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Mayor's Desk

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through trade trip

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at age 40

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Letters to the Editor

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One of a kind

Gordon and Caroline Martin say their “adopt a tree” orchard in Erickson is unlike any other in Canada.

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Guest From the editor

If life is all about trade-offs, the Martin family is comfortable with the entrepreneurial ones it has made. Commercial orchardists for more than a decade, Gordon and Caroline vacated the Lower Mainland to capitalize on the Creston Valley cherry craze during its heyday from the late 1990s through mid-2000s. But money, as it turned out, wasn't everything.

Selling to overseas markets, no matter how lucrative, didn't sit well with them. And the volatility of international, financial and environmental climates took an emotional toll.

Thus the decision to abandon cherry exports and concentrate on local sales, including an innovative tree adoption program unlike any other in the country, and a road-side fruit stand/tourist destination featuring Dutch treats, gourmet ice cream, Creston Valley Jam Company preserves, miniature railways and (soon) mini-golf. They're working harder and making less, but sleeping better than ever.

"That's exactly how it works," says Caroline, whose Cherrybrook Farms is featured in this month's I Love Creston magazine. "More hours and less pay, but we feel happier about it. It's what we strongly believe in."

"We also feel you'll reap the benefits later on, and I can see that. It starts to turn around and people see who you are and what you're made out of and they support that. To me, that's the best thing."

Cherrybrook trees, maintained year-round by the Martins and their staff (two in the field and three in the store), are "sold" to members who pay an annual fee in exchange for reaping the crop. It's equal parts financial (cheaper than buying cherries in a store), educational (children learn about agriculture), social (some members plan

this issue

family reunions around the harvest and share the crop with friends) and nutritional (the cherries taste great).

As the cherry industry has evolved and the competitive advantage once held by Creston is weakened by market trends and the law of supply and demand, the attractiveness of the business has waned. Some local growers have razed their orchards, making the Martins' transition seem even more prudent from a long-term perspective.

Their income may not peak as high as it once did but they are sheltered from bottoming out. The greater stability is worth the extra workload that comes with diversification.

"I think I would have ripped out the trees (eventually) because I'm not really good with that kind of stress . . . all the uncertainties. I said, 'I can't handle this anymore,'" she says.

"You get one paycheque a year and you have no idea what that is until about October. You just keep your fingers crossed and hope that you budgeted well enough that you can make your cash flow through. This gave us the opportunity to be creating revenue throughout the year."

They like not having to keep one eye on foreign markets and currency exchange rates, and the other on the sky.

"We know that those cherries on that tree, no matter what the market does around us, will be sold locally," she says. "The local market is stable. We know that people around here will buy cherries. Tourists will still come in here and buy cherries."

"I don't have to worry if Turkey has a huge crop and they're coming off at the same time as ours. That doesn't bother me anymore. It is a trade-off. I have less stress."

"If it pours rain and the cherries start to split, that's OK. The members can still go out and pick split cherries because, you know what? They're still

good. They just don't transport across seas."

It's a win-win proposition because Martin is convinced local residents appreciate – and deserve – the opportunity to buy high-quality, home-grown produce.

"They have to listen to the noise of the windmills and the tractors and all that, so why can't they reap the benefit of the local cherries rather than having to go into Extra Foods and buy cherries that have been brought in from Washington? That just doesn't seem right," she says.

"We only sell in our fruit stand what is grown and produced in the Creston Valley. You are guaranteed, when you walk in the door, that those cherries are our cherries, either directly from us or from a friend in the valley."

"People really want Creston cherries. Creston is well-known and even tourists come in and ask for Creston fruit. They don't want the Okanagan."

"Other consumers, they don't care. They just want a cherry. But we care."

Read more about Cherrybrook Farms, and much more, in this August edition of I Love Creston. ■

Mailbag

(Letters and emails to the editor are printed as written with the exception of profanity, slander or defamation)

Kisuk Kyukyit,

Hello!!!

I just wanted to say thank you for the opportunity to be a part of the magazine. I love the article and I've heard lots of great feedback so far. You guys do wonderful things for the community. I appreciate your time and hard work.

- Misty



Cherry-themed pit stop thriving

Photos courtesy of Cherrybrook Farms

Martins favour local, tourist market over exports

Does fruit come from the grocery store? One child's naïve understanding of the question caught Caroline Martin off guard when a neighbour's young relative wandered over to her Erickson orchard one day.

"The little grandson looked at the cherry tree and said, 'Nope. Cherries just come from Safeway. This is wrong,'" Martin says, "and we're like, 'Wow.' We saw the disconnect happening between the children and agriculture."

A desire to set the record straight, one family and one tree at a time, resulted in Martin and her husband Gordon launching Cherrybrook Farms in 2007.

The "adopt a tree" operation moved from the back road into a high-profile location along Highway 3 two years ago and today is a thriving, evolving and expanding home-grown business that remains one-of-a-kind in Canada.



The premise is simple: for an annual fee, members pick and keep all the cherries from a tree the Martins take care of, giving customers a stake in the orchard and protecting its integrity.

"We didn't want a typical U-pick," she says. "Most people come for a deal. They think, 'If we pick it ourselves we can get it cheaper,' but they destroy the trees. So we thought, 'How do we keep our trees healthy and allow people to pick their own cherries?'

"We're a strong believer in local agriculture"

"The way we did it, they adopt their tree, so it becomes their tree and they actually put their name by it. Every year they renew, they come back to their tree. It gives them a sense of pride."

Cherrybrook members hail from as far away as Alberta and Saskatchewan to the east and Vancouver and even Kelowna to the west, "which surprised me, thinking of all the cherry trees there, but they want the ownership and the holiday, so they spend a weekend in Creston.

"We've had a little girl come (from Nelson) since she was seven years old. She picks the cherries with her grandmother (and) then goes home and shares all the cherries with her friends.

"She gets it for a birthday present and says it's the best present in the world."

The Martins – including now-grown children Peter and Laura – moved here from Langley in 1996 to start a cherry orchard which they farmed commercially for 11 years before transitioning to the current model. Gordon had been working at a golf course but grew up on a farm in Manitoba.

"I was a city slicker," says his wife, who was nonetheless delighted with the move. "I grew up in Calgary but a lot of my friends lived out in the country and I used to spend weekends out there, and I loved it."

They own nearly 3,000 trees, which most years produced a lucrative crop as the local cherry industry peaked during the Martins' first decade in Creston.

"The money was there. The Canadian dollar was low, so there was a really good (export market)," she says. "But it broke our heart to know you spent all this time and sent it overseas. It wasn't what we wanted to do. It's not what we believe in."

"We're a strong believer in local agriculture."

They put their money where their mouths are in 2012, the last year they exported any fruit. This year they leased out half the orchard and retained a hands-on presence in the other half, which is split between memberships and production for sale at home, to residents and tourists through the Creston Valley Farmers' Market (which Martin helped establish) and their own fruit stand.

The storefront has become an attraction in its own right due to Martin's fertile mind running in perpetual overdrive.

"I'm one of those artsy, creative type people," she says. "My brain just keeps going. That's the joke around here. 'If you don't see what you want, come back in three days and she's probably got another idea on the table.' I've been told I've got to slow down."

So far, Gordon's been able to keep up.

First came the Dutch treats near and dear to the heart – and stomach – of the Cranbrook-born Martin, whose parents emigrated from Holland in the 1950s. The line of candies consumes 20 square feet of space and includes 60 types of licorice and other Dutch cuisine.



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Then came the ice cream, which had to be a B.C. product made with pure milk. The Island Farms brand from Victoria fit the bill, 16 flavours of which are stocked.

"Gord's mom was really big on having high teas and prim-and-proper tea parties at her house," Martin says, "so we started bringing in loose-leaf teas and having high teas with three-tiered plates of dainties, just like you'd have at the Empress Hotel."

"We want to make this a real family stop"

Those are served monthly from September through June, on their spacious south-facing deck in early fall and spring and in the store during cold-weather months. They break from it during the heat of the summer.

Blended into the mix is a miniature railroad inspired by Martin's father, an aficionado who got her hooked on the hobby as a child.

"It's part of the attraction," she says of an 800-square-foot layout adjacent to the deck, which affords panoramic views of Erickson orchards and the Skimmerhorn range. "(Customers) love to sit out here and have their ice cream and watch the trains go around."

A smaller-scale setup is enclosed within its own out-building, and a Dutch-themed railroad is under construction to complement the candy section.

"We want to make this a real family stop," Martin says, which is why they provide a larger wooden train for kids to play on and are developing a portable mini-golf course – this one Gordon's brainchild.

It can be set up in the backyard in summer, brought indoors in winter and loaded into a cargo trailer for temporary use at

fairs or in schools throughout the year. Agriculture-oriented obstacles will add an educational component.

"(The ball) will have to go through a cow's udder to get to the glass of milk, that kind of thing," she says. "The kids will be learning but they won't have a clue they're learning."

While Gordon works on the course, his wife is focused on concocting nutritional, home-made candy recipes to go along with the cherry juice, cherry lemonade, cherry slushies and cherry fudge already available – all high in natural ingredients and low on processed sugar.

Family cherry tree memberships, however, remain the core of the business. About 250 trees are adopted, a number that will be capped at between 300 and 500 depending on how many picking sessions can be booked during the two-week harvest season.

"The limit is going to be how many families we can accommodate in that time frame," she says. "We have a schedule, so we stagger the flow of people coming in."

It's a two-hour process, including orientation before actually stripping the tree of its fruit, which is cooled on site before being packed. Customers walk away with no fewer than 40 pounds and sometimes up to 120 pounds of cherries for a flat fee of \$80.

"We call it playing the cherry stock market," she says. "Some years are up, some years are down. It equals out."

Even in the worst year the price per pound is a relative bargain, but the value of a tree membership is rarely measured in dollars and cents.

"A lot of people do it just for the experience, not for how much fruit they take home. That's irrelevant," Martin says.

"There's nothing like picking your own fruit. Eating a cherry fresh off the tree is just unbelievable." ■





From the Mayor's desk

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

Far East junket puts Creston on economic map

How do small communities foster economic development? There certainly is not a single "one size fits all" formula.

Increasingly, however, the answer comes in terms of regional initiatives. By combining the efforts of smaller communities located within a

Creston Valley Business Buzz



Christina Franklin, owner of 360 Estate Services

Are you moving into a new home or need to refresh to sell? 360 Estate Services can help; we are a full service painting and decorating company. With Christina's many years of experience, operating a painting company in Vancouver since 2005, she noticed a need for more. Clients were struggling with too much stuff and didn't know how to liquidate or struggled with the time to pack and handle the estates of loved ones. 360 Estate Services offers

help to "move you forward" in times of transition.

Christina's education includes certificates and degrees in decorating, design, pottery and fabric arts. In her 12 years of painting she has worked on many projects including commercial, hospital, high rise construction along with private residences.

Christina and her family moved to the Creston Valley in February 2012, reopening 360 Estate Services in April of this year.

For more information about 360 Estate Services or to get a quote please call Christina at 250-428-8816

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geographic region, it is often recognized that communities have more to offer the larger market when a collective effort is put forth.

With an eye to opportunities in the global marketplace, and building on the economic development work spearheaded by the City of Cranbrook, I recently had the opportunity to participate in a trade and friendship-building delegation, visiting cities in both China and South Korea.

The purpose of the trip was to promote economic development opportunities in the Kootenay region, with a focus on agriculture, tourism, mining, forest products and education.

The trip was a reciprocal visit to one undertaken by a six-person delegation from the City of Wonju, South Korea, last summer. That group was greatly impressed by the Creston Valley's agricultural capacity and potential.

The decision to participate in the delegation to China and South Korea was supported by the Town of Creston's council for a number of key reasons: the public's ongoing request for increased economic development opportunities for both our community and our region; the recognition that, as a region, the Kootenays have much to offer Asia in terms of the economic sectors noted above; that the trip built upon the economic development work undertaken by the City of Cranbrook to promote our region to Asia; and, that the trip was a reciprocal event.

The budget is always a key consideration for any initiative. My total travel expenses were approximately \$4,000, mostly for airfare. Expenses for accommodation, dining and touring in Taicang, Wonju and Seki City were covered by our gracious host cities.

As invited guests, the respect and appreciation shown toward our group was outstanding. Our delegation also included: the mayor of Cranbrook (Wayne Stetski); a Cranbrook councillor (Diana J. Scott); Cranbrook's economic development officer (Kevin Weaver); the College of the Rockies president (Nick Rubidge); and, the dean of international studies for the COTR (Patricia Bowron).

In addition, a Teck representative from Beijing, a Canfor representative from Shanghai, B.C. International Trade and Investment representatives for East China and the general manager for CanadAsia Management Development Ltd. (Paul von Wittgenstein) participated with our delegation, as did many senior officials from cities in both South Korea and China.

Our delegation's tour points included Taicang Port, Taicang Science and Education Park, Chien-Shing Institute of Technology and the Yonsei University and Agricultural Centre (to name only a few).

For me, the most impressive highlight of our travels was spending time at the Agricultural Technology Centre, an economic development initiative created and paid for by the City of Wonju. This centre employs more than 100 people, with a mandate to assist farmers in becoming more productive, efficient and resilient.

In addition to visiting China and South Korea, I was able to route through Japan on my return trip. This itinerary allowed me to visit Creston's sister community of Kaminohō, a reciprocal trip to the one made by representatives from Kaminohō in 2012.

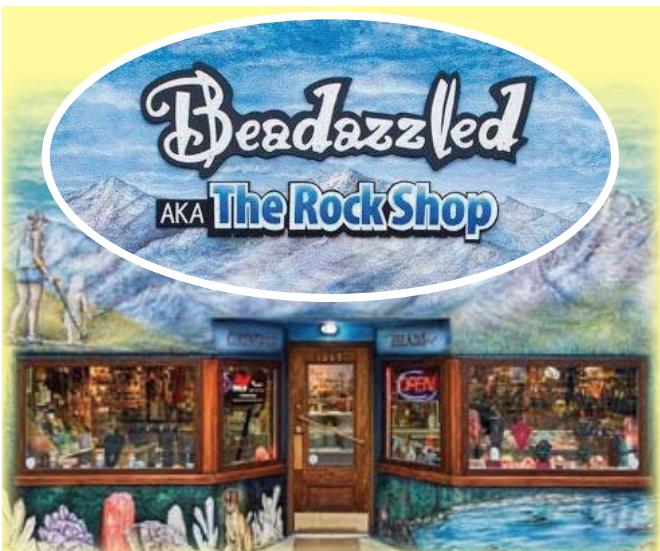
This community relationship between Creston and Kaminohō has existed since 1991, with each community visiting its "sister" numerous times over the years.

My visit to the East has been the topic of many conversations I've had over the past few weeks. While there has been much support expressed for taking the initiative, there have also been questions of whether the visit was of significant benefit to the community.

I believe the value to the community is based in the possibility of economic outcomes.

Economic growth is often defined as "an increase in the capacity of an economy to produce goods and services, compared from one period of time to another." By taking advantage of opportunities as they are presented, by staying curious and alert to possibilities and by being willing to showcase the capacity of our region, it is hoped that we can better position ourselves in the context of the provincial, national and global marketplace and achieve economic growth. ■

Ron Toyota can be reached by phone at 250-428-2214, e-mail at Ron.Toyota@creston.ca or on the Web at www.creston.ca.



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Message from the chief

Story by: Jason Louie, Chief, Lower Kootenay Band

Milestone birthday cause for reflection

I celebrated a milestone birthday in July, turning 40 years old. To most people this may not seem like a mile stone, but when middle age in my community is 30, this is quite significant.

Statistically speaking I am more likely to be deceased or in prison by now, according to the many stats of First Nations people in North America. I do not foresee a midlife crisis looming any time soon but I have been reflecting on many aspects of my life, in particular, the advancement of technology in such a short time frame.

I can recall when Atari was the gaming system to have and how expensive it was to own video games. I never did get an Atari and probably never will purchase a gaming system.

I did, however, receive a Walkman cassette player for a birthday and recall how, at the time, this was state-of-the-art technology.

In my childhood there was no social media, no Facebook, no Twitter, no texting. It just seemed as though there were more meaningful things in life and I had no concept of time.

Summer vacation meant travelling to a powwow or going to what we called the “black bridge,” which was replaced by the current bridge over the Goat River on Highway 21.

We would fish and swim all day long. It wasn’t that our guardians

didn’t care where we were. There was a trust, and it was just a different time in history.

Highway 21 wasn’t as busy as it is today. Crime still happened. Maybe we were just too innocent to notice? Or could it have been that we did not have cable television or a satellite?

CBC television had Hockey Night in Canada, and a couple of other channels were received from Spokane. Television time was limited, and seemed limited to watching my beloved Vancouver Canucks.

“Always lead by example. Never ask your people to do something you yourself wouldn’t do”

I don’t want to give the impression that Lower Kootenay Band residents lived a primitive lifestyle but there was something unique to our community. It seemed as though every young man went hunting and fishing to sustain not only their family but their community.

Duck hunting, goose, deer, elk – there were no trophy hunters. An old-timer once said, “You can’t eat antlers. Hunt for food. Horns won’t make your stomach full.”

Those words still echo in my mind as I hunt every year and try my best to tell the up-and-coming hunters that same message.

Each fall also brought the task of cutting firewood. We had to ensure we had enough firewood to get through the winters. As young men we were also expected to keep the fire in the house stoked throughout the night.

School was never my strong point. I felt as though I was not as intelligent as the other students, and struggled.

I remember one of the classic school assignments that our teacher assigned: “What I want to be when I grow up.” I wrote down: “I want to be happy when I grow up.”

The teacher became angry and said, “I don’t think that you understand the assignment.” I replied, “I don’t think that you understand my life.”

From childhood to the present I struggle with deep depression, which at times brings me to a very dark place with such a profound sadness. I have tried the various anti-depressants on the market and personally have found them to only make matters worse.

Although it is not a cure I have found peace with being in and around nature as I did as a child. The Kootenay Lake is the heart of the Ktunaxa and the rivers and waterways are the veins that connect the Ktunaxa people.

The animals are not here for me to hunt but give their lives so we may sustain ourselves. The concept of ownership of land is somewhat foreign as the expectation of the Ktunaxa people is to be stewards

and guardians of this pristine terrain.

In elementary school the teacher reiterated that I would never graduate from high school and never attend post-secondary schooling. I began to believe those statements and often wondered what the future would hold for me.

In my 40 years of existence I have witnessed more death than any human being should. I have witnessed the most horrific and tragic deaths imaginable. I have seen death and now will spend time enjoying life.

I did complete high school and have proven myself at the post-secondary level. I was never, and probably won't ever be, the strongest, fastest or most intelligent, but what I do know is I will always be the most determined. Determination has brought me this far and will get me to where I need to be at the next milestone.

I recall a ceremony at which the elders stated: "One day in our ceremonies only English will be spoken. The people will forget who they are and both the children and adults will play with toys."

I questioned why such a statement would be made when there appeared to be many elders and it seemed that everyone spoke the language. I also found it humorous that "everyone would play with toys." Could it have been foreseen that what was referenced as "toys" was in fact what today we call technology?

All age groups are constantly on their phones, texting and e-mailing. Facebook seems to be how we count our friends and can also be a

way to hurt someone through cyber bullying.

This is 40. A lot has happened. There has been much trial and error. I had no idea how to be a father but have learned the difference between father and dad. There is much more honour in being a dad.

I had no idea what it meant to be a husband but see equality in being a partner.

As for becoming a chief, I have come to understand that "nasukin" is much more meaningful and is a title that is earned.

Always lead by example. Never ask your people to do something you yourself wouldn't do. Pick and choose the battles but know that some of the battles will be one-sided and time-consuming.

Everyone roots for the underdog. In this case I have assumed the underdog role and will continue to do the right thing even when no one is looking. Taxa. ■

Jason Louie can be reached by phone at 428-4428, ext. 235, e-mail at mjasonlouie@gmail.com or on the Web at www.lowerkootenay.com.

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Pharmacist Corner

Article submitted by: Srinivas Chalagalla B.pharm., Ph.D.

Cartilage at the root of osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis, sometimes called degenerative joint disease, is the most common form of arthritis. This disease, which affects close to one out of every 10 Canadians, occurs equally in women and men and typically strikes those aged 45 and older.

It is a painful and sometimes debilitating disease that can affect several joints, including the hips, knees, neck, shoulders, back, fingers and big toes.

Osteoarthritis is defined as the breakdown and eventual loss of cartilage in one or more joints. Cartilage covers and protects the ends of bones, acting as a shock absorber and preventing the bones from rubbing against one another.

When cartilage begins to degenerate, it thins and can even flake away,

no longer acting as a cushion and therefore leading to joint pain.

Causes

Several factors increase the risk of osteoarthritis:

- Family history;
- Wear and tear (e.g. occupation or sport that requires repetitive movement);
- Reduced physical activity;
- Obesity; and,
- Wearing high-heeled shoes (knee-related osteoarthritis).

Symptoms

Osteoarthritis limits joint mobility and hinders overall movement. Over time, the worn-down ends of the bones are replaced by less-efficient cartilage or even new bone that forms small but painful

outgrowths called osteophytes. As a result, joints become deformed and may also become inflamed, making it more difficult to move affected joints.

The disease may cause pain in the joints, which become sensitive to pressure and stiffen as a result of inactivity.

In the more advanced stages of osteoarthritis it is possible to hear the bones rubbing against one another when moving the affected joint.

Diagnosis

Osteoarthritis is a disease that requires a medical diagnosis. During the consultation, the physician will require a detailed description of the pain as well as its exact location. The doctor will also want to know when the pain is most evident, for example, after being seated in a car for an extended period, during exercise, etc.

Then the physician will have to eliminate other possible causes. He could request blood tests, radiographies and possibly an analysis of the synovial fluid which is the lubricant found around joints.

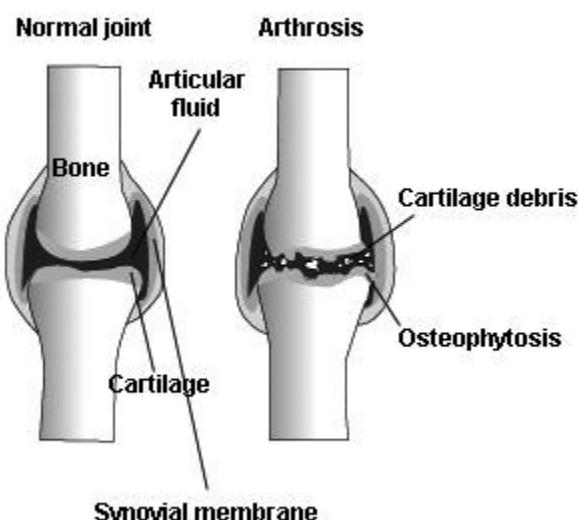
Treatment

The treatment for osteoarthritis consists primarily of relieving pain. Acetaminophen is often the first medication chosen to treat osteoarthritis. Anti-inflammatories can also be taken.

Ointments and lotions can be applied directly to the sore joint for more localized pain relief.

Compresses can also be used to alleviate pain. Cold compresses are recommended to reduce inflammation while hot compresses are recommended to reduce stiffness.

Codeine may be added to help relieve pain in more serious cases. Codeine, however, can cause drowsiness, gastric disorders and constipation. Elderly persons are more sensitive to its effects.



A cortisone injection, administered directly into a joint, is another alternative to consider when movement is seriously impeded. Although the full effect of the injections takes a few days, they last several weeks or even several months. One may receive two to four cortisone injections a year.

As a last recourse, when the joint becomes unusable or when the pain is intolerable, replacing the damaged joint with an artificial joint by way of a surgical procedure is possible. This type of surgery is known as arthroplasty.

Commonly used natural health products

Glucosamine – A substance found naturally in the body, glucosamine helps build up cartilage and synovial fluid which are important for normal joint functioning. It is used mostly as a treatment for osteoarthritis.

Once treatment has started it may take several weeks (up to eight) to have an effect and may also cause some stomach upset. It is a good idea to spread out the dose throughout the day to reduce this effect.

Some glucosamine products are made from shellfish so people with an allergy to fish or shellfish should avoid using glucosamine.

Although most studies have found that glucosamine does not affect blood sugar levels, people with diabetes may want to take the precaution of monitoring their blood sugar closely when starting glucosamine.

Chondroitin – Like glucosamine, chondroitin is found naturally in the cartilage between bones. It acts as a building block of cartilage

and prevents the wearing down of cartilage that occurs in osteoarthritis. Supplements often contain both chondroitin and glucosamine.

Like glucosamine, chondroitin may cause stomach upset. Therefore, it is recommended to divide the product into several doses throughout the day.

Nutritional approach

Take control of your weight. Any excess weight puts an unnecessary load on your joints. Losing weight can help reduce pain and improve joint mobility.

Try to maintain a healthy weight. If you need to lose some excess weight,

talk to your dietician, who will suggest ways to modify your diet.

Once you reach your healthy weight, try to maintain it by eating balanced meals.

Eat calcium and antioxidant-rich foods. Calcium and antioxidants (vitamins C, D and E, and selenium) appear to delay the progression of the disease. Eating fruits, vegetables, cereals and dairy products regularly should ensure that your daily vitamin needs are met. ■

For more information contact local Shopper's Drug Mart pharmacists Srinivas Chalagalla or Karl Mottl by phone at 250-428-9334 or e-mail at Asdm2284@shoppersdrugmart.ca.



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Equestrian program on solid footing

Everyone involved in Creston's therapeutic riding program was a winner when the rubber hit the road – or, more specifically, the floor.

A new wheelchair-accessible floor in the tack-up area made from tiles of recycled rubber is among improvements being celebrated this summer.

The cost of the \$23,000 flooring project was covered by a pair of grants,

including more than \$7,500 from Tire Stewardship B.C. The balance came from the 2012 Kraft Celebration Tour award, presented during the live edition of TSN SportsCentre produced in Creston last August.

"The DinoFlex flooring system is easily navigated by people with mobility challenges, is non-slip in all weather conditions and has so far stood up to people and horse traffic," says therapeutic riding program director and certified instructor Michelle Whiteaway, noting that a secondary goal of reducing dust was also achieved. "The project has been a huge success. All of our riders, volunteers and instructors benefit from this huge improvement."

The tack-up area, where people interact with horses as they are prepared for riding lessons, consists of an enclosed tack room with four tie stalls, a large alley for people and horses, and a viewing area with picnic tables.

The old floor, made of sand and gravel, was worn with dips and trenches that made for an uneven surface which was particularly hazardous for clients with unsteady gaits, walkers, canes or wheelchairs.

"The addition of the matting was a very big step in improving safety, accessibility and aesthetics," says Peggy Hawes, an assistant instructor. "It (provides) safer, more secure footing for the handler, and the person with a balance issue will

have a much safer, enjoyable experience. The horses stand with less pawing and shifting around. Their stance is more even and secure.

"The matting also enhances the appearance of the area and makes cleanup much easier."

The tiles, supplied by a Salmon Arm company, were installed by TB Contractors of Creston over a 1,100-square-foot area.

Kraft funds were also used to buy a wheelchair-accessible portable toilet and a new horse, a 14-year-old Morgan mare named Peanut.

Therapeutic riding also benefited from the Kootenay Employment Services Experience Works program. Over five weeks a work crew built four horse shelters and a hay shed, installed sign boards at the facility entrance, reinforced the tack-up shelter, painted out-buildings, repaired the mounting ramp and finishing building a fence.

The Creston and District Society for Community Living oversees the riding program, which caters to children and adults with various disabilities. It's "more than just a pony ride," according to Whiteaway.

"It's a way to discover a whole new world of adventure, freedom, responsibility, dignity and excitement," she says. "It is also a way to improve balance and co-ordination and strengthen muscles. Most importantly, it provides an overwhelming sense of accomplishment for everyone involved – riders, volunteers, caregivers and instructors."

Victoria-based Tire Stewardship B.C., meanwhile, is a non-profit society responsible for the provincial scrap-tire recycling program, through which more than 60 million tires have been recycled since it was introduced in 1991. ■

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Ag Aware

Story by: The Creston Valley Agriculture Society

Quality cherry crop anticipated – weather permitting

The fabulous July weather, which was mostly hot and dry, was a blessing for most of the valley's crops.

The first hay crop was harvested in good shape and quite plentiful. Second cutting will be coming off this month, and the dairies will probably be able to make a third cut before month's end.

The canola, wheat and barley crops on the flats should be ready for combining as well. Watch out for large equipment on area roads.

Cherry growers will be harvesting and packing this year's crop through most of August. Early reports in late July indicated the crop was of good quality and quantity. Hopefully the heavy rains stay away during the harvest so as to avoid the splitting of the plump, juicy fruit.

Early indications are that the cherry market will be reasonably decent this year. A trade agreement with China may help by allowing Canadian cherries into that country.

A somewhat lower Canadian dollar also helps the export of our local cherries

No doubt we will see an influx of cherry pickers from outside the valley. The service these people provide is vital to getting a large amount of fruit harvested in a timely manner.

Many of them travel around the province picking various crops in various areas as the crops ripen. There are not nearly enough local people willing or able to do what these travelling pickers do for our growers.

Apricots and peaches, as well as some early plums and apples, should also be available in August.

So many crops are now coming on in the vegetable gardens – potatoes, tomatoes, corn and cucumbers, to name a few. Fresh eating is the best, but make sure to put some away for winter enjoyment by freezing or canning.

Pickling is another excellent way to put away a bounty of cucumbers, beets or carrots for winter use.

Whether you grow your own or buy from local growers such as the Pickle Patch, many varieties of pickles can be made from our local produce.

Beef cows and calves continue to graze on pasture around the valley. This is one commodity that could use some rain to keep the grasses growing. If it stays hot and dry too long, the grasses go dormant which can result in a shortened pasturing season, which means feeding dry hay sooner rather than later in the season.

Timely rains throughout the summer keep the grasses growing and provide fresh feed for the cows to produce more milk for their calves.



The B.C. Weed Control Act imposes a duty on all land occupiers to control designated noxious plants.

The purpose for the Act is to protect our natural resources and industry from the negative impacts of foreign weeds.

For Noxious weed spraying please contact:
Creston Valley Beef Growers Assoc.
Rob Davidson 250-402-8664
or Bryan Wuzinski 250-866-5744

For more information on noxious weeds check out this website:
<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/cropprot/weedguid/weedguid.htm>

Nearer the end of August it will be time to get your entry forms in for the Creston Valley Fall Fair, held on Sept. 6 and 7. This year marks the 95th year of the fair. Please plan to participate.

Fall Fair booklets are available at the Creston Valley Chamber of Commerce as well as online and at businesses around the valley.

One of the events at the fair is the Creston Valley Agriculture Society-sponsored auction of locally produced and donated goods. Proceeds from this auction go toward the bursary the society awards to a Prince Charles Secondary School graduate each year. Come out and bid and support this activity, and take home some great local produce.

There will also be 4-H activities at the fair, including the dairy and beef club achievement day and sale of animals. Support our youth in this activity.

The Creston Valley Farmers' Market continues to run at its new location behind the chamber of commerce. The variety of local produce and wares is incredible. Make sure to make this a part of your Saturday morning.

Till next time, we hope you are more Ag Aware. ■

For more information on the Creston Valley Agriculture Society, contact Randy Meyer at 250-428-7013 or Kris Vanderweyde at 250-428-2920.

Eco-Friendly Back to School Tips

<http://envirodad.com>

Does Everything Have To Be New? – There are a growing number of used clothing retailers that can insert a certain element of “eco-chic” to your child’s wardrobe and are much more affordable anyway.

Pack Lunches In Reusable Containers – Single use, brown paper or plastic sandwich and lunch bags are a big no-no today. The better option is to pack their lunches in reusable food and drink containers.

Choose Products With Minimal Packaging – Nowadays extra packaging is it's just pure waste. Keep this in mind when picking products in order to minimize the amount of non-recyclable items that we need to send to landfill.

Responsible Laptop Purchasing And Usage – While the use of personal

Back To School

computers in schools and for homework is all but essential today, we still need to be responsible users of them. Be sure to turn off laptops when not in use to conserve energy.

Support local food producers – When purchasing food items for school lunches and snacks, try to source as many of these items from local food producers as possible. ■

Back to School Safety Tips

www.safekids.org

Reminders for drivers:

- Slow down and be especially alert in the residential neighborhoods and school zones
- Take extra time to look for kids at intersections, on medians and on curbs
- Enter and exit driveways and alleys slowly and carefully
- Watch for children on the roads in the morning and after school hours

Reminder for your kids:

- They should cross the street with an adult until they are at least 10 years old
- Cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks
- Never run out into the streets or cross in between parked cars
- Make sure they always walk in front of the bus where the driver can see them



Back to School!

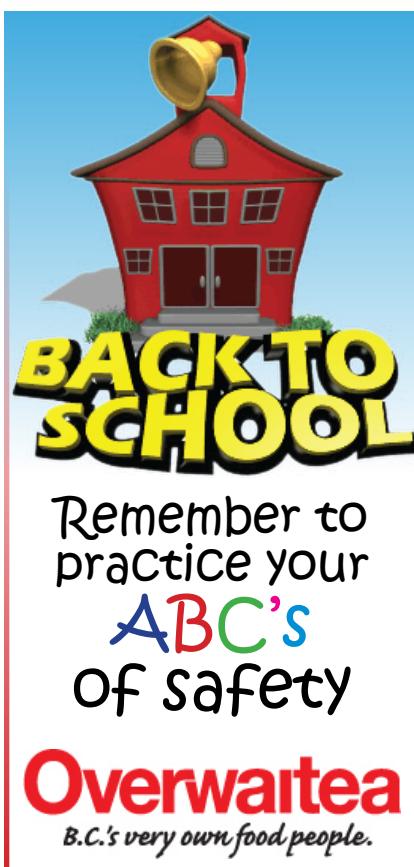
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The history of the bicycle draw

Story by: Loretta Huscroft

The Santa Parade was started in 1994, run by the Community Pride Committee (a sub-committee of the Town of Creston) in partnership with the Creston Valley Chamber of Commerce.

One of the highlights of the event was a draw for students from all the elementary schools in Creston and surrounding area.

In the beginning, the draw was for a Disneyland trip. Each of the elementary schools in the valley was asked to submit the names of all the children from kindergarten through Grade 7. These names were put in a draw barrel and one name was selected to receive a trip to Disneyland.

The family would be given \$2,500 toward the trip. The only criterion was that a picture be taken of one of the Disney characters with the winning child. The \$2,500 was donated by local businesses.

As time moved on, the Community Pride Committee decided it would be nice to spread out the donations so that more than one family benefited.

That's when the idea of buying bicycles and helmets for the children began.

The number of bicycles given out depended on the amount of money donated and the cost of each bicycle.

In 2011, Community Pride decided the prizes should be changed so the committee decided to give out family passes to the Creston and District Community Complex.

After some discussion again in 2012, the committee decided the children would benefit more from a bicycle they could ride and enjoy most of the year.

Anyone wanting to be a part of what is now called the Creston Valley Spirit Committee is welcome to join. We meet every third Wednesday at 3 p.m. in the chamber of commerce. ■



Creston Valley Spirit Committee bicycle draw winners.

Camps for the month of August at the Creston & District Community Complex!

August Camps

- Healthy Eating for Healthy Teens (ages 12 to 17 yrs)
- Aug 7-9
- Water Safety Instructor (ages 15+) - Aug 8-11
- Hunger Games Bootcamp (ages 12-17 yrs)
- Aug 12, 14 & 16 or Aug 19, 21, 22
- Sweaty Boys Sports Camp (ages 10-14 yrs) - Aug 12-16
- Girl Power Camp (ages 8-13 yrs) - Aug 19-23
- Swim Lesson Sets - Aug 12-16 and Aug 19-23
- Lifesaving Instructor (ages 16+) - Aug 23-26
- Kung Fu Camp (ages 4-7 yrs) - Aug 26-30
- Wilderness Camp (ages 8-12yrs) - Aug 26-28

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- Sun, Aug 25, 2-4pm • Thur, Aug 29, 2-4pm

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Contact Ashley at 250-428-7127 or crestonrec@rdck.bc.ca for ice availability.



Experience It!
Creston & District Community Complex

West Arm logged without compromising water quality

By Tom Lymberry

Procter and Harrop, two small communities on the West Arm of Kootenay Lake, have found a

way to maintain the forest that supplies the small creeks from which residents draw their water supply.



The Harrop - Procter Forest Products sawmill in action. A Douglas fir log is being milled into a timber for a timber frame home by David Strom of Harrop - Procter Forest Products.
Photo courtesy of Ursula Heller

The BC Forest Service apparently has a mandate to log every watershed, which is usually done by offering the timber to lumber companies. Their object is to make money from this so they extract the maximum volume, leaving the bush in disarray, which naturally disrupts the small streams and springs and can all too easily create landslides.

From 1951 to 1967, the Wirsig family's Gray Creek Forest Products operated on the eastern shore from Boswell to Riondel using small roads and equipment that predated the clear-cut revolution. They only felled the timber they needed to meet their orders, leaving any trees they didn't need.

This was true selective logging; taking out only the largest trees allows the sun to reach trees of 14-inch diameter so that another crop of timber can be harvested only 15 years later.

However, this doesn't produce every available dollar the way clear-cutting does, and it doesn't produce the maximum returns that the big companies require.



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The residents of Procter and Harrop knew this was the way to handle their backyard and in 1997, when the Ministry of Forests asked for proposals for community forest pilot projects, the Harrop-Procter Watershed Protection Society put together a 300-page application that combined community involvement, environmental concerns and business opportunities. It was one of only seven chosen in 1999.

The Harrop-Procter pilot project has gone two steps past the typical community forest by implementing an ecosystem-based plan for both landscape and timber stand levels that leaves a fully functioning forest after logging takes place. Some large trees are left standing to provide the best quality seed for natural regrowth.

When you cross on the Kootenay Lake ferry, compare the north side of the West Arm to the south. You will see that the area from Procter to Harrop has no visible clear-cuts while many can be seen on the mountains across the water above Balfour and Queens Bay. What a contrast to waiting 80 years for another crop on replanted clear-cuts!

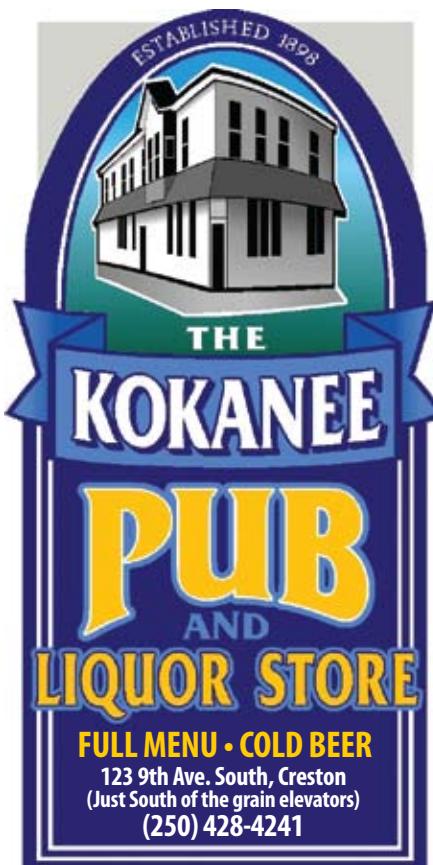
Go to www.hpcommunityforest.org and you will find out about the challenges that had to be overcome. The Web site also describes the ecologically responsible wood products sold by the Harrop-Procter Community Co-op, and provides links to other organizations and research groups that are working toward the same goals.

Gray Creek Store is the first lumberyard to stock some of this

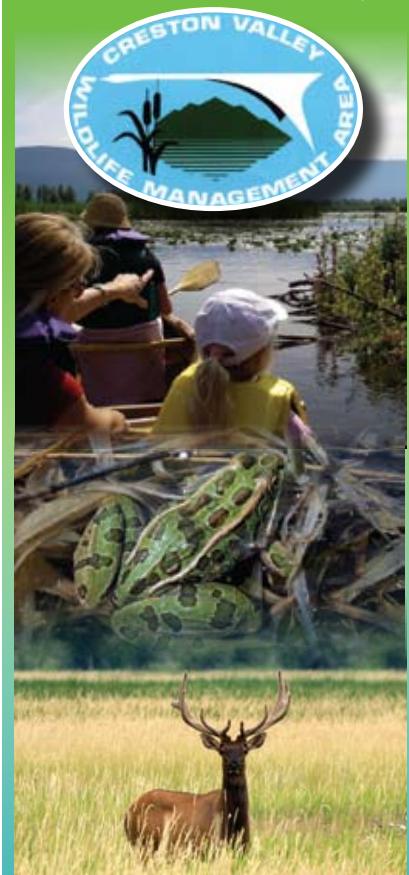
reasonably priced, quality, eco-friendly lumber. Staff member Matthew Winger, who serves in our building supplies and contractor sales department, is a world traveller who has built his new home on the East Shore and was very interested in Harrop-Procter's story and products.

We're currently stocking rough-sawn, landscape-grade cedar, which is perfect for garden projects due to its rot resistance and economical price compared to A-grade cedar.

In the future we've got plans to offer the best cedar and fir decking that Harrop-Procter has to offer, since this partnership allows us to match the best wood with the right project. ■



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www.crestonwildlife.ca

Was "Happy" Eastlake really happy?

Story by: Tammy Hardwick
Manager - Creston & District Museum & Archives

I'm not the only one to wonder about strange details of local history. Just the other day, during the course of a random conversation, someone asked me, "Why was Happy Eastlake called Happy?"

"Happy," of course, was not his real name – that was Reginald Rashleigh Eastlake. He was a well-known figure in the community but the reason for his nickname seems to be a bit of a mystery.

One person I talked to suggested that most people would be happy if they didn't have to work for a living because their family back home was sending them money every month. Happy Eastlake, you see, was a remittance man.

These were young men and women from middle- or upper-class families who were sent to various parts of the British Empire and who received a

remittance – essentially an allowance – from their families to stay there.

In some cases, remittance men were younger sons seeking greater opportunities than the rigid, eldest-son-inherits-everything system in England would allow. In other cases they had disgraced themselves in some way and were sent away to minimize the damage to the family's reputation.

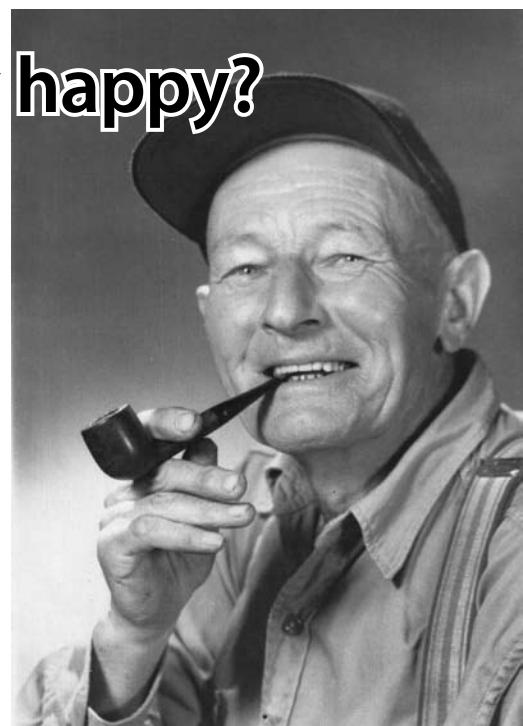
The 1911 England census states that Happy's father's occupation was "Private Means," suggesting a well-to-do gentleman living off of substantial investments or the revenues of a large estate. It also reveals that Happy did indeed have an older brother, the presumable heir of their parents' wealth.

However, once here, Happy doesn't appear to have engaged in any kind of occupation so he probably wasn't looking for new opportunities, and none of the people I've talked to suggests there was ever any kind of disgrace, scandal or rumour associated with him.

Most likely is the fact that Happy, though certainly very intelligent, had a speech impediment. In Edwardian England this might well have been enough of an embarrassment to a prominent family to wish the young man out of the way.

His obituary describes him as a kindly man, "ever on call to aid anyone suffering misfortune." Perhaps, if he had endured ridicule and ostracism as a boy for his speech impediment, he might have gained considerable empathy for others who were struggling.

Although his death certificate lists him as a "gentleman" engaged in



Reg "Happy" Eastlake, smoking a pipe no doubt filled with some of his potent, custom-mixed tobacco.

no business or industry, Happy was clearly not an idle man. He was the first president of the Creston Tennis Club. He was a keen gardener, specializing in roses.

He enjoyed a strong cup of tea – brewed by tossing a quarter-pound of tea into a pot and letting it boil for 20 minutes – and loved mixing tobacco. He'd mix some aromatic Turkish tobacco and a few other kinds with things like local sweet clover.

Bill Constable, who remembers Happy well, told me that "some of it would blow the wax out of your ears."

He was an avid hunter, regularly heading out of town to hunt deer in the surrounding mountains. It was upon his return from one of these trips that he became involved in the Great Creston Bank Robbery.

He walked into town along Canyon Street, carrying his rifle, just in time to hear shots in the Imperial Bank. He dashed into the bank and pursued the two robbers out the window, down the



The first Creston Hospital, 1930, one of the local causes that Happy supported. His dog, Buzzy, is lying on the sidewalk.

history

alley, through the orchards beyond 11th Avenue and across the street into the old lumberyard.

Everyone who knew Happy knew he loved his dog, a German shepherd named Buzzy whom he fed top-grade cuts of meat. (Happy kept the poorer-quality cuts for himself.)

Indeed, when Buzzy died, Happy took down all his pots and pans and similar utensils and wrapped two or three strands of copper wire around the handles as a way of remembering his dog. Mr. and Mrs. Staples thought he might have done the same to any pots he bought after Buzzy died, too.

Was it helping people that made Happy happy? Perhaps his love for his dog? His love of music? (His obituary states that he was a collector of "a fine variety of high-quality musical records?"

Perhaps it was his support of the local hospital. Everyone I talked to recalls that he was a strong supporter of the hospital and, in particular, of the nurses who operated it.

Constable recalls that Happy gave a fine Stromberg-Carlson cabinet radio to the nurses' residence.

Happy's obituary suggests that there might have been many other gifts. It declares that he "aided materially in equipping" the home.

Someone told me years ago that Happy was, despite all his talents and abilities, a bit of a hypochondriac. Constable recalls that for several years in a row he somehow or other got sick just before Christmas. He'd be admitted to the hospital and would be there when Irene Labelle made her rounds playing Santa Claus, giving gifts to all the patients.

I don't mean to imply, though, that his support for the hospital was self-serving; rather, he seems to have tried to avoid all credit for his role.

The Creston Museum's collection includes a photograph of the original hospital with a note on the back written by Happy himself. It states that "the full credit (for the hospital) goes to Dr. J. Olivier and no other person."

The most likely reason behind the nickname "Happy" seems to be a bit of irony. As Constable says, "He

rarely seemed entirely pleased with anything that went on." Perhaps the comfortable income and easy living of a remittance man was neither as comfortable nor as easy at it appeared.

When an English pound converted to five Canadian dollars, things were pretty good for Happy. But eventually the conversion rate dropped until the pound was only worth about \$2.50 Canadian, and that made things much more difficult.

The 1940 voters' list records Happy as a labourer, which seems a bit strange for a man with a family history of gentlemen-of-leisure. Dropping exchange rates might provide an explanation.

Truly happy or not, Reginald (Happy) Eastlake lived in Creston, taking full part in the life of the community, for 53 years. He died in 1967. ■

For more information contact the Creston and District Museum and Archives by phone at 250-428-9262, e-mail at mail@creston.museum.bc.ca or the Web site www.creston.museum.bc.ca.

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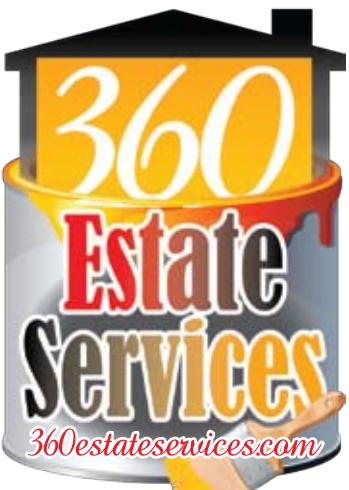
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Burning Wood

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Some of the maintenance can be done yourself.

- vacuum ashes from the firebox
- clean the glass door using specialty fireplace glass cleaner
- check the doors for proper operation and seal
- inspect damper and ensure it is opening and closing properly
- source out a supply of clean, seasoned hardwood
- stack safely in a log rack the proper distance away from your home

Your chimney sweep may also perform the inspection on your fireplace or wood stove, including the flue, firebox and stove pipe, if applicable.

Burning Natural Gas

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good neighbours... good advice.

Hire an experienced technician to handle this annual maintenance task for you.

There are a few tasks you can complete ahead of time.

- vacuum the firebox, removing dust and cobwebs
- clean the log set with a damp cloth
- clean the glass door using specialty fireplace glass cleaner
- check the doors for proper operation and seal ■

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World-class guitarist visits Creston

Story by: Marc Archambault

Having attended a guitar workshop with award-winning guitarist Don Alder earlier in the day, I was looking forward to a good show at Creston's music and arts venue, The Snoring Sasquatch.

A nice, light supper finished off with a home-made cookie for dessert, and date night was off to a great start.

Despite the solstice's unseasonably cold weather, the walk to the show with my wife was still pleasant because, well, this is Creston and it's beautiful here.

Settling into the retro couches, I reflected on the venue's comfortable and intimate atmosphere – perfect for this kind of show. I was expecting to be treated to inventive percussive acoustic guitar playing, and I was not disappointed.

But to my delight, Alder's artistic abilities also extend to singing and story telling. His rich voice and evocative playing style convey a depth of emotion that had my wife in tears and both of us enjoying the kind of chills and goose bumps that can only be elicited by an encounter with art that resonates with the soul.

In story and song, Alder took us from the Great Wall of China,



Don Alder playing his harp guitar at the Snoring Sasquatch.

where he wrote The Wall, through accompanying his friend Rick Hansen on the history-making Man in Motion tour, which inspired the song Blue Shift Principle, to a visit with the Man from Lady Lane.

He also introduced us to the harp guitar, a revival of an 18th century instrument.

Throughout, he engaged with the audience in a way that only a small-venue show can allow.

Born in Vancouver and raised in Williams Lake, Alder is a one-instrument band. His guitar also fills the roles of drum and bass. He manages to play all three in a way that makes one wonder how all these skilfully blended sounds could possibly come from a single man and his guitar.

Alder speaks of the finger-plucking and percussion techniques he uses as colours and credits this personal flair for his success at competitions such as his victory at the 2011 World Guitar Idol Live.

Joining Alder and other audience members at Jimmy's Pub and Grill for the Snoring Sasquatch's

traditional "beer with the band," I asked him about his songwriting process. When writing songs with vocals, which comes first, the lyrics or the music?

"As I'm playing guitar I'm spitting out words to see if something catches," he says. "Then I try to work something out of that."

He humbly refers to his lyrical compositions as elementary level, though I'm sure those who took in the show would beg to differ.

"Do you think Creston is going to recognize what we have here?" asked Snoring Sasquatch co-owner Paul Hutcheson. "An incredible world-class guitarist in Creston . . . wow."

They may not have realized it before the concert, but it didn't take long before the enthusiastic crowd knew they were experiencing something special. The audience's long and loud standing ovation at the end of the show may be the answer to Hutcheson's question. ■

For more information about Alder and other talented artists playing in Creston, visit www.snoringsasquatch.com.

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The calcium controversy

Story by Jesse Moreton, BSc DC

By now many of you have heard of this alliterated dilemma. If you have not, let me fill you in quickly.

During the past few months there have been studies published by reputable journals, including papers in the British Medical Journal and Journal of the American Medical Association. The researchers submitting the articles are also reputable and include members of the National Institute of Health.

Their findings indict calcium supplementation as increasing cardiovascular problems such as heart attacks. One review of 135 studies simply stated there was little evidence that calcium and vitamin D supplementation prevented fractures in healthy women.

Obviously this challenges our traditional understanding. Looking back, it's not surprising that we eventually found out smoking was bad, but this is something else.

After a patient asked for my own two cents on the topic, I thought I had better do a little digging. I found myself reading articles on PubMed, an online database of biological science papers. I was surprised to find an article published in 1989 in the Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners expressing doubt that supplementation beyond 800 milligrams per day would produce any benefit. This was 1989! Apparently this isn't a new controversy.

I then thought of my experience as a chiropractic student. We had two instructors for our nutrition classes. One owned his own supplement line. The other was a retired university

professor. If you attended their lectures you wouldn't need to be told who was who.

The entrepreneur pushed his pills and hailed supplementation as the solution to life's problems. The academic would frequently and humbly repeat, "Take it in the diet."

Why? Because nutrients are better absorbed and used when they are taken in the diet. It appears the studies are indirectly suggesting the same thing. Duly note the studies only cite supplemental calcium as producing risks or lacking benefit.

So take it in the diet: milk; cheese; yogurt; and, other dairy products.

Wait a minute. What about the Chinese? They don't eat much dairy and yet have a low incidence of osteoporosis.

To confirm my thought process I found an article in the Journal of Osteoporosis published in 2010. Sure enough, the paper reported hip fracture rates for women were five times less in China than in the United States. Another conundrum. (Or for those who saw the last Footlighters production; another corn drum.)

I remembered reading a book a friend lent me during school called The China Study. Authored by T. Colin Campbell (researcher) and his son, Thomas M. Campbell II (physician), it broke down and analysed the results from one of the largest epidemiological studies to date.

The China Study followed people from 65 different counties over 30 years and compared their diets to mortality rates and causes. Among more significant insights, Campbell and Campbell explained that consumption of animal

protein, unlike plant protein, increases acidity in the blood. Calcium, as an effective base, gets pulled from the bones to neutralize the acidity.

The result: bones lose their calcium. Counties in China whose residents ate mostly plant protein (as opposed to animal protein), as cited above, had about one-fifth the fracture rates seen in the U.S.

Would we avoid sinking into osteoporosis if we simply ate less meat? (The vegetarians cheer!) Should we simply take more calcium in the diet? Why not both?

And just in case you really think the Asians are on to something, here's a list of non-dairy, calcium-rich foods found in their diet: salmon, tofu, rhubarb, sardines, spinach, dark leafy greens, beans, broccoli, peas, brussels sprouts, sesame seeds, bok choy and almonds. Yum, brussels sprouts. ■

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Treat yourself to some summertime tree gong 木功

Story by: Shifu Neil Ripski

I want to start by thanking the people who called and spoke to me around town about the healing article I wrote for neck pain. It really is nice to hear that the practices are helping those of you who have given them a chance.

Since it is the full heat of summer as this article comes out, I thought something seasonal for qigong would be good since qigong is so much more rewarding done outdoors. In this beautiful place we call home, any excuse to enjoy the outdoors is well-received.

This is a qigong I have been

“Other types of qigong practices that are involved with observing reality and our relationship to it”

teaching in my tai chi and qigong classes since the weather became warmer but it requires a bit of a preamble to make sense of it.

Some qigongs are about looking at and understanding the relationships in our bodies, between our joints, in our spine, verticality and so on. But there are other types of qigong practices that are involved with observing reality and our relationship to it. These are the kinds of practices that bring us more to the present moment and really allow us to

strip away the preconceptions we have about what we see and where we are.

One of my favourite practices in the summer is done with trees.

From the point of view of living beings, we all have some things in common. That which lives on land pretty much all shares the qualities of breathing in and out, feeling temperature and so on.

Trees and humans share a few traits that are the same. First of all we both stand between heaven and Earth vertically. Secondly, we both breathe to survive, albeit at different rates.

We pressure down into or onto the Earth in order to reach up toward the sky and so on.

Lastly, trees, like humans, communicate with one another. This usually takes place in the form of pheromones released into the air that are a form of communication, much like ourselves when we find someone attractive.

To look at it another way, living beings pant or animals are looked at as having a shen 神 or spiritual/mental part of them.

We are obviously in this club of beings that have a shen. Ours is considered “bright” because we live our lives quickly and think quickly, directly in relationship to how we experience time.

From this understanding we can look at trees as having a dull shen 神 since they live extremely long lives in comparison to us and only breathe once a day: 12 hours in; and, 12 hours out.

Since they have a shen they are aware of their surroundings just as we are but they live slower lives and so take their time in recognizing any changes. This brings us to the exercise of tree gong (really a tree qigong but I like calling it tree gong).

Stand next to an evergreen tree (not a fruit tree; I was warned never to practice it with a fruit tree as it can make you ill) and find a comfortable stance, feet about shoulder-width apart, hands resting in a natural position and letting your mind settle.

Now feel/imagine roots growing from your feet deep into the Earth and your head reaching up into the sky, the same height as the tree you are standing near.

Once you have accomplished this there is only one more thing to do: wait. Wait and stay connected in this manner and sooner or later the tree will notice you as another tree standing next to it.

"Change peoples' perspective on things and they generally want to walk a little more gently on the Earth"

What happens next is magical. As the tree notices you it communicates, recognizing you are there by releasing a puff of pheromones. It is usually a strong, musky, earthy smell, like the smell of a forest, only more vivid.

You will notice it when it happens and then you should stand a minute or two longer and just take in how it has made you feel about the relationship between



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you and the forest. It is a great experience to realize that the forest is alive and not just filled with plants.

Change peoples' perspective on things and they generally want to walk a little more gently on the Earth. I know it sounds like a crazy, hippy qigong, and it is a crazy, ancient, Taoist hippy qigong. What have you got to lose?

Go for a walk in the woods.
Have a great summer.

As a service to our community I am offering all kids' classes free in September. Register your children aged five to 15 via e-mail at redjadekungfu@gmail.com or in person in September at Red Jade Martial Arts (behind 12th Avenue Hair and Esthetics). ■

Neil Ripski teaches kung fu and tai chi at Red Jade Martial Arts in Creston and also teaches tai chi at the Wynndel Community Hall. He can be reached at 250-866-5263 or at www.redjademartialarts.com.



The poster for the Creston Valley Fall Fair features a vibrant blue background with a large yellow sunburst graphic. In the top left corner is a green four-leaf clover with the letters 'H' on each leaf and the word 'CANADA' on a banner below it. In the top right corner is a red ribbon banner with the year '2013'. The main title 'Creston Valley Fall Fair' is written in large, stylized yellow letters. Below the title, a red banner displays the event details: 'September 6th & 7th' and 'Creston & District Community Complex'. To the left of the text is a brown hen standing on a pair of dark blue rubber boots. To the right is a large, colorful rooster standing on a pair of bright yellow rubber boots. At the bottom, a red banner contains the text 'Remember to plant/save a little extra for your entry into the Fall Fair: flowers, fruit, vegetables, grain, largest/smallest egg.' and 'Celebrating 95 years!'. A yellow oval in the bottom left corner contains the text 'Fall Fair Guide available at the Creston Valley Chamber of Commerce'. The bottom of the poster features the slogan 'Hometown Roots and Rubber Boots' in blue and red, followed by 'Locally Grown, Locally Produced!' and the website 'www.crestonvalleyfallfair.com'.

Billeting rewarding for players and families

Story by: Creston Valley Thunder Cats

iring a hockey team in a small town requires community effort and co-operation. An essential part of the season is billeting out-of-town players.

Being part of the extended hockey family is a rewarding experience for local families and an important part of the players' hockey experience with the Creston Valley Thunder Cats. Following are some testimonials from billet families, players and player families:

"Being part of the extended hockey family is a rewarding experience for local families and an important part of the players' hockey experience"

"We were asked three seasons ago if we would consider being a billet family for the Thunder Cats. Within a couple hours we decided to give it a whirl and have never regretted it. Our kids had left the nest and we were missing the youthful spirit in our home. We are their home away from home and their biggest supporters during their hockey season. The support doesn't stop once hockey is over; we keep in contact with the players once they return home" – billet family.

"Opening our home to players has been such a fun experience for us as we head into our fourth season of billeting. The boys are living away from home, some of them for the first time, and just need

a comfortable place they can call home for the season. The boys have all been respectful and bring a lot of humour into our home. The biggest reward comes when they stop becoming just a hockey player and become one of the family. We have established great and lasting relationships with both the players we've billeted and their families" – billet family.

"My son has spent the last two hockey seasons playing for the Thunder Cats. Our billeting

experience has been amazing. His host family treats our son like he is one of their own and has done so from Day 1. His every need is met and the commitment shown to their 'billet children' is truly remarkable" – player parent.

"Both of our sons have played for the Thunder Cats and the experience has been great because of the wonderful families that take them under wing and treat them as their own. It takes very special people to take teenage boys into their homes for the hockey season and send them home better people than when they arrived. The billet families, the organization and the community all work together to make it happen. The billet co-ordinator does an

amazing job of matching boys to families, ensuring that the situation is good for everyone, that there are regular followups and they are always in contact with the boys" – player parent.

"Moving away from home is always tough. You hope to get placed with a good billet family. Creston has the best billet families, for sure. The families that take in the players for the season are phenomenal people and they make you feel right at home. My billet family has literally been like a second family to me, I love them and it is part of the reason I came back and played in Creston these last couple years" – player.

"I have spent two hockey seasons in Creston now and have loved every minute of it. Being there is easy when I get to live with great people like my billets. They have given me the best 'home away from home' living arrangements that I could have ever asked for. They treat me like a son and I think of them as my second parents. A big thanks to everyone involved. You guys rock!" – player. ■

For details about billeting (including remuneration) or if you are interested in becoming a billet family, call Shannon Veitch at 250-428-6050.



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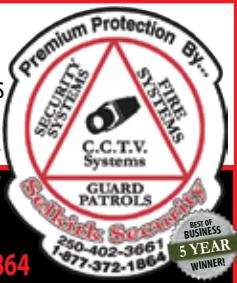
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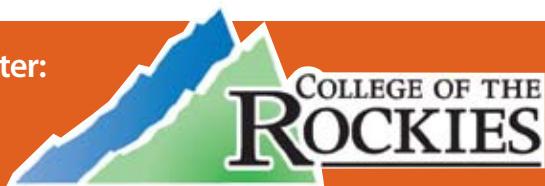
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