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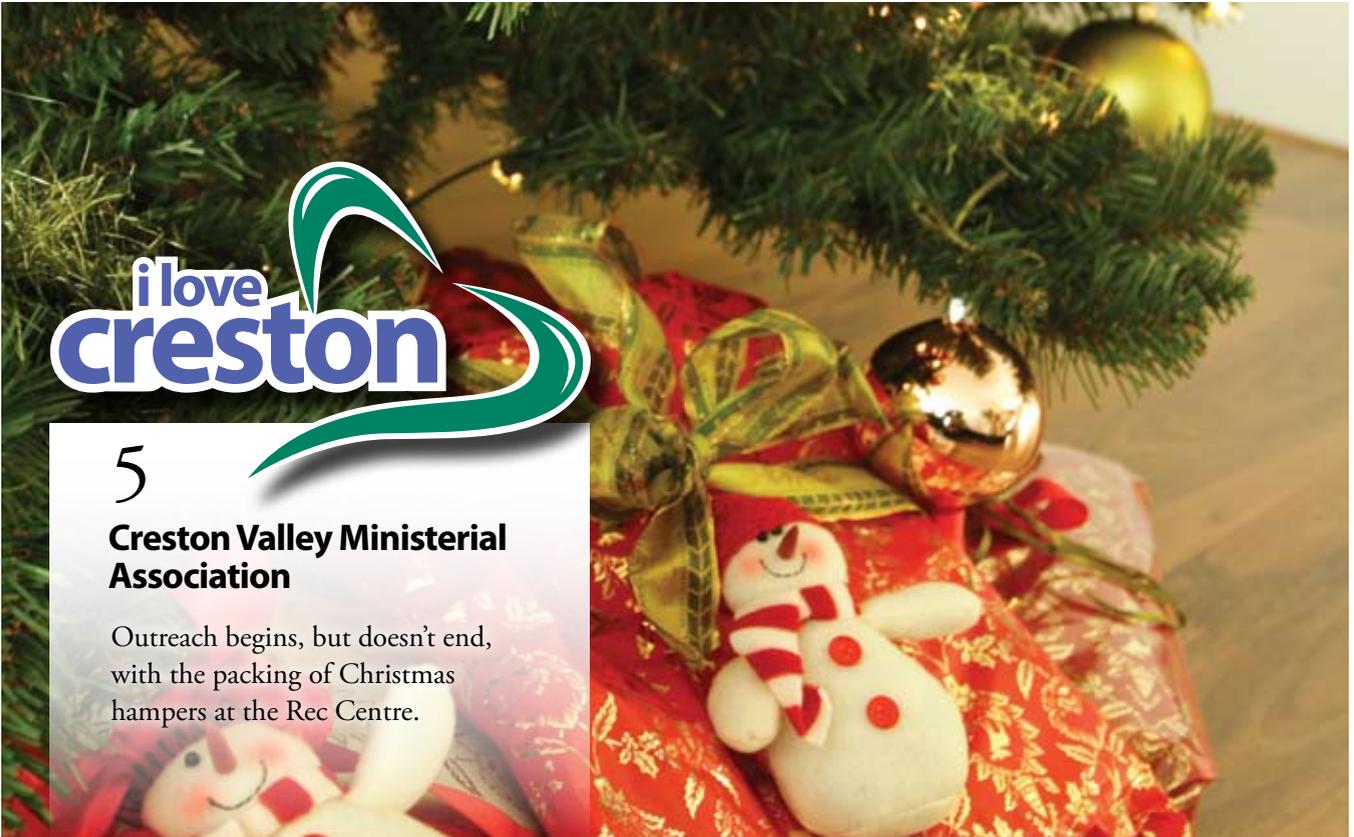
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5

Creston Valley Ministerial Association

Outreach begins, but doesn't end, with the packing of Christmas hampers at the Rec Centre.



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The Magazine

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Letters to the Editor

Letters to I Love Creston Magazine may be emailed to kris@ilovecreston.com or mailed to Box 143, Creston, BC, V0B 1G0. Letters may be edited for clarity and space.

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Guest From the editor

December is a month rife with mythology and majesty, rich in symbolism and inspiration, and positively bursting with benevolence and goodwill. This issue of I Love Creston magazine – the last of 2010 – touches on all these aspects of the season and more.

Giving, of course, is at the forefront at Christmastime, and one local group that gives generously year-round is the Creston-Kootenay Foundation, which we learn in subsequent pages distributed more than \$24,000 to non-profit groups in the greater Creston area this year.

Among the primary recipients, incidentally, was the College of the Rockies, which put the cash into its community greenhouse project. This month's gardening column, by Holly Pender-Love, highlights regional flora that rate high for visual impact but low on water consumption, a focus of the college's Water Wise course offered in the greenhouse.

Also going "green" (a prominent Christmas colour) in the spirit of giving are the publishers of Kootenay Kalendars, whose gift-quality masterpiece shows off more than a dozen of the region's most breathtaking back country views.

Their customers will also be throwing their support behind an international initiative called 1% for the Planet, whose member businesses – including newcomer Kootenay Kalendars – donate \$1 out of every \$100 in sales to non-profit environmental causes. At the current rate that's adding up to in excess of \$15 million a year worldwide.

Although you may or may not find it growing in the community greenhouse, the heart-warming

medicinal capacities of ginger are highlighted in the health column. Maya Skalinska touts the herb as a natural way to take the "ill" out of winter "chills," which I Love Creston's youth correspondent doesn't let get her down in any event.

In the latest instalment of My Side of the World, Kristen Cook opines that the best way to ride out the winter blahs is to embrace the finest aspects of the season with a vengeance, starting right now in December. Whether your cup of (ginger) tea, so to speak, is curling up in front of a fire or just plain curling, there's something everyone can relate to in her top-five list of things to appreciate about winter.

For those determined to simply curl up in a (furry) ball until spring arrives, check out the wildlife column by Carla Ahern, whose envy of creatures capable of hibernation is barely (make that "barely") disguised.

For inspiration, it's hard to beat the account of a real-life angel who spent every Christmas day at the Creston hospital, from age 15 until her death more than six decades later – and not because she was sick. Read Tammy Hardwick's historical piece to find out why.

Contributor Trish Bartlett also dips into the past to shed light on several religious festivals rooted in the month of December, which locally marks one of the biggest annual goodwill projects in Creston – the ministerial association's Christmas hamper drive. Brian Bell profiles the group, which endeavours to reflect the love of Jesus Christ (aka the Reason for the Season) in the community, not just on December 25 but quietly and significantly throughout the year.

Happy reading and Merry Christmas, everyone.

Mailbag

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

Hello to the i love Creston staff

The audience's reactions and the subsequent comments of numerous acquaintances confirm that my wife and I were not alone in finding the presentation of "An Evening on Broadway" at the Prince Charles Theatre on October 22 and 23 thoroughly enjoyable.

It was a tribute to the "hosts," Brian Lawrence and Simone Wiebe, and to all who took part in any capacity.

Given that, it is in a real sense unfair to mention any of the performers by name. Nevertheless, I feel a need to say that I especially appreciated the solo contributions of Rhonda Barter, both as a vocalist and a violinist. I feel obliged to do so because of having learned that she stuck to her commitment to "Broadway," even though doing so made it impossible for her to address an NDP meeting in Revelstoke that was, to her surprise and dismay, scheduled for the same time.

She wished to do her bit for "Broadway" because its aim was to raise money for the Creston Auditorium Society to buy new curtains for the theatre's stage. The Society and other users of the theatre have been hit by the decision of School District No 8 to charge more for renting the facility as part of efforts to cut the board's fiscal deficit.

I can honestly say that I have yet to decide whom to vote for at the next federal election. However, I hope her absence from the Revelstoke meeting will not hurt Rhonda Barter's chances of being chosen as the NDP candidate in this constituency. That would be unfair.

By the same token, I look forward to seeing her in the cast of the Footlighters' upcoming production of "The Sound of Music."

Peter Hepher

the Christmas Gift that keeps on Giving

Story by : Brian Bell

Around this time of year, as Christmas approaches, thoughts often turn toward what to get for the person who has everything. More in tune with the spirit of the season may be what to get the one who has nothing.

One idea that doesn't disappear with the Christmas wrap on December 25 is a donation to the Creston Valley Ministerial Association, which is not unlike the Energizer Bunny, according to chairman Carl Sawler.

"The money goes a long way," says the pastor of Glad Tidings Pentecostal Church. "The gift keeps on giving and giving, and going and going."

Like the loaves and fishes of New Testament times, "it multiplies. It is (a miracle), for sure."



The CVMA is best known for its Christmas hamper program through which – this year, on December 21 at the Creston and District Community Complex – some \$26,000 worth of food will be tucked into 800-plus boxes by more than 100 volunteers and distributed to 430 needy families and individuals, from seniors to young singles.

It is with the hamper program that this story begins but, as with the CVMA itself, it's not where it ends.

Many people familiar with the highly publicized

“The ministerial disburses up to \$20,000 in financial aid”

December handout may not be aware that the ministerial disburses up to \$20,000 in financial aid from January through November every year, through the help of

partners like the Creston Valley Gleaners Society, local businesses and service clubs, and individual donors.

It has always provided a transient ministry, giving hard-up travellers a belly full of food and a night's lodging. But that mission expanded in 2005 to incorporate a variety of benevolent causes mostly related to medical needs.

“It's built in the last five years because we didn't take this on before, all these community needs. We didn't have the funding,” says Sawler, who credits the new thrust to a person who worked in the health-care field at the time

of her death. The woman, who requested anonymity, bequeathed the interest from a trust fund to the ministerial with the stipulation that it go toward medical expenses of the under-privileged.

“That started something in our thinking and now, when they know what we're doing, people give beyond the hampers. They say, ‘Hey, you help us all year through so we need to give generously,’ ” says Sawler, referring to a solicitation campaign that begins in early November with a letter to business owners and non-profit groups, some of which build an annual contribution into their budgets.

“I had a phone call today asking when they could drop a cheque off. Some of the organizations stated their employees don't want Christmas gifts and so ‘we're putting (an equivalent amount) through the ministerial.’”

Needs, ranging from medical treatment and prescription drugs to food, transportation and accommodations, are identified through medical professionals and government agencies.

“I just wrote a cheque for six hundred-and-some dollars for an individual who needed dental help,” Sawler says.

“The dentist contacted us because we've distributed letters through the hospital and all the doctors' offices and dental offices (saying) there is funding available and we need to be contacted.

“Social services contacted us from Vancouver just yesterday. There was a lady who was down there with her little one. It was just born but had complications and they said that the funding had run out through other organizations and wondered if we could help.

I sent a cheque for 15 hundred dollars so that mother and father could both stay there.”

Sawler said demand for such assistance has become more pressing due to provincial government cutbacks. The timeliness with which the ministerial can respond is also a factor.

“With red tape it takes a long time,” he says, “(but) immediately I can phone three people (on) the executive and say, ‘Can we help this way?’ They say, ‘Yeah,’ and that's taken care of right there and then. It's usually unanimous.”

“Demand for such assistance has become more pressing”



They've never had to turn anyone down.

"It's all because of the money that comes in through the hamper fund during the year," says Sawler, the CVMA chairman since 2004 for whom this will be his 15th Christmas with the program.

One with an even more extensive CVMA background is Harry Haberstock, the recently retired pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church who joined the ministerial when he moved here in 1969, briefly served as chairman and headed up the hamper program for many years prior to Sawler.

"Support the underprivileged at Christmastime"

From his early years here "there was concern by all the churches that we support the underprivileged at

Christmastime," Haberstock says.

Initially anywhere from 50 to 85 hampers were packed in the United Church Hall, which remained the site until the volume of goods outgrew the building and the number of people picking up hampers – in excess of 200 – swamped the small parking lot.

The late Lawrence Lavender, a former town councillor and regular hamper program volunteer, was instrumental in getting the three-day operation (sorting on a Monday, packing and distribution on a Tuesday and cleanup the next day) moved to the community complex within the past decade.

On packing day, workers push chairs bearing cardboard boxes around a long row of tables stacked with canned and other dry goods, inserting a predetermined number of each item into every box. Toys collected at Pyramid Building Supplies are added to boxes destined for families with young children.

"Last year we (planned for) 380 hampers but in the last count we did up 414, so this year we're planning to do up 430," Sawler says. "We have to do this all on faith. By 'faith' (means) we don't have the money but we believe that it's coming through the generosity of the people, and it always does."

Ten churches comprise the CVMA, which holds monthly meetings of either pastors or laymen from each congregation.



"It's a time of sharing and encouraging one another and praying for one another," Sawler says. "We pray constantly for every church in the valley, every pastor in the valley and their families."

They agree to disagree on any major doctrinal differences, but all adhere to the Apostles' Creed, which Haberstock describes as a universally acknowledged statement of faith.

"I learned from my Christian brothers and sisters that though we may have unique customs, traditions and doctrines which make up our identities, we have so much more in common with each other when we dare and care to work side by side in hands-on projects," Haberstock says. "I see God's hand of strong blessing in these endeavours."

"Our focus," adds Sawler, "is that we believe in Jesus Christ as the one true God, our Saviour. It's through Him that we serve and love each other and minister to the valley. Jesus went about doing good and so that's the important thing for me."

Haberstock recalls numerous ways besides the hamper program in which the ministerial has reached out in either official capacities or through member churches helping other groups achieve community-minded goals. The CVMA, for example, backed the development of Pioneer Villa (a now-closed nursing home) and the Addiction Recovery Centre of the Kootenays, and

'We have so much more in common with each other'

supports initiatives such as New Life Church's school lunch program and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency.

"During the days when a ministerial rep was part of the hospital accreditation process," he continues, "the ministerial developed a strong program of volunteer hospital chaplaincy. A significant aspect of this has been the hospital chapel, sponsored by the ministerial."

"One of the most inspirational parts of my Christmas season"

More recently, the CVMA responded to a Town Hall invitation to share invocations, prayers and blessings at civic events such as council meetings,

"without any intention of proselytizing," Haberstock says, "simply sharing our need for God's blessings as we seek the welfare of the community."

For all its various outreaches, no single act stands out like the CVMA hamper program, which Haberstock cherishes as "one of the most inspirational parts of my Christmas season."

"It's a wonderful time," Sawler concurs. "There is always laughter and singing. It's a happy time, a joyous time.

"For people picking up the hampers we have cookies and coffee there, just making it special, because some people have a hard time coming by. It's pride, but they just say, 'Thank you for your help,' and they're off again."

Gratitude for the ministerial making a difference is expressed verbally and in writing, such as one letter from a single mother of two sick children who was upgrading her education and couldn't afford an electricity hookup. She wrote: "Without your help I don't know what would have happened to us."

"The other day," Sawler says, "a guy we've been helping came by and gave us an envelope and said, 'Here's \$20. I want to repay some of the money that you've been giving me.'"

"We don't become the judge when people ask. The Scripture says, 'Give and it shall be given unto you pressed down, shaken together and running over.' And so when we give, we know that God is going to give more so we can give more. That's the way it goes." ■



Love Passion

Natalie Santano has been passionate about photography ever since she got her first camera as a young girl. She fell in love with capturing peoples unique personalities and special moments in life.

Whether it's engagements, weddings, maternity, babies, children or families, every shoot brings out the love of the people around her. Natalie finds joy in each session creating memories that last forever through creative studio and outdoor photography.

"I am truly blessed to meet so many beautiful people"
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From the Mayor's Desk

Story by: Ron Toyota
Mayor of the Town of Creston

A Celebration of Construction

On November 24 a “celebration of construction” ceremony for the new 24-unit housing development for seniors and persons with disabilities took place in council chambers and at the development site, located at 200 – 11th Avenue South, directly behind Extra Foods.

Councillor Tanya Ducharme served as the master of ceremonies, with Councillor Jerry Schmalz attending as acting mayor. Also in attendance were councillors Joanna Wilson and Len Folkman.

Representatives from BC Housing, Columbia Basin Trust and Town of Creston staff also participated in the ceremony.

The project includes 24 modular units of affordable housing for seniors and persons with disabilities. The project is made up of four, six-plex units, all designed to be one storey, one bedroom and

approximately 600 square feet in size.

The building permit, with a value of over \$2 million, was issued on September 24. As such, this project represents a significant investment in our community.

Partnerships in this initiative include:

Town of Creston – provided the land, environmental studies, driveway construction and service connections.

BC Housing – provided overall project co-ordination and administration through partnerships with the Town of Creston, Columbia Basin Trust and both the federal and provincial governments.

Columbia Basin Trust – provided funding to this project and six other communities within the Columbia basin.

Government of Canada – provided funding through the Seniors’ Rental Housing (SRH) initiative in partnership with the Province of B.C.

Province of British Columbia – provided funding through the SRH initiative in partnership with the Government of Canada.

A non-profit housing society has been selected by BC Housing to manage and administer the facility upon completion. Occupancy is scheduled for early spring 2011. ■

For further project information or to apply for housing within the development, contact BC Housing through the Web site www.bchousing.org or by calling 1-800-257-7756.

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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Lest We Forget.....

Story by: Joe Martin
Head Coach/GM
Creston Valley Thunder Cats, KIJHL

November was tough on the Creston Valley Thunder Cats. Just after they got 20-year-old and three-year veteran Rob Stuckey of Whitehorse back into the lineup from injury, they lost 20-year-old captain Travis Ludwar of Creston and 20-year-old assistant captain Kane Dawe of Whitehorse to injuries.

A few new teammates (Brandon Parrone, defence) and some more experience (Weston Joseph, goalie) added to the club has helped keep the games close but they really did miss their top scorers.

“Injuries have been really tough on us lately, and the schedule just

gets tougher,” says head coach and general manager Joe Martin. “We’ll be happy to get our guys back, but the players that are healthy have been doing pretty well.

“We need a few young guys to step it up a notch and fill the missing void, but overall I am happy with our club and their efforts.”

Let’s hope December and the Christmas break are kind to our local Kootenay International Junior Hockey League team. ■

Check for game updates and schedules at www.crestonvalleythundercats.com.

Creston Valley Business Buzz



Bill and Janice Dyck
Whirlwind Mobile Audio and Accessories

My wife and I have just finished our 3rd full year of business in the Creston Valley. With today’s economy and the inevitable push toward OEM (original equipment), it makes our business more unique

than ever before. How do we custom fit for your I Pod? How do we make something sound clearer? How do we add “Hands Free”, add sensors for backing up? Cameras? Navigation? Remote Starters? Recent changes this year has brought our office to our home (1816 Pine Street) with MOBILE Service. We also offer installation service for Bell Satellite systems for the Valley and surrounding

areas. We’re proud to still be here to serve the community. What’s new for 2011? Whirlwind has committed time to build a 3 cars for a local enthusiast that should take these cars and Whirlwinds talents to a national sound-off show in 2011. My wife and I look forward to maintaining and fostering these relationships now and in the future.

For more information: www.whirlwind.cc

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“Eye-candy” in the garden, all year round

Story by: Holly Pender-Love,
on behalf of WaterWise Garden program,
COTR Community Greenhouse

Gardeners are constantly delighted to see the colourful changes created by our plants in the fall, due to the shortened daylight hours. Seasonal views – “eye candy” – are something you might wish to consider so you have a beautiful scene to enjoy year-round.

This time of year, many plants in the Creston area create eye candy. The reliable and stately coniferous trees paint a green background: tall fir, pine, spruce, cylindrical cedar hedges and the short groundcovers of juniper and mugo pine.

In contrast, we enjoy splashes of riotous gold, orange and red in tall, spectacular maples and scarlet berry displays on mountain ash, cotoneaster and pyracantha. Also strutting their beauty this time of year are poppy seed pods, tall golden grasses and plain or variegated periwinkle groundcovers.

In my yard I enjoy the purple “beauty berry,” marginal to zone 5, and never cease to enjoy the catkins of the hazelnut, including the contorted hazel (Harry Lauder’s Walking Stick) with corkscrews into the air covered with snow.

Many of these delightful seasonal shows of trees, seed pods and grasses can be displayed indoors as dry floral arrangements. There is a special type of oasis available from Morris Flowers which does not take up moisture and is suited for holding branches of shrubs and dried flowers.

In the Water Wise gardening course offered at the College of the Rockies Community Greenhouse,



we have been discussing plants that grow easily in the Creston area with little water other than annual precipitation.

One can easily incorporate the concepts of low water requirements and year-round visual interest. All the plants mentioned in this article are well-suited to the Creston climate and often thrive on neglect, the best kind of plants to have!

Spectacular in dry floral arrangements are some of the ornamental grasses: Karl Foerster feather reed grass; blue oat grass; and, silver grass, for example. Perennials such as cone flowers, thistle, sea holly, and baby’s breath, and the opened pods of peony, can be utilized effectively in dry arrangements.

Some very interesting effects can be gained by using the height and silvery nature of the Russian sage, and falling over the sides of your container can be greens of cedar, vinca or other coniferous branches.

With Christmas upon us we can easily create lovely arrangements, either dry or floral, using local

“Delightful seasonal shows of trees, seed pods and grasses can be displayed indoors”

products from our gardens or the roadside and dress them up with red or white carnations or other seasonal treats from the florist.

The sample arrangements here have utilized dried apples, poppies, Chinese lanterns, teezel and a mixture of domestic and wild plants, including bullrushes. Easily accessible and delightfully economical gifts or for your own enjoyment, this eye candy is available year-round, inside or out. ■

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Santa Claus for Sixty-four Years

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

A small card of thanks appeared in the Creston Review of January 2, 1931: "The staff of Creston Valley Hospital wish to thank the people of the Valley who were so generous with their gifts of Christmas cheer to the hospital. Everything was very much appreciated and helped to make Christmas a very pleasant time for those unable to join in the usual Christmas festivities."

Local produce, meat and dairy products were being donated to the hospital since its opening the previous August, but the Christmas season warranted something more to cheer the hospital's five patients.



Creston's first hospital, where Irene LaBelle began her Santa Claus tradition in 1930.

One of those generous local residents was 15-year-old Irene LaBelle. She was working in the hospital office at the time, and as Christmas approached she and the nurses spent 10 cents each to pay for crepe paper and popcorn decorations. They hung these in each of the patients' rooms.

Irene felt that this was not enough, so she asked her father for money, saying, "If I had two dollars, I could buy something for everyone in the hospital."

"From 1930 to 1994, Irene chose and wrapped gifts for each patient"

Her father, Frank LaBelle, gave her the money. She spent \$1.25 on linen handkerchiefs from the Creston Mercantile and distributed them to the patients on Christmas morning. This was the start of a tradition that would span more than 60 years.

Every year from 1930 to 1994, Irene chose and wrapped gifts for each patient and made sure she had a few extra just in case patients were admitted in an emergency. She went to the hospital on Christmas morning and visited each patient for a few minutes while she distributed the gifts.

Irene had help with this. At first, the Creston Hospital board included

the expenses in its annual budget. In 1949, though, the B.C. government took over all the hospitals in the province and the board was no longer allowed to support Irene's Santa Claus undertaking.

Other community groups helped, including the Creston Women's Institute, the Hospital Ladies' Auxiliary and, most significantly, the Lions Club, which provided the necessary funds for decades.

As the local hospital expanded, so too did the number of potential patients to remember, from 11 in 1930 to 44 in the present-day hospital, built in 1970. The addition of the extended-care unit in 1983 brought the total up to a potential 60 patients to bring gifts to each year.

She also remembered the hospital staff who, because of their duties, could not spend Christmas with their families either.

Her report to the Ladies' Auxiliary for Christmas 1950 is a good illustration of her work: "There were 19 patients in the hospital, 5 children, 2 babies, 3 men and 9 women. Each received a gift, the four boys books, the little girl a doll, the 2

babies rattles, the men handkerchiefs and the ladies Yardley cologne.

"Twenty-four members of the staff received gifts. To the nurses an electric kettle for the home. The ward aids, kitchen maids and cook, cleaning women and office girl all received earrings, the laundry men china and the hospital board secretary cigarettes. All together 43 people were remembered at the hospital on Xmas Day."

In 1978, Irene was interviewed by the CBC about her work. Her 49th consecutive annual visit to the hospital was a B.C. record and, as the December 14, 1978, Review stated, "an outstanding achievement." She received congratulatory letters from across Canada.

Irene did not have a Christmas at home for 64 years but never seemed to regret the fact. In an interview with the Review in 1979, Irene said simply, "It's my Christmas too. I enjoy making someone happy on Christmas morning."

Irene passed away on November 17, 1994. ■

Creston and District Museum and Archives: phone (250) 428-9262; e-mail mail@creston.museum.bc.ca; Web site www.creston.museum.bc.ca.



Irene, Maury Murphy and Cliff Carr of the Lions Club, visiting patients on Christmas morning in 1962.

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Winter Solstice Celebrations

Story by: Trish Bartlett

It is happening again. The days are getting shorter, the nights longer and there is white stuff on the ground.

We hang colourful lights and displays to chase away the gloom and cold of winter nights. We are reacting to the shadows of our ancestral memory when lack of heat, light and a limited amount of food caused us to fear this season of darkness.

Let's celebrate and bring back the light and warmth (even though our biggest fear now would be a short-term power outage).

People all over the world have always done what they could to relieve winter doldrums, to mark the winter solstice; the shortest day and the longest night, occurring around December 21.

Hanukkah, an eight-day Jewish holiday, means "dedication." This year it is celebrated from December 2-9.

In 167 BC, the king of Syria captured Jerusalem and defiled the Jewish temple. Jews were forbidden to practise their beliefs or even call themselves Jews. This provoked the Maccabean revolution and after three years the Jews were victorious.

Their temple needed to be purified and rededicated before it could be used for worship. This included relighting the Menorah, the great seven-branched candelabrum. Legend says only enough oil was available to allow the Menorah to burn for one day but, miraculously, the oil lasted until a new supply arrived eight days later.

This "Festival of Lights" has been observed annually in remembrance of the Jews regaining their freedom and having the light shine on them once again.

Pancha Ganapati is a five-day Hindu festival, observed December 21-25, celebrating Lord Ganesha. Each of the five days has its own discipline and colour representing the five powers of Ganesha.

Banana leaves, pine boughs, flashing lights, tinsel and colourful hanging ornaments may be used to decorate the family's shrine. Sweets, fruits, incense and songs of praise are offered to the god daily.

Small gifts are given to the children, who keep them to be opened on the fifth day. Ultimately, the festival represents a new start, beginning with forgiveness and reparation of the mistakes of the past year.

Shab-e Yald is an ancient Persian Zoroastrian festival celebrated on the eve of the winter solstice. Zoroastrians believed that on this night Mithra, the Persian god of light and truth, was born to a virgin mother. With the subsequent rise of Islam, the religious significance was lost and Yalda became a time when family and close friends would get together.

Saturnalia, a Roman festival, began about 217 BC to raise citizens' morale after a military defeat. Masters and slaves had a superficial switching of places for one day on December 17.



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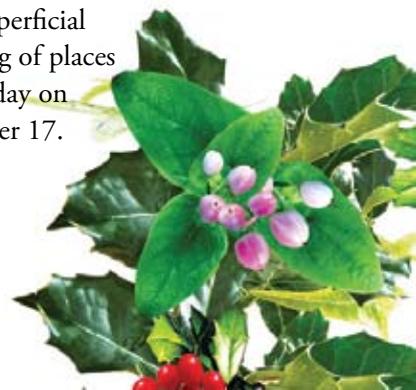
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Eventually, one day expanded to a week-long extravaganza, ending on the 23rd.

Celebrations included conventional sacrifices, the making and giving of small gifts, gambling and a sense of equality for all. Slaves were not punished during this time. A slave banquet was served by the masters, though it had been prepared by the slaves. Saturnalia was a time to eat, drink and be merry.

Christmas was first celebrated on December 25 in 336 AD. Prior to this there was no official recognition of the birth of the god/man Jesus Christ to the virgin Mary. Once it was no longer illegal to be a Christian, church leaders bowed to the people and designated an official day of celebration. They deliberately chose the time of the winter solstice since so many people in the Roman Empire were already celebrating the return of light in some form.

Christians believed Christ to be the light of the world so it was only fitting his birth should be celebrated at the time of the return of light into the world. They believed all other celebrations were a foreshadowing of the truth of the birth of Jesus Christ.

To this end, many other non-Christian symbols were eventually incorporated into the celebrations

and took on Christian

“Many other non-Christian symbols were eventually incorporated into the celebrations”

meanings: the yule log and gifts; the evergreen tree and mistletoe; candles and lights; food and merrymaking; incense; and, stars. These all can be found in non-Christian cultures but

all have been sanctified by the Christian story.

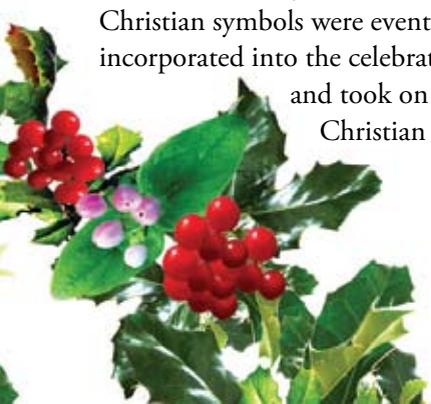
There are Christians who shun these

things as non-Christian, and non-Christians who embrace them as purely pagan. The early Christian church was not there

to change the world but to find the truth which already existed and add to it the truth of Jesus Christ.

Augustine of Hippo, a fourth-century bishop of the Christian church, purportedly said of Christmas: “We hold this day holy, not like the pagans because of the birth of the sun, but because of him who made it.”

Whether it’s Happy Hanukkah, Blessed Yalda, Io Saturnalia or Merry Christmas, may the light return to your life. ■



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Kootenay Kalendars Launches 2011 Outdoor Adventure Calendar

Story by: Ginia Hayward – Kootenay Kalendars

The founders of Kootenay Kalendars, Nelson locals Lucas Jmieff and Ginia Hayward, have released their second local-interest calendar titled *Off the Beaten Path*.

“Most spectacular back country adventure spots”

The high-quality gift calendar showcases 14 of the Kootenays’ most spectacular back country adventure spots.

Be it hiking in the Purcell Mountains, touring the Selkirk Mountain back country or

skimming ridges in the Valhalla Mountains, *Off the Beaten Path* delivers what the title suggests, Kootenay-style.

A new step for Kootenay Kalendars in 2010-11 is becoming a proud member of 1% for the Planet, an international organization whose members dedicate one per cent of annual sales toward non-profit environmental groups.

By joining the 1% movement, along with other business members like Mountain Equipment Co-op, Kootenay

Kalendars is striving to help protect the environment and promote sustainability. ■

Off the Beaten Path is available in Creston at Black Bear Books, or visit the publisher online at www.kootenaykalendars.ca.



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One Percent for the Planet

*Source of giving statistics: Giving USA Foundation 1/23/08

1% for the Planet is helping to tilt the scales of giving toward the thousands of under-funded non-profits dedicated to the pursuit of sustainability, and to preserving and restoring our natural environment.

Since its inception in 2002, the 1% network has become one of the largest funders of environmental work. Membership consists of more than 1,400 businesses in 38 countries, together giving over \$15 million annually to more than 2,000 environmental groups worldwide. To date, 1% for the Planet has initiated over \$50 million in environmental giving.

By joining 1%, businesses can help drive positive environmental change while gaining recognition for their commitment. In addition, they can promote further action on the part of consumers, their employees and other companies.

Joining also creates an opportunity to engage in dialogue with the rest of our membership, foster new business relationships, connect with like-minded individuals and share ideas and resources.

For more information contact: 1% for the Planet, P.O. Box 650, Waitsfield, VT, U.S.A., 05673; phone (802) 496-5408; fax (802) 496-6401; e-mail info@onepercentfortheplanet.org; or, www.onepercentfortheplanet.org.

Drive Smart, Drive Safe, Drive Hands-free

Story by: Bill Dyck -
Whirlwind Mobile Audio and Accessories

On January 1, 2010, the B.C. government introduced hands-free legislation. As a result of this law, anyone caught talking on a cell phone, text messaging or playing with an iPod could be subject to a hefty fine of about \$600.

What are the alternatives? Working in retail I see customers on a monthly basis and ask the question, "Do you talk on your cell phone while driving?" The common response is, "Oh no, I would never do such a thing. It is dangerous."

Yes, it is dangerous, so why do we still see people driving with their phone attached to their ear?

One of the problems is people are scared that the alternative solution is expensive or doesn't really work. The good news is the pricing on a

hands-free Bluetooth device is very affordable.

The sky is the limit when it comes to Bluetooth. As long as your cell phone, BlackBerry or Blueberry is Bluetooth-compatible, you'll be safely driving hands-free and happier because you'll have one extra hand to sip coffee, do makeup or 10- two-o'clock on the wheel. Now that's a strange concept! ■

For more information contact: Bill Dyck,
Whirlwind Mobile Audio and Accessories; phone
(250) 428-9188; e-mail sales@whirlwind.cc; and,
on the Web at www.whirlwind.cc.



What is Bluetooth?

www.bluetomorrow.com

Put simply, it's a short-range wireless radio technology that allows electronic devices to connect to one another. Generally, Bluetooth has a range of up to 30 feet or greater. Devices using newer versions of Bluetooth have ranges over 100 feet.

The technology has been around for years. However, for many people it is just another "tech" term. Most people have little or no understanding of the technology and have very little knowledge of its applications. But they hear and

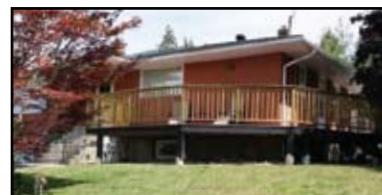
read about it everywhere – in ads for computers cell phones, smart phones and various other devices.

Bluetooth wireless technology makes connections just like cables connect a computer to a keyboard, mouse or printer, or how a wire connects an MP3 player to headphones. Bluetooth makes these same connections except without the cables and wires.

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My Side of the World

Story by: Kristen Cook

Winter Has Come

Chances are very good that, if you're reading this, you're from the Creston Valley (or surrounding area). Now, I know our winters here are a little milder than a

stereotypical Canadian winter but there's no denying that we still fully experience the season every year.

This year is shaping up to be long, white and bitterly cold. I've been hearing this since I was still wearing flip-flops and now it's becoming obvious that the predictions were probably right.

Clearly, being Canadian means winter is a fact of life. Some will be more brutal than others but, regardless, we have to deal with it.

Over the past couple of years I've decided to practise a theory: to enjoy is better than to endure. I suspect enjoying winter is partially mindset. So here's a list of the top-five things to appreciate this winter.

1. Winter is always a perfect excuse to curl up indoors. Traditionally the Canadian winter is neither time for planting nor harvest. Sure. Most of us have other methods of making a living now, but the thought of winter probably still brings to mind

a blazing fireplace, mugs of hot chocolate and a good book.

It's a great time to watch your favourite movies, cook your favourite meals, listen to your favourite music and sit for hours chatting with your favourite people. In short, winter is for soup, not salad. And sometimes soup is nice.

2. In contrast to point number 1, winter brings about opportunity for a lot of great outdoor activities. Personally, I always wait eagerly for the ski hills to open up. Snowboarding almost independently

"Clearly, being Canadian means winter is a fact of life"

makes me excited for snow. Add hockey to the mix and winter sports keep me busy.

Maybe neither of those is for you, but what about snowshoeing, cross-country skiing or figure skating? Maybe curling or sledding (my apologies to both parties for putting those in the same sentence). Even if you're not competitive or particularly interested in athletics almost everyone should be able to appreciate long, open moments spent skimming across Duck Lake.

3. Winter clothes. Oh, I know nothing quite compares to tank tops, cargo shorts and bare feet. But life needs a little variation. When I travelled long-term I actually craved a hoodie – something warm, comfortable and familiar to wrap myself in. And hoodies are only a little piece or what I'm excited to pull out when the weather gets cold. Scarves from around the world, kicking boots, cable-knit sweaters, fleece-lined board pants, cozy mittens, plaid jackets. Without winter I'd never know what it was like to tuck my hair inside a perfect wool toque.

4. I hope you understand what I mean when I say winter

peacefulness. If you don't, I'm not quite sure how to explain it. What I mean is the mellow glow of light softened by the snow. I mean lying on your back in snow pants and, mid-snow-angel, staring up into endless, fat snowflakes. I mean the sharp quiet of the crisp evening. I mean each breath hanging in the air. Do you know what I mean? You must. If you don't, I'm afraid I can't help you out.

5. Christmas! Of course this has to make my list – the year's major holiday and always my favourite. The whole month is beautiful. Decorations light up around town, strangers smile at each other, Christmas music starts playing

everywhere. Secrets are kept, neighbours remembered, grudges forgotten. December is among my favourite months, and for only one reason: a Merry Christmas to you!

I'm not saying you have to actually eagerly await the cold. True, I love having four distinct seasons, but even still winter will never be my favourite. Life will always be about summer for me. I just happen to think that it might be worth appreciating winter as well.

Sure, we can gripe about salt on the road. We might complain about dry skin and slippery sidewalks. But what fun is that?

To enjoy is so much better than just trying to endure. ■

**"It might be worth
appreciating winter as well"**



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Baby It's Cold Outside

Story by: Carla Ahern
Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area

Trust me, I would hibernate if I could. The recent cold weather snap of minus 15 and below, although somewhat invigorating in small doses, reeks havoc on my coastal blood. And I can only imagine how those who do not have access to a soft couch and a woodstove must feel.

“Blocking out the winter months in a somewhat comatose state”

And for those who have only fur to keep them warm or cold blood running through their veins, I say, “How do you survive winter?”

The brave wildlife that decide to stay in true winter environments hibernate, blocking out the winter months in a somewhat comatose state. Again, if I could, I would.

Other humans have thought of this option too, although for more noble reasons than mine. There are many research projects currently investigating how to achieve “induced hibernation” in humans. The ability for humans to hibernate could be useful for enhancing trauma care, surgical outcomes and organ transplants, to name a few.

Hibernation is defined as a state of inactivity and metabolic depression in animals, characterized by lower body temperature, slower breathing and lower metabolic rate.

Winters are cold and there is little to no food available, so hibernation is a way to conserve energy and tap into

reserved fat supplies to stay alive, in a slow and steady manner, while waiting for the bounties of spring to reappear.

During hibernation, animals will use up stored body fat for energy and will not lose any muscle. This causes the animal to come out of hibernation thinner but still as

strong as it was in the fall. If only we worked that way!

For many, when you think of a hibernating species you think of a bear. But bears do not go into true hibernation. During a bear’s winter nap, the degree of metabolic depression is much less than that observed in smaller mammals. A bear’s body temperature remains relatively stable, depressed from 37 °C to approximately 31 °C, and it can be fairly easily aroused (hence the expression “Let sleeping bears lie,” or maybe it’s “dogs” . . . whatever).

Many people deem this false hibernation but others just consider it a different form of hibernation.

With true hibernation, the animal almost appears dead. There is little to no movement and it takes a long time for it to wake up enough to even walk around. An example would be a ground squirrel, who can reduce its body temperature to 0 °C or below for weeks at a time.



Or take a cold-blooded animal, such as a frog, whose core temperature is directly correlated to the outside temperature and thus remains in hibernation until the outside temperature rises to a level that allows body movement.

“Some frogs in the far north can actually freeze solid”

I do find amphibian and reptile hibernation techniques quite fascinating. Some frogs in the far north can actually freeze solid. When cold weather approaches they burrow under leaves and debris on



the forest floor, lose more than half the water in their bodies and their veins fill with an antifreeze-like mixture of sugars and sugar alcohols.

The somewhat dried-out frog freezes; it is rock-hard and ice forms around the frog's organs. The frog's

"Trying to successfully survive the harsh effects of winter"

individual cells, however, remain unfrozen and intact. Pretty amazing.

Whether an animal is a true or false hibernator, they are all trying to successfully survive the harsh effects of winter.

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For those of us who cannot hibernate and shut out winter, I suggest taking up skiing or snowshoeing, investing in a down jacket and thermal underwear and just getting out there and enjoying it. Spring will come soon enough.

Now, I just have to live up to my words. ■

Carla Ahern is the director of communications, stewardship and education at the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area. She is learning to like winter and does own snowshoes and skis – and many pairs of thermal underwear. For questions or comments, contact her at cahern@crestonwildlife.ca or 250-402-6905.

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Creston Valley Quad Squad

Albert Stoyanowski
Past President - Creston Valley Quad Squad

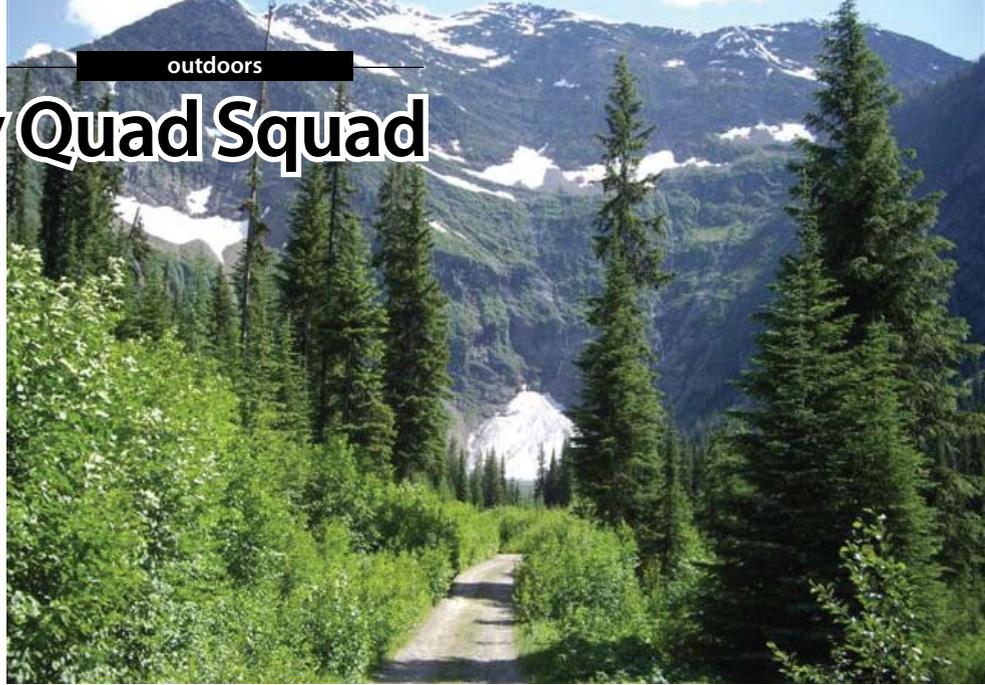
The Creston Valley Quad Squad is a club representing the local quadding community. It's for those who want to meet new people interested in the sport and have a lot of good fun in the mountains.

We had a very successful summer full of various activities. Very few people know of the extreme beauty that exists in the mountains surrounding the Creston Valley and beyond. The aim of the club is to explore this beauty and at the same time enjoy it and preserve it for future generations. Responsible quadding is a key part of our goals.

As with any club, volunteers are an integral part of our organization. We have been fortunate enough to have plenty of enthusiastic and willing volunteers. The executive has again done a bang-up job of steering the club to the success it enjoys today.

From communication and working with the provincial organization (ATV BC), to frequent communication with club members, to organizing club rides and additional events, to keeping a powerful Web site functioning (crestonquads.webs.com), the club has evolved into a successful organization.

Our 60 members have enjoyed rides to almost every nook and cranny surrounding our grand valley and beyond. A four-day quad campout at White Boar Lake in the St. Mary's was a highlight for many and the area was absolutely magnificent. Check for more details on our Web site.



White Boar Lake campout, July 17 to 20, 2010.

We had two potlucks this season, one in August at Hart Creek and one on the Iron Range in October. The food was absolutely out of this world. I keep wondering how the various members can provide such a balanced and delicious range of foods out in the mountains. You have to taste the food to appreciate it.

The cabin that we have stewardship of went through some significant changes this summer. The cabin is used by many year-round. Summer use includes hikers, hunters, people on ATVs, horseback riders and others. Winter use includes skiers and snowshoers. We built a new and spacious deck with a great view.

A new woodshed will keep the wood more accessible and dry. Recently some members went up and installed a picnic table and fire ring. This was delivered to the cabin by provincial employees.

Throughout the summer, members went up and did maintenance work. A new bench was also taken up there. All these amenities will

“Very few people know of the extreme beauty that exists in the mountains surrounding the Creston Valley”

provide a more enjoyable stay for all who visit the cabin.

A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped make this possible. Donations would be gladly accepted.

Please report any acts of vandalism at this cabin to our new president at (250) 428-0704.

This is the year that a change to our executive has occurred and we look forward to the direction the club will take. We know that new and exciting things will happen under the leadership of Antonio Asturi.

New people have volunteered to take on the available positions and will be a great asset to the club.

We encourage all you out there who own a quad to consider joining next

spring. The bigger the numbers in the organization, the better chance we have of preserving our riding freedoms in the future.

The provincial organization will also help us and other clubs around the province to promote and preserve the sport.

Even if you don't want to attend our regular meetings and take part in the various activities; we still need numbers to make important things happen for our future. Consider that as we are reading this, key areas have been closed down to quadding. The reason: irresponsible riders.

The quads only do damage when the drivers makes the machines do the damage. It is against the law to go into the mountains and just cut a new trail. When new trails are cut , then others ride these trails also. Soon we have destruction of the environment, including plant destruction and erosion.

“Quads only do damage when the drivers makes the machines do the damage”

The easiest way for Forests Ministry officials to control this is to shut down the whole area. It is perfectly acceptable to clear trails that have previously existed on old roads. There are lots of these in the mountains and as long as no dirt is disturbed these trails are legal.

The days of just riding anywhere you feel like are gone. Please consider the future of riding when you are tempted to create a new trail. A lot is at stake. We would like to preserve areas to ride in for future generations.

Also, please obey and respect signage that has been erected for protection of certain areas. Times have changed and so we must change

to ensure future freedoms. Please be responsible.

Private land is also an issue to consider. Please get permission to ride on these lands.

Liability insurance is required for all to ride on a Forest Service road, and has been for years. Changes will be coming in the fall of 2011, so be aware.

Consider wearing a helmet when riding, for safety's sake.

There have been local areas that have been destroyed by irresponsible quadders. Going into high elevation lakeshores and bogs and spinning the tires may sound like fun, but rejuvenation of the destroyed plant life takes years.

Please be aware of the consequences of our riding actions. Thank you for helping to preserve our riding areas.

■



Iron range ride, October 17, 2010.

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Tai Chi is good for health, but why?

Story by: Sifu Neil Ripski

Tai chi is known as a good-for-you discipline that many people practise every day because it is enjoyable, supposedly good for you and, well, a lot of people do it.

The question I most often try to help answer is: why is tai chi good for you? I thought a brief explanation of a few key points would make a good article, so here we go.

1. Balance equals health. Now I am not just referring to the ability to stand on one leg in a windstorm uphill both ways.

Balance in tai chi terms refers to left and right, up and down, forward and back, as well as outside and inside. Basically every movement in tai chi has a left and right component as well as an internal and external component, and it is the balance between these things that helps the body maintain equilibrium.

When the mind concentrates on only one hand in a movement, for instance, the other hand/side of the body is left-hanging, mentally and physically, and the whole-body exercise that is tai chi is not actually happening.

The most important question I ask my beginners is: "What is your other hand doing?" Most everyone can put the lead hand in place and bring their mind to it but what is the other side of the body up to?

In the Tai Chi Classics (a very confusing read for most people) it is said, "When going forward think of

backward." This is meant literally. When walking forward, if you bring your mind to centre and think backward as well, you will find your spine expanding backward and opening the back, straightening your posture and exercising groups of muscles that are rarely engaged in forward movement.

Every part of the body should be engaged and observed while practising tai chi, although without this advice the art will still render its health benefits to you. They will be measurably less than with proper balance.

2. Massage the internal organs to remove stagnation. The twisting and turning of the torso in tai chi practice accomplishes a deep internal organ massage that helps to squeeze out stagnant blood and allow for proper circulation.

Sedentary lives lead to the internal organs never moving or pushing up against each other. The sack of mushy stuff inside us has to be moved and twisted in order to keep all our organs functioning properly. This is accomplished by leading all your movements with the waist (Dan Tien or Elixir field, very energetic and cool sounding). Turn the waist to move the hips, the shoulders, the elbows and so forth.



"It is enjoyable, supposedly good for you and a lot of people do it"

Moving your hands around in a tai chi form is still exercise but twisting the torso and moving it first creates pressure inside our bodies and this allows us to stay healthy. As the classics say: "Pliable as a child." I don't know about you but I hope I can be as pliable as a six-year-old when I am 60!

Already out of space so I will leave it here. Any tai chi exercise will affect your health. Performance of that exercise with balance and movement from deep within your centre will affect your health even more. ■

Sifu Neil Ripski teaches tai chi to beginners and advanced practitioners. For information call him at 250-866-5263.

Creston-Kootenay Foundation Update

Story by: Peter Hepher

Vern Ronmark and Casey Messinger were re-elected to the board of the Creston-Kootenay Foundation (CKF) at the group's annual general meeting October 27.

The CKF accepts donations of cash, real estate, securities, bequests and other classes of value and invests them. It then distributes the annual earnings from such investments to non-profit organizations working in and for the community between Yahk and Riondel.

A member of the Community Foundations of Canada, the CKF is also registered with the Canada Revenue Agency, thus authorizing it to issue tax-deductible receipts for the donations it receives.

At a board meeting following the AGM, Larry Brierley was re-elected to the group's presidency. Also re-elected were Peter Hepher as vice-president and communications convenor, Messinger as secretary and Ronmark as treasurer. Other directors whose terms have not expired are Lon Main and Bob Ewashen.

Creston town Council Joanna Wilson will again serve as the representative on the board from the municipal governments within the CKF's geographical service area. Nicole Nilsson and Rita Scott will

continue as representatives-at-large from that area.

In his president's report to the AGM, Brierley noted that the foundation distributed \$24,500 this year and completed its commitment to the College of the Rockies greenhouse project.

He urged members of the community, including CKF directors, to donate to the foundation, pointing out that the

"The more it has in its investment portfolio, the more it can help the community"

more it has in its investment portfolio, the more it can help the community in the form of grants.

At the subsequent board meeting, objectives for the 2010-11 year were discussed. Among them was a special fund-raiser, a formal-dress soiree, to be held in the Creston Room of the Creston and District Community Complex on June 11, 2011. ■

More information about the CKF can be found on the organization's Web site (www.ckfoundation.com) or by phoning (250) 223-8004.



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The Warming Wonders of Ginger

Story by: Maya Skalinska
M.H.,R.H.T

While scraping the ice off the car in the blowing wind and falling snow, ginger tea comes to mind.

Ginger is my favourite herb to beat the winter chills. It has been used for medicinal and culinary purposes for over 5,000 years, but only in the last 30 years has science taken interest in this amazing herb and started to confirm all its traditional uses.

And what are the traditional uses? The list is long, but I'll start with the reason ginger comes to my mind on those cold winter days.

For centuries now, traditional Chinese medicine has been suggesting ginger for winter chills, colds, flu, bronchial congestion and even hangovers. What a perfect herb for the cold and festive season.

Ginger's warming effect takes care of the chills while its cleansing effects take care of hangovers, but it

doesn't end there. Ginger improves circulation, relieves aches, arthritis pain and nausea, takes care of digestive complaints and is a heart tonic. That's pretty good for a tasty root you can pick up at any grocery store.

"Ginger is my favourite herb to beat the winter chills"

Cut three to five slices of ginger and boil it in one cup of water for five to 10 minutes, depending on how strong you like it. If you have a rasp (or microplane grater) at home, you can grate the ginger, add boiling

water and let it steep for a few minutes.

According to Ayurvedic Medicine (traditional East Indian medicine) adding honey to herbs makes the medicinal effects of the herb stronger. Honey is also soothing to the throat and has anti-bacterial properties. Therefore, adding honey to your ginger tea is not only delicious but medicinal.

So, remember all the extra medicinal gifts you're giving your body as you sip a warming ginger tea this winter. ■

(Maya Skalinska is a registered herbal therapist with CHA of B.C. She offers iridology, pulse and tongue analysis, herbal medicine, nutritional consultations and flower essences in Crawford Bay and at Vital Health in Creston. For more information or to book an appointment, call 250-225-3493.)

Note: This article is intended for informational purposes and does not replace regular visits and recommendations from a personal medical doctor.



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Out & About

Submitted by: www.crestonevents.ca

December 3 & 4 Season's Grinnings

Location: Prince Charles Theatre
7:30pm

Contact: Brian Lawrence
Phone: 250-428-2266 ext. 103
email: editor@crestonvalleyadvance.ca

December 4 Daniel Huscroft Concert

Location: Snoring Sasquatch
Doors open at 7pm,
Show starts at 8pm

Contact: Mark
Phone: 1-877-264-8543
email: info@snorningsasquatch.com
www.snorningsasquatch.com

December 4 Watkins Open House

Location: Coffee Creek Café
1 to 8pm

Contact: Melanie Postnikoff
Phone: 250-402-6699
email: melpozy@hotmail.com

**Creston Valley
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Hours of Operation

Main Store Hours:
807 Canyon Street
Tuesday & Friday 9:30 am to 4 pm,
1st & 3rd Thursday 4 pm to 7 pm,
last Saturday of each month 9:30 am to 1 pm

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115 8th Ave. N. (across the street)
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1st & 3rd Thursday 4 pm to 7 pm

Food Bank Hours:
807 Canyon Street
(behind Main Store)
Tuesday & Friday 9 am to 1 pm

Drop-Off Hours:
(both locations)
Gates Open Monday to Friday 6 am to 6 pm
Saturday & Sunday 3 am to 6 pm

December 4 Santa Claus Celebration & Parade

- A Christmas family classic & Christmas shorts at the Tivoli Theatre, 12:30 to 3pm

- Swim at the Creston & District Community Complex, 1 to 3pm

- Free "Pictures with Santa" by Natalie Santano Photography Creston & District Community Complex, 2:30 to 4:30pm

- Gingerbread Man Decorating - Creston & District Community Complex - Erickson Room 2:30 to 4:30pm

- Santa Claus Parade starting from Creston & District Community Complex, 6:15pm

- Free hot chocolate and hot dogs during the parade
Sponsored by the Town of Creston

Contact: Creston Valley
Chamber of Commerce
Phone: 250-428-4342
email: crestonchamber@kootenay.com
www.crestonchamber.com

December 5 Thunder Cats vs. Kamloops

Location: CDCC, 2pm
Contact: Joanne Endicott
Phone: 250-428-3965
www.crestonvalleythundercats.com

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December 11 Thunder Cats vs. Fernie

Location: CDCC, 7:30pm
Contact: Joanne Endicott
Phone: 250-428-3965
www.crestonvalleythundercats.com

December 17 Thunder Cats vs. Grand Forks

Location: CDCC, 7:30pm
Contact: Joanne Endicott
Phone: 250-428-3965
www.crestonvalleythundercats.com

December 18 We're Back!! ... for Christmas

Location: Prince Charles Auditorium
7:30pm
Contact: Kelly Mehrer
Phone: 250-428-9444

December 18 (Pseudo) Night at the Opera

Location: Creston Public
– meeting room, 7pm
Contact: Creston Public Library
Phone: 250-428-4141

December 20 Ministerial Carol Festival

Location: Trinity United Church
7:pm
Contact: Betty Marzke
Phone: 250-428-7984

December 29 Thunder Cats vs. Fernie

Location: CDCC, 7:30pm
Contact: Joanne Endicott
Phone: 250-428-3965
www.crestonvalleythundercats.com

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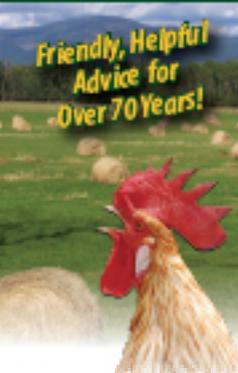
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