Fools' joke ever.

"Metrication" began, like all government initiatives, with a great deal of discussion, a white paper, and, in 1971, the establishment of a special task force (the Metric Commission). The first real step in the country's changeover, though, took place on April 1, 1975, when Celsius officially replaced Fahrenheit. The Creston Review article announcing the change included the Metric Commission's recommendation that "the easiest way to become familiar with the new system is to use it, and not convert back to the familiar temperature readings." The rest of the article went into great detail on how to convert back to Fahrenheit so you could tell how cold it really was.

The rollout of the metric system proceeded in stages from there. By September 1977, all highway signs were in kilometres instead of miles per hour. Jan. 1, 1978, was set as "M-Day" for the construction industry — the date on which all builders were supposed to be using the metric system in everything they did.

In the lead-up to M-Day, a pilot program was launched in which several B.C. communities were chosen to build brand-new metric-housing subdivisions. The provincial Ministry of Housing was involved, as part of its efforts to ensure affordable housing in the province. Federal and provincial government grants helped municipalities with the costs of building roads and installing utilities.

In February 1977, the local papers announced that Creston would have one of four metric housing projects in B.C. Twenty-four lots were purchased, in the then just-out-of-town-boundaries area between 10th Avenue North, Scott Street, 12th Avenue North and Regina Street. Within a few months, the property had been surveyed, plans had been drawn, and contractor bids had been received.

According to the Creston Review of April 27, 1977, the move to metric measurements "was expected to simplify building standards and specifications and should result in a lower cost for housing." The provincial project planners were so confident in this prediction that a maximum price tag, to sell the completed units to homeowners, was set at \$34,000. This, they said, was five to 10 per cent lower than comparable housing using conventional planning and construction.

Every aspect of the work, from surveying the land to buying the materials to building the houses, had to be done in metric terms. Surveying didn't pose too many problems, but, according to project supervisor Kevin O'Connell, "we'll find out what the problems will be when the building begins."

And there were problems. For starters, blueprints were presented in millimetres. I've seen building plans in millimetres — they're mindboggling, and that's from someone who grew up in the metric era. Imagine what it must have been like in 1977, for a builder who had spent his entire career working in feet and inches, to be suddenly confronted with instructions to "build this wall 6,096 millimetres long." Or to place his studding on 400 mm centres instead of the accustomed 16 inches. Simple tasks that a skilled builder used to do by instinct suddenly demanded a whole new way of thinking.

Every stage of the metrication process was accompanied by massive public education programs. The metric-housing project had an information trailer, staffed by PCSS grad Dianne Beddoes, to help the public understand the new system. But had anyone re-trained the builders? Even high-risk industries like aviation had dangerously inadequate conversion training (just ask anyone who was on the "Gimli Glider"), so one has to wonder just



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how well the local contractors knew the system they were being required to use.

Secondly, all the building materials had to conform to metric measurements. This was 1977. Nothing was available in metric dimensions. Every sheet of plywood, every two-by-four, every roll of linoleum had to be trimmed to meet the new specifications. That meant, for example, trimming precisely 1.92 centimetres off the long edge of a sheet of plywood, and 3.84 off the short edge, to make it exactly 1,200 by 2,400 millimetres. Can tape measures and table saws even achieve that degree of accuracy?

Finally, as any builder knows, "time is money." All those new calculations, all that trimming, took a lot of time. Undoubtedly, there were more than a few mistakes, which led to wasted materials. Those costs added up, and the \$34,000 selling price became increasingly problematic. I've been told that none of the metric-housing units had basements, because the contractors simply couldn't afford to build basements for that price.

What about the affordable housing element of the project? In the spring of 1977, Veitch Realty listed a two-bedroom, 700-square-foot house, "priced to sell" at \$29,900. That's smaller than the minimum metric-housing unit of 75.6 square metres (813.75 square feet), but the low-priced house included a one-bedroom revenue suite. A two-bedroom house with porch, carport, basement, and storage was listed at \$42,000, and similar homes on half-acre lots in Erickson were going for \$45,000. So, if the two- or three-bedroom metric-housing units sold for \$34,000, they might have been a little below the local market — but that, apparently, was only achieved by sacrificing amenities that were fairly standard in other houses.

The original plans had called for 24 lots with two or three condominium-like units on each. Ultimately, only five units on two lots were built. The project faded into obscurity; at least, there were no more big splashy headlines about it.

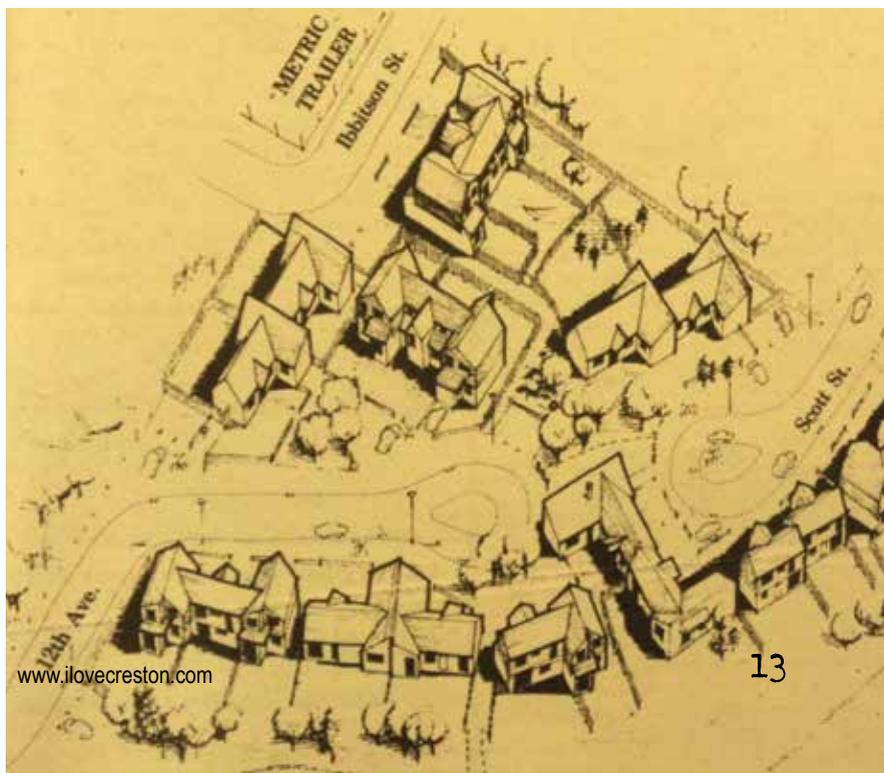
Metrication itself ground to halt less than a decade later, with the abolition of the Metric Commission in 1985. It's still the official system of measurement, and in some sectors it's the dominant one. But many of us still buy fruit by the pound. In a conversation about the weather the other day, my friend was talking Fahrenheit while I was talking Celsius. And plywood still comes in four-by-eight-foot sheets.

The five metric-housing units still stand on Scott Street. ■



(Above) A Creston Valley Advance photo of Dianne Beddoes in the "Metric Trailer," surrounded by information on the metric system. Her desk, according to the newspaper, measured exactly one cubic metre.

(Below) Artist's rendition of the proposed metric-housing subdivision, as published in the Creston Valley Advance in April 1977.





CRESTON VALLEY BIRDFEST MAY 13-15, 2016



wildsight

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday Night, May 13

- 11:00-4:00 pm Festival registration at Rec. Centre
Creston Ceramics Art display and Sales tables
- 4:00-5:30 pm Meet and Greet at the Rec. Centre
Photography show by Monte Comeau
- 5:30-6:45 pm Buffet supper - Catered by Demetre
Presentation by Jakob Dulisse
- 7:00 pm Buses depart from Rec. Centre for 3 field trips:
- 8:30 pm return 1) Birds of Fox Tree Hill
- 9:00 pm return 2) Counting Bats at the Wildlife Centre
- 9:15 pm return 3) Bird Songs & Frog Calls at Duck Lake

Saturday, May 14

- 6:00-6:30 am Coffee and muffins at Creston Ramada
- 6:30-11:00 am 8 guided Birdwatching tours from Ramada
- 10:30-11:30, 11:30-12:30 Canoe trips at Wildlife Centre
- 11:30-12:45 International Migratory Day Luncheon
Presentation by Glynnis Hood
- catered by Real Food Café
- 1:00-3:00 pm Children's event at the Wildlife Centre
- 1:00-3:00 pm Bus tour to 4 Art Studios
- 1:00-3:00 pm Tour of Swan Valley Honey
- 1:00-4:30 pm Kayak to Cormorant Colony
- 2:00-3:00 pm Presentation by Gary Davidson: Birds of Panama
- 2:00-4:00 pm Photography workshop with Monte Comeau
at the Wildlife Centre
- 2:30-3:30 pm Canoe trip at Wildlife Centre
- 3:00-5:00 pm Tour of Kootenay Meadows Organic Dairy Farm
and Kootenay Alpine Cheese
- 3:00-4:00 pm Tour of the Food Forest with Melissa Flint
(College of the Rockies)
- 4:00-5:00 pm Backyard Herbalism with Rachel Beck
(College of the Rockies)
- 7:00-9:00 pm Bird Fest Social at the Ramada Inn
-hors d'oeuvres and drinks, a chance to show your
photographs and talk birds
Entertainment by classical guitarist/composer
Peter Bodley

Sunday, May 15

- 6:00-6:30 am Coffee and muffins at Creston Ramada
Bagged lunches available
- 6:00-10:00 am Birding at Schikurski Park with Ed McMackin
(4 one-hour slots: 6-7:00, 7-8:00, 8-9:00, & 9-10 am.)
- 6:30-11:00 am 6 Guided Birdwatching tours from Ramada
- 1:00-2:00 pm Wind-down Wine Tour of
Baillie-Grohman Estate Winery
(registration not required)

Register on line: www.crestonvalleybirds.ca
or at College of the Rockies 9-4 Monday-Friday



Photo by Monte Comeau

Bird Fest Back for Fourth Celebration of Valley Culture

By: Creston Valley Bird Fest

It's springtime and the birds are singing about the fourth Creston Valley Bird Fest May 13, 14 and 15, a celebration of the birds, the art and the agriculture of the Creston Valley.

Guest speakers are Jakob Dulisse from Nelson, Gary Davidson from Nakusp, and Glynnis Hood from Camrose, Alta. Wildlife biologist and photographer Jakob Dulisse has given several presentations in Creston about the birds, the frogs, the toads, and creatures of the Columbia Basin. Gary Davidson, naturalist and wildlife photographer, returns to Creston after a winter in Panama with a plethora of bird photos for our enjoyment. Glynnis Hood, originally from Creston, now teaches environmental science at the University of Alberta's Augustana campus. Her specialty is aquatic ecology, and beavers.

Monte Comeau, award-winning wild bird and nature photographer, will be giving away his secrets at the photography workshop. Monte's photo of loons, called "Hitchhiker", was selected for the cover of Nature Canada out of 4,000 entries. (www.comeauphoto.ca)

The festival begins Friday night with a chance to make new friends over local beverages while viewing Monte Comeau's

photography show, then a supper catered by Demetre, followed by field trips to three different locations.

On Saturday and Sunday mornings, eight birding experts will guide tours throughout the wildlife management area. All tours begin at the Ramada with coffee and muffins available at 6 a.m. Take advantage of an opportunity to learn about some of the 300 species of birds that frequent our valley. Find out why our protected wetland is designated as an "Important Bird Area" with international Ramsar status.

While the birds are sleeping, several afternoon events are happening. New this year, are a kayaking trip with Paddle and Portage to a cormorant colony, and a tour of the Food Forest with Melissa Flint at the College of the Rockies. Other tours include a four-studio art tour

by bus, a tour to Swan Valley Honey, a tour to Kootenay Meadows organic dairy and cheese factory, and an adventure with Rachel Beck to learn about medicinal properties of common plants. Canoe trips and a children's event are at the wildlife centre.

Ed McMackin will be giving one hour tours at Shikurski Park on Sunday starting at 6 a.m. Ed has 40 years of experience as a naturalist in the valley and writes the "Out There" column for the Creston Valley Advance.

All participants are invited out to Baillie-Grohman Estate Winery for the

wind-down wine tour Sunday afternoon, rumoured home of the Bluebird of Happiness.

Throughout April, committee members are selling raffle tickets for Celestron binoculars, Overwaitea and Real Food Cafe gift certificates, a Tigz gift basket and a handcrafted birdhouse. Thank you for your support.

Registration in person is at the College of the Rockies, Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., and online at www.crestonvalleybirds.ca. Register early to avoid disappointment, as some tours are limited. ■



Photo by Monte Comeau

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Top Benefits

1. It Makes You Happier

FACT: A 2013 study from BMC Health found that volunteering is associated with reduced symptoms of depression and increased life satisfaction and well-being.

DOING GOOD: The study's findings are in line with the term helpers' high, coined by psychologists to describe the happy rush followed by calmness felt after performing an act of kindness.

2. It's Good For Your Body

FACT: A Carnegie Mellon study found that 200 hours of volunteering per year correlated to lower blood pressure.

DOING GOOD: Volunteering has the potential to increase physical activity and get people moving and interacting, getting your blood flowing and moving around.

3. It Can Help You Get A Job

FACT: A Time Bank UK survey among leading businesses found that 73% would employ someone who has volunteered over someone who hasn't.

DOING GOOD: Volunteering can offer an opportunity to try something new or gain experience in a different field, while also giving back to the community.

4. It Is Worth Money

FACT: The estimated value of volunteer time for 2013 is \$22.55 per hour.

DOING GOOD: This estimate acknowledges the enormous contribution that volunteers make to charitable organizations, helping them offset costs while providing added value to the cause.

5. It Creates More Giving Adults

FACT: Adults who began volunteering as youth are twice as likely to volunteer as those who did not volunteer when they were younger.

DOING GOOD: While volunteering is great at any age, exposing youngsters to the importance of helping others will provide them with a strong base of giving that will carry into their adulthood.

Source: www.goodnet.org



VOLUNTEER AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

A sincere thank you to the countless volunteers throughout the Creston Valley, especially those hard-working people in Area B who help make our community stronger.



Tanya Wall
Regional Director, Area B

Canadian Volunteering

In 2013, 44% of Canadians volunteered their time and almost twice as many (82%) gave money to a charitable or non-profit organization.

While the proportion of Canadians who volunteered their time declined by 3 percentage points between 2010 and 2013, the total number of hours volunteered remained virtually unchanged.

In 2013, volunteers devoted almost 2 billion hours to their volunteer activities, or the equivalent of about 1 million full-time jobs.

non-profit organizations declined in recent years, falling from 84% in 2010 to 82% in 2013. Donation amounts, however, increased.

The average annual amount per donor in 2013 was \$531, up \$61 from 2010.

Overall, Canadians gave \$12.8 billion to charitable or non-profit organizations in 2013, 14% higher than 2010.

A range of charitable and non-profit organizations benefited from these donations.



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Joining Board a Serious Responsibility

Non-profit organizations rely on strong leadership to drive change and achieve their missions.

Nearly all non-profits in Canada are led by a volunteer board of directors. The role of boards varies from organization to organization. Usually the board of directors gives leadership and guides the strategic direction of an organization. Boards govern non-profits on behalf of their members, while corporate boards govern on behalf of shareholders.

If you're interested in volunteering on a board, first consider your skills, interests

and experience. Board members should know an organization's history and mission. And they should understand the board's role before joining.

Board members have legal obligations, but many are unaware of them. Board members are liable for their decisions and work with the board. This liability holds true for all non-profit organizations.

Directors are responsible for representing the interests of the organization. When directing the affairs of an organization, the board must act within the law. A board member must follow three basic principles:

Diligence. Act reasonably and in good faith. Consider the best interest of the organization and its members.

Loyalty. Place the interest of the organization first. Don't use your position to further your personal interests.

Obedience. Act within the scope of the law. Follow the rules and regulations that apply to the organization.

Volunteer Canada offers a resource to inform board members of their legal duties. It includes a "prevention checklist" to help reduce liability.

Source: volunteer.ca

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR MANY VOLUNTEERS

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- Therapeutic Riding Program
- Creston Valley Hospice Society
- Creston and District Society for Community Living
- And Many More



Larry Binks
Regional Director,
Area C

Safety Comes Before Fun

By: Kokanee Country Snowmobile Club

With the alarming number of snowmobile fatalities this 2016 season the Kokanee Country Snowmobile Club (KCSC) has amped up outreach. In a combined effort between the Kokanee Country Snowmobile Club and Creston Valley Search and Rescue, weekly youth safety outreach sessions have been successful with as many as a dozen of Creston's youth participating.

KCSC president Trish Drinkle, junior director Dylan Armitage and SAR manager Heidi Muller have been mentoring the youth into understanding the importance of Avalanche awareness. The group practices skills such as transceiver searching, probing techniques, shovelling, terrain assessment, and basic backcountry preparedness.

"It is inspiring to see how passionate these young adults are about safety," says Drinkle. "I wish many adults would see these kids as role models and use them as an example of what it takes to ride in our mountainous backcountry."

With each and every human triggered avalanche, there was a mistake made. By working together to provide a solid foundation of knowledge, snowmobile fatalities can and will be reduced.

Earlier this month, KCSC opted to cancel its annual poker run based upon dangerous snowmobile conditions.



Submitted Photo

Learning about safety is important for snowmobile club members.

"The thought of sending 50 people into the backcountry during a time of extreme snowpack instability was not a decision, in my opinion, especially knowing how many riders in our Creston area ride without a transceiver shovel and probe," explains Drinkle.

Although a small number of people were disgruntled at the social event cancellation, an outpouring of praise was bestowed upon the club for making the right choice. The British Columbia Snowmobile Federation (BCSF), avalanche education providers, Avalanche Canada, residents of the Creston Valley, Regional District of Central Kootenay directors Larry Binks and Tanya Wall, and many more publically praised the club for their decision to cancel the run, especially in light of recent tragedies.

The next club meeting will be held April 11 at the Columbia Brewery. The meeting will be a season windup and

update from the BCSF's spring meeting in Pemberton on April 2 and 3. ■

For more information, visit kcsf-bcsf.silkstart.com/cpages/home, or contact Trish Drinkle at 250-428-7531 (Kootenay Speed Shop) or 250-402-3179.

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Dogs or No Dogs: That is the Real Question

Story by: Carla Ahern,
Director of Communications, Stewardship and Education Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area

There has been a lot of response to the article I wrote last month in I Love Creston — the part related to dog poop. From this article discussions started, not only about poop, but about dogs in general and their place in a wildlife management area, the CVWMA in particular.

Yes, the poop problem is gross and avoidable, but this conversation is going beyond the poop. I have heard from all sides via phone calls, emails and impromptu talks on the street. There are those who believe they should be able to walk their dogs, on a leash, along the CVWMA dikes and trails. There are those who believe that a wildlife area is no place for a dog to be at all; they disturb and stress wildlife whether they are on or off a leash. Surprisingly (not), I haven't heard from those people who think they should be able to walk their dogs off-leash at the CVWMA... Could it be that they know what they are doing is wrong and they shouldn't be doing it? I hope so. So stop it.

I have definitely noticed in my 11 years working at the CVWMA that the number of people using the area to walk their dogs has increased dramatically. Unfortunately, this comes with impacts to the wetlands and wildlife, especially when they are off-leash. It seems that many people who come here with their dogs think that it is a place where running your dog off leash is OK. It is not OK. The CVWMA was set aside for the *wildlife*, not the *domestic* life. The wild creatures found here — 300-plus species of birds, 57 mammal, 17 fish and 12 reptile and amphibian species — don't need the added pressure of a canine threat of the domestic sort.

Recreational activities have impacts on wildlife and habitat too — from provincially regulated sports such as hunting and fishing to the mere act of walking or biking, they all have impacts. Is it an idea then to ban people from the CVWMA so that we don't disturb wildlife? Well no,

that is not realistic. There are many areas of the CVWMA that are hard to access, which is good for the wildlife as they can live their lives in relative peace. There are areas of the CVWMA that are highly used by people for various recreational activities and yes, there are impacts.

If dogs (and their owners — we can't blame the dogs) continue to be detrimental to the habitat and wildlife by leaving poop everywhere, roaming without a leash and disturbing wildlife, can they be banned? Well, yes of course they can. That is something that can be controlled. There are many wildlife management type areas that do not allow dogs. Do we want to ban dogs from the CVWMA? Well, I don't know the answer to that. I am a dog owner. I enjoy walking my dog along the trails of the CVWMA. But, I also see the other side. I see the impact they can have in high use areas around the Wildlife Interpretation Centre and at Summit Creek.



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Discussions are good. There are many sides to an issue and each have their views and opinions. There are facts and data. There are decisions that need to be made.

I am glad that my poop article started these discussions because what is currently going on at the CVWMA, with people and their dogs, is not working. Something has to change. What that something is I don't know nor is it up to me to decide. The CVWMA has a head of operations and board that ultimately makes these decisions based on facts and based on what is best for the CVWMA habitat and wildlife.

What I would like to see, as of right now, at the very least, is for everyone to *please leash your dog* while recreating at the CVWMA. And don't forget about the poop — pick it up. It's all part of being a responsible pet owner. I don't think that is really too much to ask, is it? Does it not make sense that for the safety of wildlife and out of respect to other users, dogs should be on a leash? Even if you think your dog is the best behaved dog ever and wouldn't hurt a fly or is too old to chase a bird (I've heard it all), it is the rule, so please obey. Correct me if I am wrong.

The CVWMA will listen, are listening, to what everyone is saying. That is how an informed decision will be made. Change never happens overnight; dogs aren't going to be banned tomorrow. Please, no irate phone calls. I would appreciate constructive comments, concerns and opinions, so please feel free to send those. We can compile this information so that it can form the basis for making informed decisions. If you don't want to talk to me (I'm not offended), you can send your thoughts directly to the board or head of operations; their contact information can be found on our website.

I would like to think that we can all work together to figure out what is best for the wildlife because in the end that is why the CVWMA is here — for the wildlife. Is everyone going to be happy with that decision, whatever it is? No, probably not.

To be continued... ■

Questions? Feel free to call 250-402-6900 (Admin) or 250-402-6908 (Wildlife Centre), or email askus@crestonwildlife.ca.

Wendy Franz

It's hard to enjoy the CVWMA's beauty while wondering what you might step in.



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Thunder Cats are True Team Players

By: Creston Valley Thunder Cats

The Creston Valley Thunder Cats wouldn't exist without tremendous fan support from the local community, and since the organization began more than 15 years ago, there has always been an understanding that the team's players need to give back, as well.

"There's a lot of responsibility that comes with the privilege of playing junior hockey in the Creston Valley," says Thunder Cats head coach Jeff Dubois. "We feel it's very important for our guys, as athletes and young men, to contribute their time to benefit and support our community the same way that hundreds of folks come out to the rink to cheer on the team."

The Thunder Cats participate in a number of community events each season and volunteer with many local charity organizations.

The beginning of the hockey season usually lines up with the Terry Fox Run and Blue Heron Run in September, where Thunder Cats players help guide runners along their routes and to the finish line. And each October, they help the Rotary club with hoisting and transporting thousands of pounds of firewood to local families.

"The returning players who come back to Creston already understand the importance of volunteer service and those who are new to the team learn pretty quickly," says Dubois. "Each of the events we participate in is an opportunity to get to know people in the community and connect with our fans. It's also important for them as young men to build an appreciation for the value of volunteering and the satisfaction you feel when you're part of a larger community effort."

Thunder Cats players get to do just that during the team's annual Stuff the Bus food drive, which sees team members collect non-perishable food donations at Overweitea and Extra Foods over a number of days before delivering all that's been collected to Gleaners in order for it to be distributed to those in need before the Thanksgiving holiday.

Another staple of the Thunder Cats' volunteering efforts is the Snow Cats program, which was created by Creston Mayor Ron Toyota. As Snow Cats, the

team's players assist local seniors and others who have difficulty dealing with the effects of a heavy snowfall by shovelling driveways, front walks and other areas around the house where accessibility can be difficult. This past season, the Snow Cats were responsible for about 30 properties around Creston and Erickson.

"The Stuff the Bus event and Snow Cats program tend to be really popular with our players because it's easy to see and feel the impact they're making on a local level," says Dubois. "There is a lot of interaction with members of the community and lots of positive feedback."

Given that Thunder Cats players often face considerable pressure to combine considerable hockey commitments along with school and work obligations, a series of volunteer commitments for these various events and initiatives may seem like overkill. But you rarely hear complaints from the players, who all relish the opportunity to give back in the community.

"Our guys respect the role they play and there's a lot of enthusiasm to give back," says Dubois. "We also have to appreciate that there are so many folks in the community who volunteer themselves at our home games. It ends up being a case of giving and also receiving so much time and effort from others that allows our organization to operate at such a high level." ■

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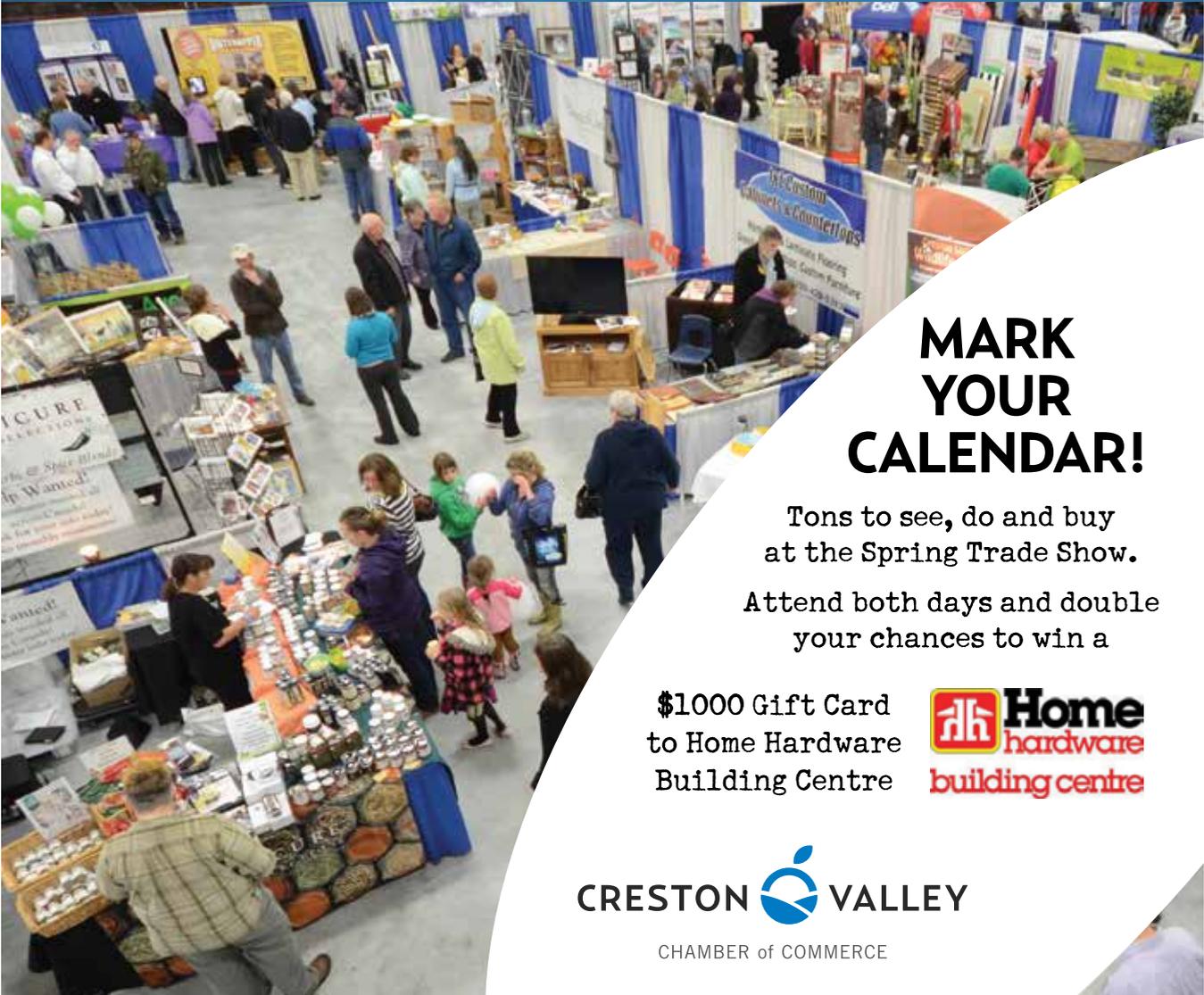
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Ag Aware

Story by: Randy Meyer,
Creston Valley Agriculture Society

Welcome to spring 2016! Hopefully by the time you are reading this, the sunny, warm days are outnumbering the rainy, cool days. Through February and March we received copious amounts of rain that really rejuvenated our soil moisture, which will be a great start for our growing season. It is time to work the land and get our crops into the ground. Enjoy the smell of the fresh turned soil! At this time of year, no matter what you are growing, the potential is there for this to be your best crop yet. Whether it is your garden plants, your hay or grain fields, pasture, grapes, apples or cherries, this could be a great year.

From here on, what the farmer does or doesn't do, as well as what Mother Nature does or doesn't do, will mostly determine how much of that potential we will reap in the end. Optimism at the start is always good!

April 22 is Earth Day, a day to recognize and celebrate the importance of the environment in which we live. It brings to my mind a bumper sticker I've seen a few times that says, "On a Farm, Every day is Earth Day". This is very true. Farmers take great care of their plants and crops and livestock and soil, not just because that is how we make our living but because it just is the right way to do things. Plants that are fed and watered properly and kept free of weeds and insect pests are more likely to fulfill their potential growth. Similarly, livestock fed, watered and kept in an

environment with sufficient space will thrive, as well.

All of us that farm for a living are really stewards of this land for however long we are on it. We may own it now, but that is not forever. The hardworking people who came before us to this valley and saw potential for farms worked hard to clear the forests of Erickson, Canyon and Lister and to develop the fields and orchards. Also, those people who saw the potential on the Creston flats built the dikes, which allowed a few thousand acres of rich bottom land to be farmed. They all were the stewards of the land then. We are now. Who will be in the future?

Most of us involved in agriculture for the long haul in this province are strong supporters of the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR). We see the value of our lands as food growing lands for now and for long into the future. It is a seemingly constant battle to keep our agriculture lands intact and in the hands of those that will keep it in production. Too many developers and politicians and other non-agriculture interests see our lands as a "savings account" of land to be used for anything else except food production. Housing, roads, shopping centres, airport expansions and industrial sites are all easier to do on nice farmland. Or how about flooding an entire agriculture valley for a hydro dam? All these other activities may generate more money for some but we all need to eat and always will. Personally, I think there are alternatives that must be explored before too much more of our food producing lands are gone.

Earth Day. Be a part of it. Look around you at our valley and all the great things we can grow and eat here — for now and for our future. Be Ag Aware! ■

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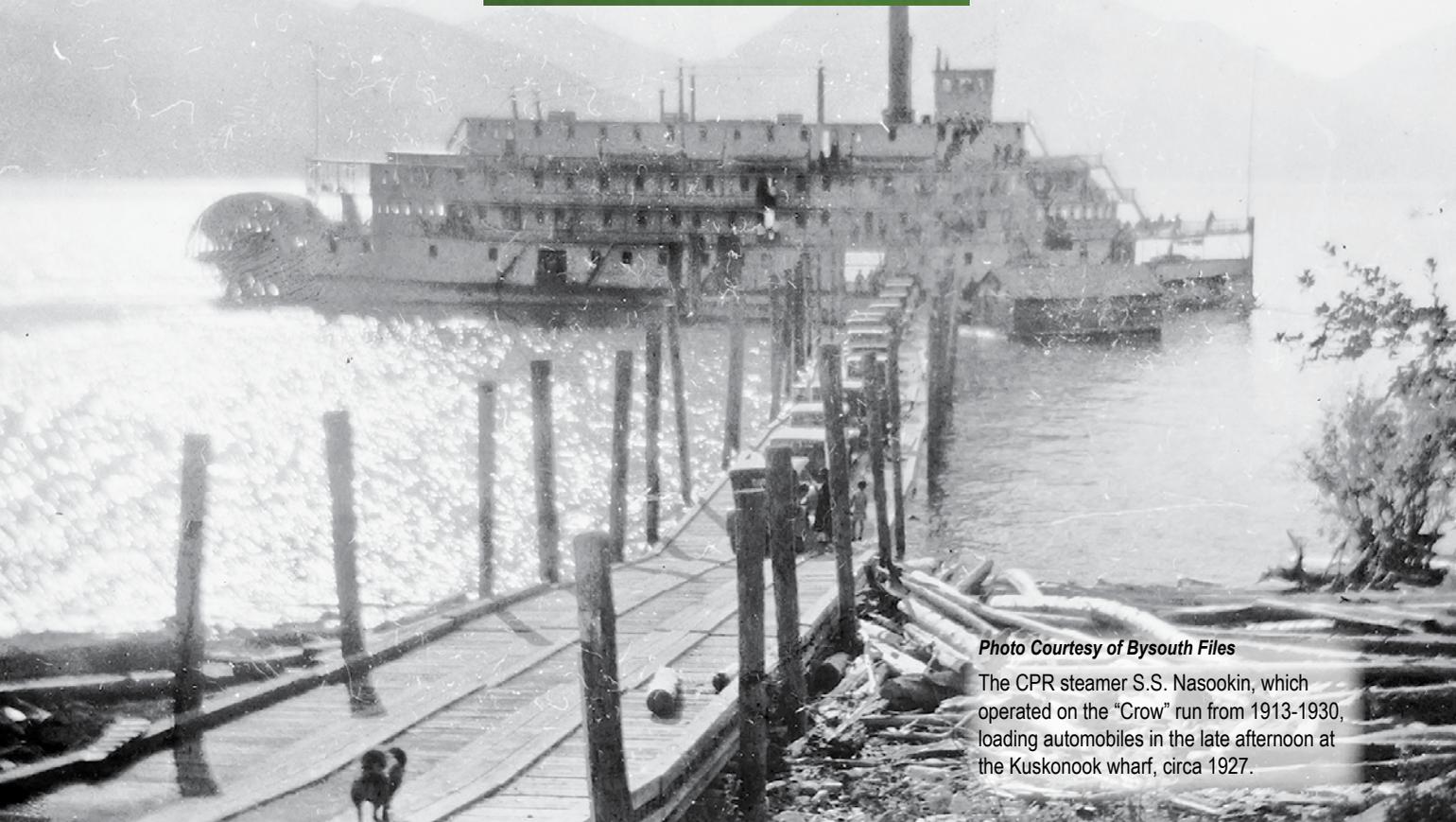


Photo Courtesy of Bysouth Files

The CPR steamer S.S. Nasookin, which operated on the "Crow" run from 1913-1930, loading automobiles in the late afternoon at the Kuskonook wharf, circa 1927.

Kuskonook's forgotten semaphore

By: Michael A. Cone

In the spring of 1921, the old townsite of Kuskonook bustled with excitement following the completion of a new highway north from Sirdar and the building of a floating wharf. Although only a few miles long, the road was part of the government's ambitious Southern Trans-Provincial Highway building program that would eventually stretch

from the Crowsnest Pass to the coast. Reaching the East Shore of Kootenay Lake was only part of the government's plan. By building a wharf at Kuskonook, the "lake link" was bridged with a ferry connection to Nelson. Motorists — primarily tourists — could now board a CPR steamer and resume their journey on either side of the Lake.

The CPR steamer that called at

Kuskonook operated daily between Nelson and the railway terminal at Kootenay Landing, located at the far south end of the Lake. The steamer on this run was known locally as the "Crow" boat, because of her connection with the Crowsnest trains at Kootenay Landing. Once the Kuskonook wharf was completed, the "Crow" boat started calling there twice a day, once in the

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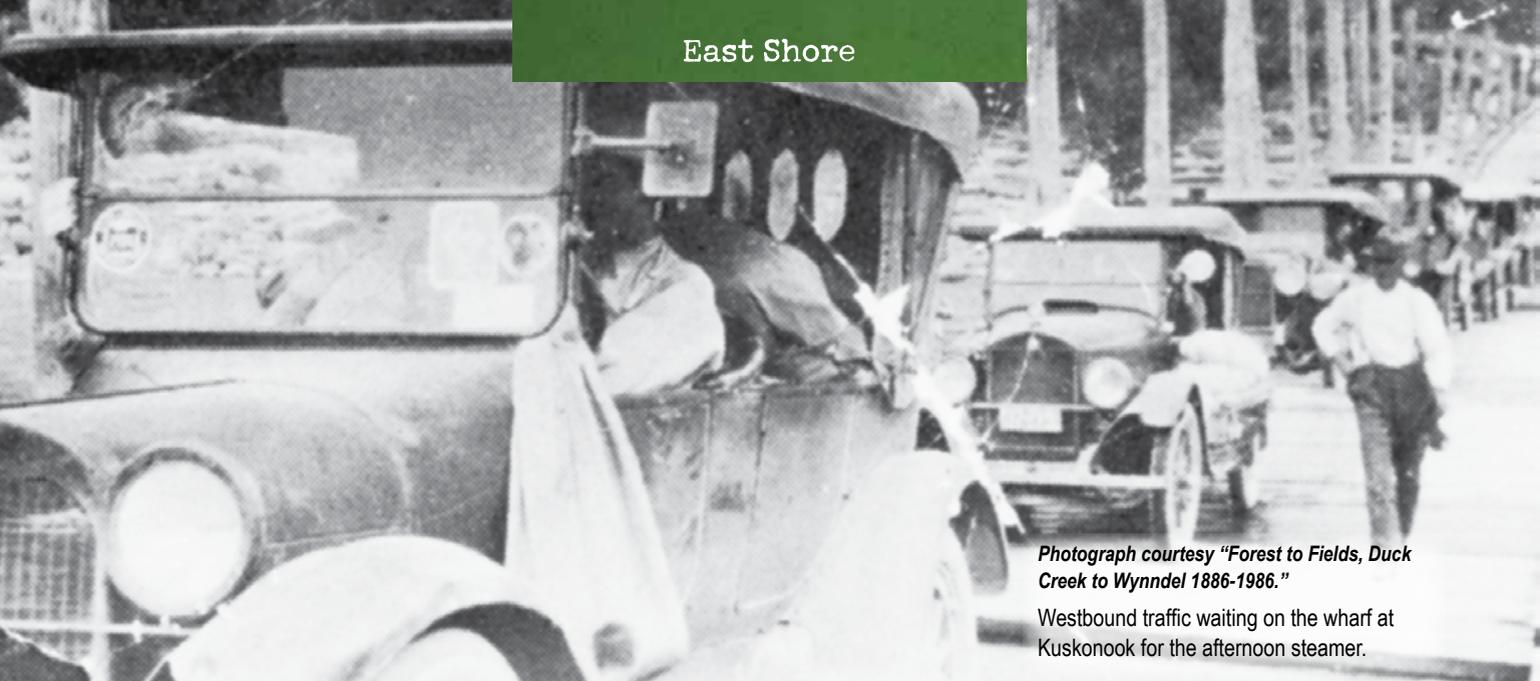
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Photograph courtesy "Forest to Fields, Duck Creek to Wynndel 1886-1986."

Westbound traffic waiting on the wharf at Kuskonook for the afternoon steamer.

morning to offload automobiles heading east, and again later in the afternoon, if signalled, by westbound motorists.

The beacon that signalled the "Crow" boat was an old-fashioned semaphore, but with some distinctive features intended to enhance its visibility from a distance. Rather than being on the wharf, the Kuskonook semaphore was set farther back near the highway. Its tall, upright signal post had a pivoting arm (or blade) that had a large circular sighting board attached to it. The sighting

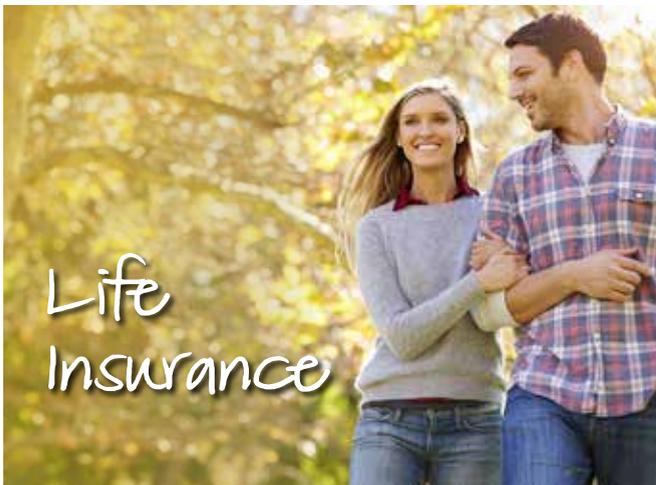
board itself was brightly painted in a variety of colours to provide a striking contrast against a background of trees. Motorists were supposed to work the semaphore and move the arm down to the horizontal "stop" position by themselves. In all likelihood, a notice board nearby explained how the signaling mechanism worked and when to activate it, but locals probably kept a watchful eye on things as well.

The Kuskonook semaphore was not infallible. Poor weather, more than anything else, hindered its effectiveness. One traveler passing through in 1922 complained in the Cranbrook Herald that the "semaphore signal ... at Kuskonook is inadequate ... and can be seen only at a short distance, and should be replaced by a more suitable one."

Over the next nine years, life at Kuskonook blossomed and withered with the frequency of the movement of the semaphore's arm. The arrival of the first buggy-topped automobiles in the spring saw the semaphore employed sporadically. By summer, its usage peaked, with tourists arriving almost daily. In the fall, utilization tapered-off and over winter, it stood idle.

On Dec. 31, 1930, the CPR cancelled steamer service to Kootenay Landing and Kuskonook. Early the following year, the government opened the new East Shore highway to Gray Creek, which became the new ferry terminal for the government-operated ferry crossing the lake to Fraser's Landing.

The Kuskonook semaphore was dismantled shortly after ferry service ended. Unfortunately, little is known about the semaphore. No pictures of it have surfaced and only a few old-timers can recall seeing it. Today, not far from where the semaphore once stood overlooking Kootenay Lake, there is a new beacon with a different purpose. It signals the entrance to the Kuskanook Harbour. ■



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Bee Products and Herbs, Part 1

Story by: Maya Skalinska
Master Herbalist, Registered Herbal Therapist

We all know how crucial bees are. Not only do they ensure we have plant foods on our table, they are also fellow herbalists, collecting the most nutritive parts of plants and transforming it into nutrient rich medicines and superfoods.

I love recommending honey with bitter tasting herbs. It makes the medicines palatable, and ensures proper delivery, driving the medicine deeper in the tissues. Ayurvedic medicine has recommended honey to be used in this way for over 5,000 years, claiming that whatever plant medicine you take, taking it with honey will make that medicine much stronger. Now we know why. Due to its impressive carbohydrate properties, our bodies assimilate honey and the plant medicine taken with it at a very efficient rate. At the same time, due to the same carbohydrates, people with diabetes or candida albicans need to be careful. Also never warm honey higher than 37 C. It kills all its enzymes and much of its medicinal properties. This is the reason to avoid pasteurized honey.

In apitherapy, honey is used for many ailments, among them sleep, wound care and general weakness. For sleep, you can make your own medicine by

layering wilted lavender flowers and unpasteurized honey in a jar. Flip the jar upside-down once a day, and in two weeks you have your own sleep remedy. Take two teaspoons with water, or add it to your chamomile tea.

The same method works for most herbs. For wound care, thyme infused manuka honey is best. It's also a great remedy for a sore throat. For general weakness, honey with bee pollen is most effective, paired with herbs specific to the root cause of the weakness.

Thyme infused honey paired with propolis is a great cold remedy, especially when the cold is due to bacterial infection. In Greek, pro is before, and polis is city, literally meaning "before city". The bees make propolis from tree resins and their own saliva. They craft this mixture into a protective wall in front of their hive, a lining to coat the cells before the queen lays the eggs, and to clean off any bacteria they might have encountered while out and about collecting pollen.

We too can use propolis as a protector. Propolis is a strong antibacterial, antifungal and antiviral. In my practice, I use it as an antibacterial, as well as part

of an immune boosting protocol, especially when the lungs are weak. Taken internally, it's best as a tincture. Make sure the tincture is a 1:3 ratio of propolis to alcohol, and the alcohol content is between 75-85 per cent. Grain alcohol is best. Be careful if you have low blood pressure, or are taking pharmaceutical blood thinners. Aspirin is OK. Topically, propolis shines in a cream form, as its also a strong anesthetic and anti-inflammatory.

And then there's bee pollen, a true superfood. It contains 22 amino acids, 18 vitamins, including all the Bs, 25 minerals, including iron, 59 trace elements, 11 enzymes and 14 fatty acids, which makes bee pollen 25 per cent protein. Need I say more? I use it in my herbal elixirs every morning. The recommended dose is one or two tablespoons a day.

Last, but not least, is a very special bee product called royal jelly, used only when absolutely necessary. It's wonderful for extreme adrenal fatigue, along with other herbal adaptogens, and when overall Qi (life force), is severely depleted.

There is so much more to these wonderful medicines our bee friends produce. Stay tuned for my next article, as I will go deep into safe ways of using these gifts from the bees, for you and your family. ■

Maya Skalinska is a Master Herbalist, and a Registered Herbal Therapist, offering iridology, herbal medicine, nutrition consultations and flower essences in Crawford Bay and at Vital Health in Creston. For more information, or to book an appointment please call 250-225-3493.



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Stress and Pain

Story by Jesse Moreton, BSc DC

Discussion of stress and its physical effects has been on my mind for quite some time. I believe everyone has some innate understanding of how stress affects their body. It's something I picked up very quickly after beginning my practice. What I originally failed to understand, however, is just how significant the effects can be. Over the last year the point has been driven home as I've seen some patients lose their stress triggers.

For example, there have been a few who have retired. I went from seeing these patients on a somewhat regular basis to a more infrequent basis. The individuals were quick to acknowledge it was retirement that brought cessation of symptoms, often before I would think to ask. I've also watched patients endure trying times with various relationship and family problems. Typically after the storm, closure or resolution, symptoms drastically improve. I've experienced this firsthand in my own life with what I thought would be a lifelong muscular problem.

Well that's all fine and dandy and maybe you agree, but case studies and anecdotal evidence don't hold much water in today's culture of proof and research. How do we actually measure the effects of stress or anxiety?

The simplest way is by observation. One study found that half their participants had improvements in chronic headaches after learning how to stop "catastrophizing" or constantly thinking negative thoughts. Often these sort of studies are aided by use of questionnaires that cover a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms.

A more objective method is to measure

the physiological markers. Stress activates the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis and eventually to the release of cortisol and catecholamines. In English, that means stress makes hormonal changes to our bodies. Some of these hormones can be measured easily in the blood, urine or saliva.

Increases in cortisol, for example, activate the "flight or fight" response. The body is flooded with glucose (for energy), arteries narrow and blood pressure increases. Among other changes, it will negatively affect quality of sleep, immune system function and cognitive performance. And that's just one hormone. Other stress hormones combine to produce more detrimental effects.

Summarizing the cumulative hormonal affects we can observe the following: headaches, upset stomach, aches, pains and tense muscles, nervousness and shaking, ringing in the ear, cold or sweaty hands and feet, clenched jaw

and grinding teeth. The laundry list goes on. These are just some the symptoms I encounter and treat more commonly.

So there is a mechanism, a direct link. Mind and body are inseparability connected. It then follows that helping the mind will help the body and vice versa. The mind can be helped by identifying and avoiding stress triggers, building better relationships and taking a break or leaving an area when angry. The body can be helped by a common-sense balanced diet, exercise and enough sleep. In addition, there are a variety of health professionals trained to help with either mind or body.

Of course there are other coping strategies, some healthy (i.e. spirituality or hobbies), some not so healthy (i.e. smoking or excessive drinking). Whatever your stresses, I hope you will find a way to manage. As I say to patients, with some things we can only cope, not cure. It doesn't mean give up or catastrophize. It means acceptance and pursuance of person-specific strategies for optimal mind and body function. ■



Home is Where the Heart is

Story by: Diane Tolleson

Like the turtle, we carry our home with us in our heart no matter where we physically live. Our origins have come from the stars. Being on this planet we require a physical home to dwell, though there are many dwelling without them, and believe it or not, many of them are happier than the ones with mansions. It's the love that fills a home that makes it what it is, and that comes straight from our hearts.

We are a very mobile society now, and I find many people, including myself, that have moved from where they called home

when they grew up. It does take some adjusting to feel at home again when in another country or even city. Knowing we take the love with us no matter where we go can be comforting when finding new friends and establishing a new life.

Where do you find that love when you are alone on your path? I find it with my spirit guides, pets and family members that have passed on, and within myself. Loving yourself first is not selfish, it's survival. Loving those around us is an added bonus!

Choosing to love every aspect of your life, good, bad or indifferent, is a challenge we all endure and can conquer. We have all

Why Choose Natural Cosmetics?

Submitted by: Vital Health

When it comes to skin care and cosmetics, being choosy is a really good idea. After all, we have been taught the importance of what to put into our bodies and what not to. However, when it comes to the skin, the largest organ of our body, we don't always take it quite as seriously.

Remember, though, that what we put on our skin does get absorbed into the body and one of the key ways to remain healthy is to keep our toxin load down as much as possible, so learning about natural cosmetics and skin care is really just another important part of good health.

As you may already know, conventional makeup relies primarily on heavy metals, petroleum products, artificial dyes and synthetic preservatives to create a product. These ingredients may be carcinogenic and endocrine disrupting, affecting our hormone balance and not supporting the true health of our skin. Their goal is performance and profit over clean ingredients and health. The good news is that in today's world, natural cosmetics have come a long way in being able to perform extremely well while still being clean and safe for our health. The choice has become a lot easier to be able to maintain that beautiful complexion without any guilt.

When choosing a natural cosmetic line for yourself, it's a good idea to really get to know the brand. Here are some key pointers to look for before making a purchase:

- Are they both dermatologically tested? Do their products

had experiences that we might judge as bad; the challenge is where to find the love in that to move on. I feel the focus should be on loving oneself first, so you can then share it with others.

As long as you have taken the bad experience and learned how you don't want things to happen in your life or how you will treat others, you are on the right track. Love will find a way.

I would love some of the readers to send me questions they would like some insight on to answer in my next column. A "psychic Dear Diane" kind of thing!

I love to help people find the answers for themselves with the information that comes through when I do readings. Please include an email for me to respond to as well. I will not disclose your name in the article.

I'm very happy that spring is on the way and new growth is already being seen around me, in nature and the people around me. Time to come out of our caves of hibernation and enjoy this beautiful valley we call home!

In-joy always and be gentle with yourself! ■

To learn more, contact Diane Tolleson at dianetolleson709@gmail.com or visit through my-eyes.ca.

perform as expected, while still being compatible with a wide range of skin types?

- Do they primarily use natural mineral pigments for color, along with vitamins, minerals, plant extracts and essential oils, instead of perfumes and other synthetic ingredients? These quality ingredients may cost more, but they are much better choices for your health and the health of the planet, which will surely pay off in the long run.

- What are their philosophies and practices? Do they respect nature and the environment, by not overharvesting plants for their ingredients, avoiding synthetic chemical use in their products and not testing on animals or using animal products?

The bottom line is: Don't be shy about asking questions when seeking out natural cosmetics that you'd like to invest in. As you know, your health is probably the most important investment that you will ever make. ■

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Home & Garden

Top Five Projects to Save Money

It's renovation season, and with so many projects on the to-do list, which should you tackle first? While some projects provide great long-term return on investment, a few simple ones can provide instant savings. Here are the top five home projects to help you save money:

Caulk around windows and doors — Stop air leaks around your home by sealing existing gaps and cracks. Use caulking or weather stripping around doors and windows. Installing a door sweep is also a good idea.

Insulate your home — Use insulation with a high R-value, such as Roxul Comfortbatt, which can be used to top up

insulation in your attic. Aim for an R-value of 50 or a depth of 16 inches (41 cm). For whole home efficiency, ensure other areas of your home are well insulated, such as crawl spaces, basement headers, walls and ceilings. It will keep your house cool in the warm weather and take the stress off your air conditioning unit.

Clean your AC unit — Come spring, it's not uncommon to find your air conditioner's condenser and compressor blocked up with dirt and debris. This can result in greater stress on the unit, causing it to work harder. Giving it a thorough cleaning is easy and can help maximize your AC unit's service life while minimizing your energy bill.

Plant trees — Direct sunlight can heat up surfaces and building materials, as well as the interior temperature of your home. Consider planting trees in strategic locations to provide shade and reduce cooling costs.

Install a rain barrel — Water is an important, but costly resource. Installing a rain barrel is an easy and affordable measure to reduce your water consumption, while keeping your lawn and garden looking great.

These simple home maintenance tasks can be well worth the effort, potentially providing hundreds of dollars in annual savings.

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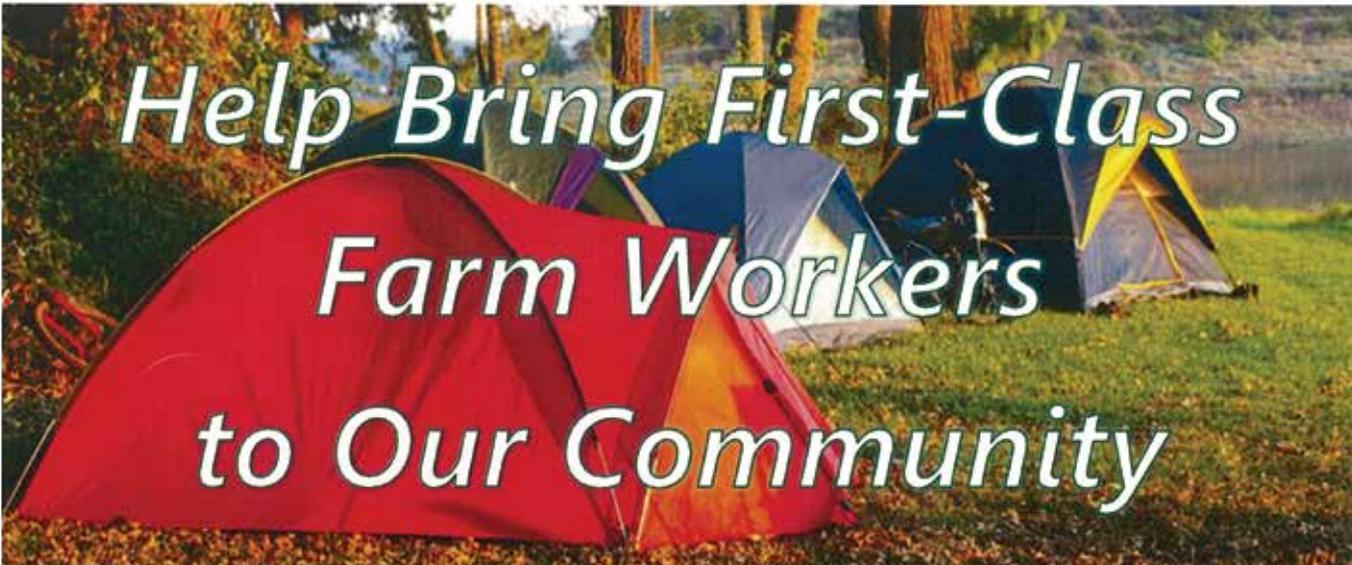
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Tanya Wall 250-428-9066 twall@rdck.bc.ca or Deb Nelius 250-428-9932

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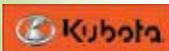
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