

March 2017

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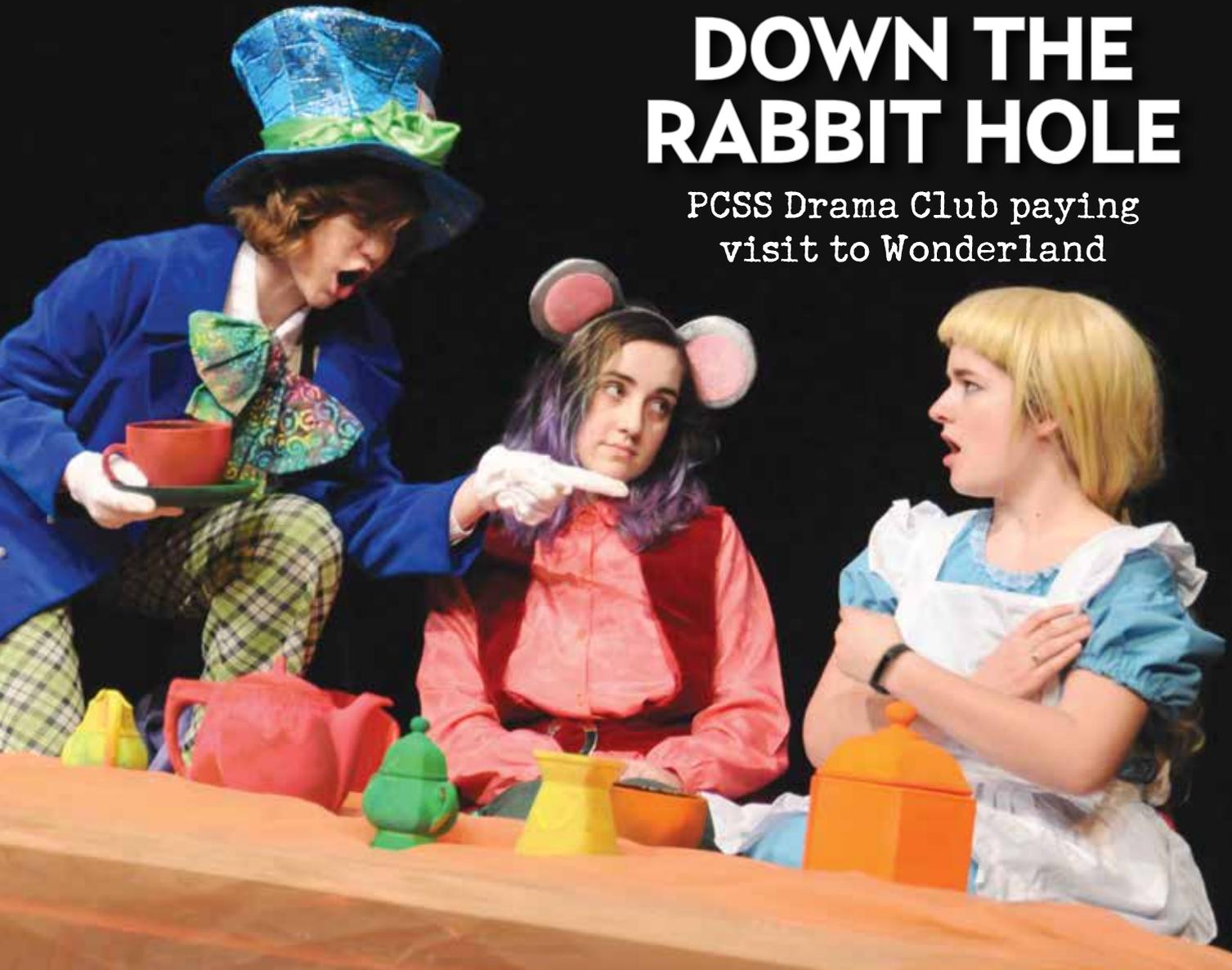
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candlelight vigil
of solidarity

Bringing the
Creston Valley together!

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE

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historic snowfalls

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OUTDOORS

Examining significance
of CVWMA

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From the Editor



BRIAN LAWRENCE

As I write this, those massive dumps of snow that fell on the Kootenays are a few weeks behind us — and it's hardly surprising that people are

still talking about them. They were epic, and right up there with some of the local records (as Creston Museum manager Tammy Bradford explains on page 10). For those who aren't winter lovers, it solidified the need for spring to come soon. Until then, indoor entertainment abounds...

The Prince Charles Secondary School Drama Club's production of *Alice in Wonderland* runs early in the

month. I caught brief snippets while taking photos at a rehearsal for this issue, and based on past productions directed by drama teacher Brooke Douma, I imagine it will be stellar. She always aims to have humour in her shows, but never shies away from intensity and relevance — the scene in 2015's *Class Dismissed* when a teacher took his class hostage at gunpoint is a perfect example. It was definitely a thought-provoking piece of theatre, and I'm excited to see her special touch on a completely different genre this time around.

There will be more theatre coming up after that, when Footlighters Theatre Society brings Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None* to the stage. I'm in the cast, and have been thoroughly enjoying the good old-fashioned murder mystery. It has some delightfully dark humour, and twists and turns that are

still as tantalizing as I found them when rehearsals started — I fully expect the audience will feel the same thrill!

Of course, with spring officially starting this month, the weather should become a bit more hospitable to those who are ready to venture outdoors after their winter hibernation. So why not check out the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area? In her article this month, acting education and communications co-ordinator Laura Brandon outlines many reasons the wetlands are a unique and vital part of the global ecosystem.

And while you're flipping through the pages, be sure to check out the impressive photos by Ethan Greentree of the Feb. 7 candlelight vigil for solidarity, a commitment that the Creston Valley will be welcoming community — one of many reasons that this valley is a great place to live! ■

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Photos by Ethan Greentree provide a glimpse at the Feb. 7 candlelight vigil of solidarity.

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BUSINESS SAFETY

Fire Safety Tips for the Workplace



Fire Prevention

Keep your work area free of waste paper, trash and other items that can easily catch fire.

Check on your electrical cords. If a cord is damaged in any way, replace it. Try not to lay cords in places where they can be stepped on, as this will contribute to deterioration of the protective outside coating.

Don't overload your circuits.

Turn off electrical appliances at the end of each day.

Keep heat producing equipment away from anything that might burn. This includes copiers, coffee makers, computers, etc.

In the Event of a Fire

Upon finding a fire, call 911 immediately and don't hang up with the emergency responder until told to do so.

Close doors when exiting to help limit the spread of smoke and fire throughout the building.

Never use elevators during an evacuation.

Follow the escape plan and meet at a pre-determined place outside of your

building and away from danger. Conduct a headcount to ensure all of your staff has evacuated.

The best way to ensure the safety of your staff is through fire prevention and preparation. Talk with your staff about fire safety in the workplace today.

Did You Know?

The BC Fire Code prohibits the use of drop bars, chains and even double key locking devices on exit doors at any time. These types of features are a threat to the employees, public and responders safety during an emergency. Be sure to use proper locking mechanisms compatible with the doors in the building that you intend to secure.

Door hardware such as "panic" hardware and automatic door closures shall be maintained for the life of the door. A good rule of thumb is that a door shall remain "as is" from the date of installation in accordance with the BC Building Code. It is common to see manual hold-open devices employed (door wedges) or self-closures removed after the installation of the door is complete. This can severely

jeopardize the safety of building occupants during a fire emergency.

It is mandatory that a business keeps record of all fire and life safety system inspections, testing and maintenance on site for review by the Municipal Fire inspector or Fire Prevention Officer.

When contracting a technician to service your business' fire protection systems (alarm panel, sprinklers, fire extinguishers, standpipes, fire pump), it is required by the Town of Creston Fire Services Bylaw No. 1774, 2011 that the fire protection technician is certified by the association known as the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC (ASTTBC). Alarm panels can also be inspected and tested by a technician recognized by the Canadian Fire Alarm Association (CFAA).



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CURIOUSER & CURIOUSER

PCSS Drama Club presenting tale of Wonderland

STORY AND PHOTOS BY BRIAN LAWRENCE
I Love Creston Editor

With its eccentric personalities, bizarre locales and zany humour, Brooke Douma knew *Alice in Wonderland* was the perfect play for the Prince Charles Secondary School Drama Club to perform.

"I wanted to do something more lighthearted," says Douma, who directs the play that runs March 9-11 at Prince Charles Theatre. "It's a big departure for me. I've never really done any fantasy."

The drama teacher's plays, while

typically containing some humour, tend toward the serious — such as 2015's *Class Dismissed*, in which a teacher held students hostage at gunpoint — and usually have minimal sets. *Alice in Wonderland*, based on the 1865 Lewis Carroll novel, allowed her to bring a bright new look to the stage, as well as help the cast develop some peculiar characters.

"I'm not trying to imitate a specific version," she says. "I'm trying to make all the characters unique to us."

Those characters are brought to life by a cast of about 30, which includes

some faces that will be familiar to regular theatregoers. Among them are Anjali Ewing and Zoe Marini — both of whom have competed at Performing Arts BC's provincial festival — who play, respectively, Alice and the Queen of Hearts.

Ewing's theatre experience began in 2007, when she was

ABOVE: Olivia Kettle as Tweedledee, Meredith Cote as Tweedledum and Anjali Ewing as Alice.
COVER: Des Geddes as the Mad Hatter, Kyla Blackmore as the Doormouse and Ewing.



Zoe Marini as the Queen of Hearts.

an orphan and dancing mouse in the Footlighters Theatre Society production of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. She went on to have supporting roles in *The Music Man* and *The Sound of Music* with Footlighters, as well as the PCSS Drama Club productions of *Anne Frank and Me* and *Class Dismissed*.

After the smaller parts, Ewing was thrilled at the opportunity to not only have a leading role, but also to get into the mind of the seven-year-old Alice. Having never seen a film adaptation and not reading the book

until after rehearsals began, she had no preconceptions about the role.

"It's fun to play a little kid too — it's fun to throw tantrums," says the Grade 12 student. "She's super oblivious. She's fallen into this world with all these characters, and all she wants to do is get home."

As with Ewing, Marini also got started on stage playing an orphan in a Footlighters production, the 2011 melodrama *The Villain Wore A Dirty Shirt*.

"Jesika [Troughton, a former Creston resident] forced me to do it," says Marini with a laugh. "She was

like, 'We need more orphans in the show!'"

The Grade 11 student went on to play supporting roles in *Annie* and other productions, and had a leading part in *The Great Ice Cream Scheme* in 2015. But with *Alice in Wonderland*, she was eager for a change of pace, and is relishing her role as the "flamboyantly ridiculous" Queen of Hearts.

"I'm always the heroine or the best friend," says Marini. "She gets to be so rude, and no one gets to say anything back because she'll have them executed."

"Alice says, 'How can I get home again?' and [the Queen] says, 'I don't like your face.'"

She nearly didn't get to play the villain, though — Douma originally cast Marini as Alice and Ewing as the Queen of Hearts.

"They can both pull those parts off," says Douma.

But something didn't seem quite right, so Douma took each aside and asked what she would prefer. Both wanted the other girl's role.

"It's the first time I've ever really second guessed a casting call," says Douma. "I asked what they had the passion to do and let them do it."

Grade 12 student Des Geddes — who, like her co-stars, has competed in drama at the provincial level — didn't start acting in school productions until 2013's *Anne Frank and Me*, but her passion began at an early age.

"All through elementary school, we would do readers' theatre, and I really liked it."

She's taking on the role of the Mad Hatter, giving her a chance to play a role unlike any other.

"The Mad Hatter is just so extra," says Geddes, who will study theatre at university after graduating from PCSS. "I get to be completely



Emily McIntosh, Siobhan Davies and Kaleigh Mickelson as the gardeners, Anjali Ewing as Alice, Keyelle Hula as the Cheshire Cat and Aurora Moore as the Mock Turtle.

exuberant, and it doesn't get to be too much."

"You can pull back, but we don't want to pull back," adds Douma. "That's what we're striving for — unique characters and over-the-top characterization. That's the beauty of the play — so many fantastical characters."

Brimming with characters so unreal, the play was excellent for this group of students; with just a few boys in the cast (playing parts including the King of Hearts and the frog footman), girls had to take on some unexpected roles, including those of Tweedledee and Tweedledum.

The unique performances are just one facet of the production, which has sets that perfectly bring to life the mysterious and zany world Alice falls into. Designed by Douma and Jason Smith, they include a giant mushroom that will light up, flowers with centres made of cushions and projected backdrops.

Although Douma is the high school drama teacher, the play is completely extracurricular for both her and the students, all of them volunteering their time to rehearse, create costumes and construct sets.

"Working with the kids inspires me, and hopefully does the same for them."

It's a significant and time-consuming undertaking, which is why Douma only produces a play every second year; talent shows and theatre trips are the big events for the years in between.

"The reward is seeing the kids shine on stage," she says.

Douma took piano lessons from an early age, but left that behind when she discovered acting in Grade 7, performing in *The Pirates of Penzance*, directed by now-retired Adam Robertson Elementary School teacher Frank Goodsir.

"I was nervous, but it was also exhilarating," she says.

She went on to perform in high school musicals, including *The Pajama Game*, *Bye Bye Birdie* and *Little Shop of Horrors*, before heading to university to become a drama teacher. Now, she not only gets to pass on her theatre training, but also the tools to develop life skills and camaraderie.

"Being part of a collaborative production like *Alice in Wonderland* helps the kids learn and grow," says Douma. "It helps them build confidence and build relationships, as well. Being part of a cast is like being part of a family. The cast forms a special bond together, and makes memories that will last a lifetime."

And it doesn't hurt that everyone has a lot of fun doing it.

"I kind of feel like a kid again getting to do this stuff," says Douma. ■

Tickets for *Alice in Wonderland* are available at Creative Fix, Black Bear Books and the Prince Charles Secondary School office, as well as from cast members.



From the Mayor's Desk

BY RON TOYOTA
Mayor - Town of Creston

New Direction for Creston Visitor Centre

The location of the Creston Visitor Centre is not changing, but we're upping our game when it comes to telling our story to visitors from the region, the province and beyond. Regional District of Central Kootenay electoral areas B and C and the Town of Creston have partnered to make our visitor centre an even more welcoming destination for those visitors seeking information on the immense selection of tourism and recreational activities that our valley has to offer.

We're proud to be launching the new and improved centre, located in the Armitage Centre, just in time for the 2017 tourism season. Facility renovations are underway and things are looking great — we look forward to the unveiling in April. While some things are changing, some things are also staying the same. We're thrilled to announce that Amy Maddess will be staying on in her new position as visitor centre co-ordinator. Building on her nine years of experience with the visitor centre, we know that we'll be hitting it out of the park when it

comes to providing quality customer service that makes people want to visit again.

We also want to spread our wings a little and get the community more involved in promoting our great valley. Are you interested in becoming a "Creston Valley ambassador"? In this exciting volunteer role you'll be able to promote the valley's best kept secrets and assets to our travelling neighbours, from near and afar! I'm excited to say that I will be personally signing up to volunteer approximately five hours a week during the tourist months, greeting and visiting with visitors at our visitor centre. Think about joining me!

During the months of May through September, my five hours a week will equate to approximately 100 hours of volunteer effort. A little time can make a great impact.

It should be noted that the centre will still be hiring summer students and the ambassadors' role will be to assist them in promoting the many destinations, amenities and

experiences that our valley has to offer. Call me if you are interested in signing up and volunteering to promote our community.

Another significant step forward is our undertaking to co-ordinate and enhance our online presence. Our community initiative contractor, Jesse Willicome, is working to align the different websites currently promoting our valley. The goal is to create a common and unified message for the many visitors that rely on web-based searches for their travel plans.

One last thought I'd like to leave you with is the idea of dealing with the exchange of U.S dollars in a way that says our community is open for business. With our proximity to the U.S., our neighbours to the south represent an important market. Businesses could take U.S. dollars at the posted exchange rate or even better. While there is a small loss (a few cents on the dollar) for selling these funds to the bank, the potential for increased tourism sales has the potential to outweigh this exchange. Think about ways you could contribute to our valley being the place that tourists want to come, visit and shop. ■

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

LOTS TO DO FOR SPRING BREAK

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March 19, 26 & April 2, 3:30-5:00pm
March 20, 22 & 24, 1:30-3:00pm
March 27, 29 & 31, 12-1:45pm

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Message from the Chief

BY JASON LOUIE
Chief - Lower Kootenay Band

Ktunaxa Legend Offers Perspective on Crisis

K*t'suk kyukyit* (greetings). Both Canada and the United States have been in the midst of dealing with a refugee/immigration crisis. Some policies of the Trump administration appear to be heavy-handed. Canada has its own policies, which are also up for debate. I cannot offer any solutions but some perspectives through a Ktunaxa legend.

The Coyote is known as the trickster in Ktunaxa lore. Although he is the trickster, he has also been our teacher for centuries.

One sunny day, Coyote spotted Grizzly Bear, who was minding his own business. Grizzly was sitting in an open field eating some berries. Coyote decided that he was going to provoke Grizzly.

Taking cover behind some rolling hills, he yelled, "Hey, small eyes! You can't see very far can you?"

Grizzly heard the voice but paid no attention to it. Coyote began to chuckle and peeked his head over the rolling hills, and yelled again, "Hey, small eyes! You can't see very far can you?"

Grizzly was now becoming angry. Coyote went to yell the same statement but standing in front of him was the huge figure of Grizzly Bear. Grizzly Bear smacked Coyote, and he ran away crying and yelping.

The moral of the story is Grizzly could not see well. He had other characteristics that made him who he was. He used his other senses to locate Coyote, most likely his sense of smell

and his ears to hear where Coyote was. To bring this story into today's world, our country is comprised of all cultures, all ethnic groups that make our country diverse. As I mentioned at the introduction of this column, I am not offering solutions. What I wish to underscore is finding a way to embrace our differences.

The Canada that I wish to be a part of is a country of respect, dignity and honour.

I have heard this legend many times. One question that I've always had is, how many times did Coyote tease Grizzly before? Did he ever learn a lesson from the first time? Were things different in the future with Coyote and

Grizzly? Although this is a short legend, there are many lessons in this story. How can we put this legend into today's confusing and difficult world?

I recall one of my first friendships was with a Chinese-Canadian. He invited me to his home where we ate a traditional meal. The older people in his family began to laugh as I had never used chopsticks. I did not feel embarrassed but welcomed. They gave me a fork and I saw many similarities with First Nations culture. Before we ate there was a prayer. The older people in the family were held in high regard. I made sure to eat everything on my plate, as I believe that is a universal sign of respect.

Perhaps we may not be as different as we may think. We all love, we all bleed the same colour, we are all of the human race. Hatred is taught but does not have to be of our culture. The Canada that I wish to be a part of is a country of respect, dignity and honour. There are many coyotes that still exist in this world. Although they are tricksters, learn from their mistakes. See the lessons in their faults.

With that, I thank you for reading and wish you all well.

Texas. ■

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

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BY TAMMY
BRADFORD

Manager - Creston
& District Museum
& Archives

A Look Back at Snowfall Records

Holy crazy snowfall! I'm writing this on Feb. 10 — we've been snowed in for a week, and it's still coming down! Here at the Creston Museum, we've been getting lots of questions: When is the last time this happened? Is this the heaviest snowfall Creston has ever had? Can we help predict what might happen when all of this melts? Will snowfall be the topic of my next *I Love Creston* article? I'm happy to oblige on that last one — I would much rather write about it than shovel it.

Fortunately, historic weather records are easy to find. We have several boxes of original records in the archives, compiled by local weather observer Jean Henderson and her father, Dr. George Henderson. Digitized versions are available on the Environment Canada website. Just follow the "Historical Weather" links at weather.gc.ca; it's all there, from 1912 up to yesterday.

According to that website, we got 99.3 mm of precipitation between Feb. 1 and 10. Not all of that was snow; there was a fair bit of rain and ice on the 10th. So, in the absence of more detailed official stats, let's assume that half of the 34.4 mm that fell on Feb. 10 was snow. Convert precipitation to snow using the standard

formula (one mm of rain equals one cm of snow), add it to the 64.9 mm of almost-entirely-snow that fell between the first and the ninth, and we get approximately 82 cm of snow — more than two and a half feet.

That makes this, unofficially, the snowiest February on record, beating out February 1937 by four centimetres. But if we don't restrict ourselves to February, two-and-a-half-foot monthly snowfalls are not all that unusual. I found 24 occurrences, as recently as December 2012 (75 cm), and January 2008 (103.2 cm). And neither of those is the heaviest single-month snowfall Creston has ever had, not by a long shot: in November 1996, 161.4 cm (over five feet!) landed in the valley.

That's monthly snowfall, though, and we complain on a daily basis. But our recent daily snowfalls (about 25 cm at most) don't stack up very well against historic records. Even though it seemed like a lot while we were shovelling it, there have been much more impressive snow days in local history:

Nov. 18, 1893: Although we don't have detailed statistics for it, this one was still being talked about years later: "Old-time settlers of Creston Valley have comments and statistics of blizzards in the past, and it is reported that on November 18, 1893, the valley was hit by a blizzard of furious proportions. Navigation on the Kootenay River came to a standstill as

the river froze. Mrs. Dow reported that her husband was on the steamboat and was let off on the bank of the Goat River, and lost his way on the flats en route home."

Nov. 18, 1946: The snowiest day ever, with 45.7 cm. According to the newspapers, "What started as a snowfall early Sunday morning ended in a blizzard which hit with fury around 3 p.m. Monday afternoon, forcing vehicular traffic to stop movement and schools let out early in order that students could reach home safely. The westbound CPR train, which should arrive around 9:30 a.m., pulled into Creston around suppertime. Due to the weight of snow, many buildings were groaning, and the planing mill roof of the Creston Builders Supply caved in. Cars were parked any and everywhere, victims of heavy snow drifts and icy roads. Drifts on the main street of Creston measured as high as five feet, and many had to dig passageways from their homes to the main street."

Nov. 17, 1996: Not only was this the second-snowiest day ever (44 cm), in the snowiest month ever, it was the start of the snowiest winter ever. A whopping 383.7 cm fell on the valley that year. That's more than 12 feet of the stuff! And it was over a metre (three feet) more than the nearest runner-up, 1915-1916, with 281.9 cm.

Well, if we can't complain about the amount of snow that's falling, can we at least complain about what's on the ground? There has been at least 20 cm on the ground since Christmas, and we now have 60 cm — not counting the mountains that are piling up from ploughing and shovelling.

But it's not the first time that has happened, either.

Street-corner conversations and Facebook have been full of comments from longtimers in the valley about a bad winter back when they were teenagers.



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History

I'm guessing it was either 1964-1965 (227.9 cm total snowfall) or 1968-1969 (206.8 cm), two of eight times in the past century that annual snowfall topped 200 cm. 1964-1965 got more than half its snow in December alone. In 1968-1969, the heaviest single day of snow saw less than 10 cm, but it snowed almost every day from the beginning of December to the end of February, and accumulation maxed out at 58 cm on Feb. 9.

But the honour of deepest snow on record goes to (surprise, surprise) the snowiest year ever: a layer 82 cm deep blanketed the valley on Dec. 30, 1996.

Can we predict what might happen this spring based on historic snowfall? Well, I can't tell you whether your basement will flood, but as far as flooding on the flats, overflowing creeks and rivers, and soggy low areas around the valley, I can tell you there is no simple correlation between high snowfall and spring flooding.

There were high floods on the flats in the spring of 1894 and 1916, but that was before there were extensive dikes along the rivers and the long, cold, wet springs had as much to do with it as the previous winter's snowfall. 1957 was a close-call year for flooding on the flats (and Goat River Bottom did flood); snowfall the winter before exceeded 200 cm. And there was flooding everywhere following that massive snowfall in 1996-1997.

But there was none in 1947 or 1965, when the heavy early snowfall was followed by a relatively easy winter. In 1969, with the exception of Goat River Bottom (which floods quite regularly), there were no problems. The two worst flood years in the valley's history (1938 and 1948) and two other close-call years (1961 and 1962) followed winter snowfalls that were decidedly below average. 2012, the most recent close-call year, saw 189.8 cm of snow the previous winter — well above average,



Creston Museum

Nov. 18, 1946, was Creston's snowiest day ever, with 45.7 cm falling, some of it in a blizzard, resulting in drifts of about five feet along Canyon Street.



but, probably just as importantly, accompanied by a lot of rain throughout the spring.

A few other fun facts I came across while digging through weather records:

- the least-snowy winter ever was 1943-1944, with a mere 35.9 cm (14 inches) of snow;

- the longest winter ever was that of 1961, with 146 days between the first

snowfall (Nov. 9) and the last (May 4) — undoubtedly a factor in the near-flood on the flats that spring; and,

- speaking of May, that month has seen snow three times (1921, 1942 and 1961), but the snowiest was 1961: 8.1 cm (3.24 inches). ■

Contact the Creston Museum at 250-428-9262 or crestonmuseum@telus.net, or visit www.crestonmuseum.ca.



Brian Lawrence
Suzanne Chubb plays Emily Brent in *And Then There Were None*.

Multiple Murders in Agatha Christie Mystery Will Keep Audience Guessing

FOOTLIGHTERS THEATRE SOCIETY

Shortly after 10 guilty strangers are brought to Soldier Island, they are accused of their crimes — and one by one, they begin to die, the manner of their deaths reflecting a poem hanging above the fireplace. The murderer has to be one of them, but which?

With all the hallmark twists and turns of author Agatha Christie, Footlighters Theatre Society brings to life the mystery *And Then There Were None* at Prince Charles Theatre March 23-25.

Directed by Gary Atha, it marks a return to Christie for Footlighters, which produced *Murder at the Vicarage* in 1997 and *The Mousetrap* in 2002. It's a significant departure from the previous play Atha directed, the 2015 comedy *Nana's Naughty Knickers*, whose characters inhabited a set that was very much its own character.

"That set was intricate and that was challenging," says Atha. "With this, the set is simpler but the characters are more intricate."

Where *Nana's Naughty Knickers*, Atha's directorial debut, had a plot driven by comedy and farce, *And Then There Were None's* action is motivated by deception and secrets — and murder, a few of which craftily happen in full view of the audience.

"The challenge with this one is that it is wordy," says Atha. "You don't want a stagnant stage. The challenge is to get movement so no one's in a spot too long, and also so nobody is suspected."

The play based on Agatha Christie's 1939 novel, the seventh best-selling book of all time, was originally performed in 1943 in the U.K. and on Broadway in 1944. Its popularity has never waned, with numerous adaptations for film, TV and radio, and even a 2011 Bollywood thriller.

While living in the Lower Mainland, Atha performed in the play in 2009, and he's given this production a couple of tweaks to fit his own vision, setting it just off Vancouver Island in the present day. But because not enough appropriately aged men auditioned for the cast — which

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and
THEN
there were
NONE
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"And Then There Were None" is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

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Brian Lawrence

Chris Boehmer as Philip Lombard and Kate Webb as Vera Claythorne rehearsing a scene from *And Then There Were None*.

includes Rudy Sager, Penny Reine, Atha, Kate Webb, Chris Boehmer, Logan Thompson, Brian Lawrence, Kevin Boehmer, Suzanne Chubb, Ann Deatherage and Jennifer Dewald — a couple of roles are played by women.

“It’s very interesting to have changed the characters and see how it fits now with what’s being said onstage,” says Atha.

But it’s still the same well-loved story audiences around the world have come to love, and which Creston audiences enjoyed when the Creston Valley Drama Club produced it in 1980. Atha is sure local audiences will still find it enjoyable.

“The audience will enjoy it because it keeps you guessing all the way through,” says Atha. “They’re going to see very interesting interactions between people as it progresses. Right up to the end, they will not know who did it.” ■

And Then There Were None is the final production in Footlighters Theatre Society’s 22nd season. The 23rd will include the locally written *Nasookin* (June 22-24) and *Hansel and Gretel* (Nov. 30-Dec. 2), and the musical *Oklahoma* (March 22-24, 2018).

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Submitted

The Blossom Valley Singers in their 2016 spring concert.

Choir Celebrating Canada's 150th

BLOSSOM VALLEY SINGERS

Spring is coming, and so is the Blossom Valley Singers' annual two-day spring concert and tea. This year, the singers celebrate Canada's 150th birthday with *Canada, Eh?* at the Creston and District Community Complex on March 25 and 26.

The afternoon concerts will feature songs by Canadian singers and songwriters from across the country, performed by Creston's community choir.

The concerts will feature choral arrangements of well-known favourites such as Ian Tyson's "Four Strong Winds", Leon Dubinsky's "We Rise Again", Allister MacGillivray's

"Song for the Mira" and the popular "Up Where We Belong" co-written by Buffy Saint Marie. Regional "Canadiana" tunes such as "The Black Fly Song", "Flunky Jim", "The Kettle Valley Railroad" and "Watching the Apples Grow" will have you chuckling or tapping your toes (or both).

Guest performers include a youth choir, Kelly Mehrer, Brian Daybell, Megan Bibby on her fiddle and (the singers are hoping) a special appearance by local legend Mark Koenig.

These songs all help us celebrate being Canadian. Now more than ever,

we can feel fortunate that we live in this country and especially that we are fortunate to live in this beautiful valley. Come out and help celebrate. A portion of the proceeds from the concerts goes toward a bursary for a Creston Valley student pursuing post-secondary education in the performing arts.

The ticket price includes goodies and beverages served by beautifully aproned male choir members during the intermission. Can't beat that! ■

Tickets to *Canada, Eh?* are available at Black Bear Books or from choir members. The concerts run at 2:30 p.m. March 25 and 26 in the Creston Room at the Creston and District Community Complex.



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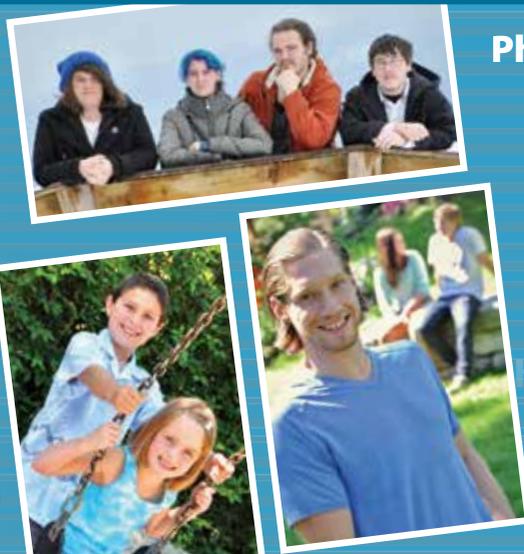
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Playoffs Prepping Thunder Cats for Cyclone Taylor Cup

CRESTON VALLEY THUNDER CATS

The Creston Valley Thunder Cats have enjoyed one of their most successful regular seasons in franchise history, but the standings reset to zero as the 2017 Kootenay International Junior Hockey League playoffs began in late February and the Thunder Cats chase their first-ever league championship before hosting the Cyclone Taylor Cup in April.

Creston's first-round opponent — the Columbia Valley Rockies — was determined earlier in February when the Thunder Cats clinched top spot in the Eddie Mountain Division for the first time in three seasons. The Rockies struggled out of the gates early this season but their young team has progressed nicely since mid-December, having posted a record of 8-6-0-1 since the Christmas break. That run of success included a 6-4 win over the Thunder Cats at the John Bucyk Arena on Jan. 13.

"The Rockies have a lot of skill up front and an effective power play, so they can definitely create chances and score some goals," says Thunder Cats head coach Jeff Dubois. "They've also picked up a couple of defencemen who have lots of Junior A experience, so you can see why they've been a team that has continued to improve as the season goes along."

The Rockies' lineup was recently boosted by a pair of impact 20-year olds: forward Braydon Barker, who returned from the Alberta Junior Hockey League's Olds Grizzlys, and blueliner Ryan St. Jean, who rejoined the team after establishing himself as one of the division's top defencemen over the past two seasons.

If Creston progresses past the first round, they'll meet the winner of what is sure to be a heated rivalry series between the Fernie Ghostriders and Kimberley Dynamiters. The Thunder Cats swept Fernie in their eight-game season series, but the Ghostriders are known as a gritty team that turns things up in the postseason. The Dynamiters, meanwhile, have one of the KIJHL's fastest and most skilled groups of forwards, and took three of eight regular season match-ups against the Thunder Cats.

"Both Fernie and Kimberley offer unique challenges in a playoff series," says Dubois. "Kimberley comes at you with a lot of speed off the rush and four forward lines that can all put the puck in the net. Fernie does a real good job getting pucks deep and pressuring with their forecheck. It's different styles but both are very good teams."



Jeff Banman/crestonphotography.com

Creston goalie Patrick Ostermann in the Feb. 8 game against the Beaver Valley Nitehawks.

While Creston's sights are set on their first-round opponent, it's worth noting that things won't likely get easier as the playoffs move along. The league's top two regular-season teams — the Beaver Valley Nitehawks and Osoyoos Coyotes — would await as potential third- and fourth-round matchups. The Nitehawks approached the playoffs with just four losses over the span of 47 games, while the Coyotes are a perennial contender with loads of skill at all positions.

But while the road may be rocky, the Thunder Cats are determined to battle their way to a KIJHL championship and earn their spot as Cyclone Taylor Cup hosts.

"That was the goal that we set at the beginning of the season," says Dubois. "We didn't want to just walk in through the back door as hosts for provincials. ... We want to go on a long playoff run and earn that championship." ■



Ethan Greentree photos

People of Peace in Valley of Abundance

BY TOM GREENTREE

On the chilly Tuesday evening of Feb. 7, following the most epic snow day the Kootenays has experienced in many years, over 50 Creston Valley residents participated in a candlelight vigil of solidarity in the Canyon Street Walkthrough.



Though hosted by the Erickson Covenant Church, this vigil — organized by Shanelle Ainscow, Leah Gailius and myself in the wake of the Quebec mosque shooting and ongoing refugee crisis — was not a Christian prayer service. Rather, we gathered as people from a mix of faiths or no faith at all, holding a variety of political perspectives, with an array of ideas and passions, and yet all unified in this one thing: As the Creston Valley, we will be a welcoming community of peace, open-hearted and hospitable, shunning violence and seeking understanding.

After opening words from Shanelle and Leah, Chief Jason Louie of the Lower Kootenay Band shared an ancient local story celebrating diversity as a strength; he also sang for us a victory song of his people. Linda Price, on behalf of the Creston Refugee Committee, shared

about the good work of hospitality going on here in our valley, making a home for refugees among us (we have welcomed multiple families over the years).

And then I had the honour of sharing words from a Muslim friend of mine in the wake of the Quebec shooting and hosting two times of silent prayer and reflection (one for the Muslim community, another for the refugees of the world). After closing with a Christian prayer, I sang an original song, written specifically for this valley and this vigil (words opposite page; hear the song at tomgreentree.com).

I'm grateful to live in a valley of such abundance, with people willing to share their hearts and their lives. May we continue to be people of peace in a world so desperate for wholeness, healing and love. ■

Tom Greentree is the pastor of the Erickson Covenant Church.



People of Peace



LYRICS BY TOM GREENTREE

In a climate of fear and mistrust
Who will we be?
In a world that is so far from just
who will we be?
When the nations are boiling, no boundaries contain
and the ones who are hated, neglected and shamed
Who will we, who will we be?

Chorus:

**We will be people of peace, people of peace
Welcoming, offering hope and a place you can stand
We will be people of peace, people of peace,
Holding our hearts open, doing whatever we can**

In a Valley that's known for abundance
Who will we be?
At a time when we're tempted to silence
Who will we be?
When it's easy to turn off the cries that we hear,
distracted by comfort and blinded by fear
Who will we, who will we be? ■



TAPS Members Staying Engaged Through Book Club

Maureen Cameron

The Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors book club: (from left) Helen Sheldrake, Nellie Daniels, Linette Collins, club leader Pat Tomasic, Helen McIntyre, Ellen Sterling and Carol Eggert.

BY MAUREEN CAMERON

Community Liaison,
Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors

Our recipe for enjoyment: Take a group of avid readers who like sharing stories, discussing them and listening to each other, arrange transportation to and from a welcoming environment at the library, add in a librarian who loves meeting with the group, serve tea and cookies, and you have a successful Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors book club. Pat Tomasic, who has been leading the club for the past few years, points to the steady attendance numbers as a pretty good indication of this club's value.

Originally housed at the previous TAPS location at the Nilsson Centre, and started by former chief librarian Ann Day, the weekly club now meets at the Creston Valley Public Library meeting room. This has been a popular program since its inception, with volunteers and TAPS and library staff participating.

"Meeting at the library offers several advantages, not the least of which is the proximity of books, movies and books on tape to choose from, and it's a short hop to the shelves," says Pat.

It's an engaging session every week. Each person chooses a book. They take turns explaining the story and how it affected them. From there, discussions or questions arise. If they are ready to do so and there's time, everyone takes turns.

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Seniors

“I like being inspired to read new authors.”

One of the longtime participants, Helen McMichael, is heralded by the group as adding a dimension to their experience through sharing her own writings.

“Some of her stories are even better than the books we read,” says a member.

In the comfortable library meeting room surrounded by local art, I recently joined the gathering. I was struck by the informality and congeniality, and the diversity of interests, depth of questions and space for each person to contribute. They asked probing questions about the topic or writing style or perhaps to discover the experience of the person reporting on a reading. Under Pat’s gentle facilitation, she may introduce aspects of style to expand the discussions, such as identifying whether the story is plot driven or character driven.

When I asked the group individually what the weekly club meant to them and why they participated, they identified the social aspect and more specifically commented, “It’s because of these ladies, that’s why I keep coming,” “The company — sometimes I don’t have a book to report on, but I love coming here for the social interaction,” and, “I feel comfortable and happy getting to know each other, and we’re compatible.”

“I enjoy presenting authors that I like but that others may not have heard of.”

In addition to the community and social aspect, participants reported, “I like being inspired to read new authors,” “I love books and talking about them,” “I enjoy presenting authors that I like but that others may not have heard of,” “I like being exposed to topics I may not have thought to read about,” and, “I love listening to the reports and discussions.” They talked about it being about more than just books as they also bring articles, and review audio books and movies in the discussions. Other benefits mentioned were that they like having their curiosity stimulated, being open to each

other and being able to talk about their life experiences that relate to the readings.

We are so fortunate to have the Creston Valley Public Library with all its services and community driven leadership. On behalf of Valley Community Services and the Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors, we want to thank the library board, chief librarian Aaron Francis, the staff and Pat Tomasic for helping us provide this program for our seniors. ■

The Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors is operated by Valley Community Services. For more information, call 250-428-5547 or 250-428-5585, or visit www.valley.services.

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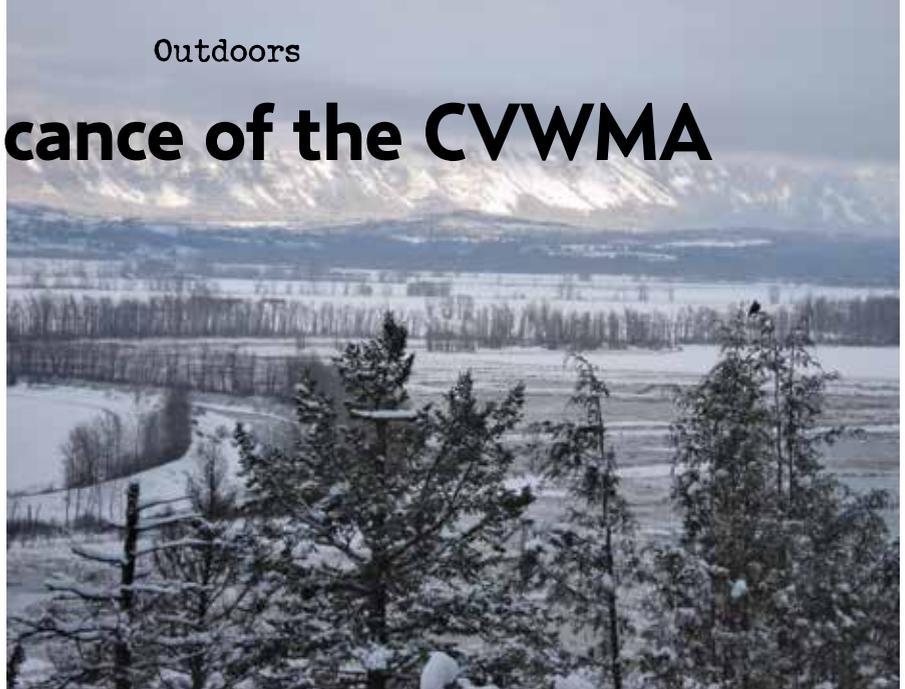
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Global Significance of the CVWMA



BY LAURA BRANDON
Acting Education
and Communications
Co-ordinator
Creston Valley Wildlife
Management Area



The recent wintry weather certainly has not hindered visitors to the wetland. I love seeing so many people soaking up the winter sun in Corn Creek Marsh and Leach Lake (not to mention all of the dedicated snowshoers and cross-country skiers who took advantage of February's massive snowfall). Most of us are familiar with the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area (CVWMA) as a place for a casual family outing or a destination to take our visiting friends and

relatives during the summer. But aside from recreation, wetlands provide us with so many more benefits and services that extend far beyond the Creston Valley.

On Feb. 2, we joined countless naturalists, scientists and fellow outdoor enthusiasts from all over the world in recognizing World Wetlands Day. This event was created to commemorate and celebrate the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, an intergovernmental treaty that was adopted in Ramsar, Iran, on Feb. 2, 1971. Today, the Ramsar convention remains the only global environmental treaty in the world that deals with a particular ecosystem, which provides the framework for national action and international co-operation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. That is very cool.

The CVWMA became a designated Ramsar site in 1994 and is considered a "wetland of international importance" by the convention. Of the 37 designated sites in Canada, we are one of only two recognized Ramsar wetlands in British Columbia. That is extremely cool!

This designation is so meaningful and incredible to me because it thrusts the Creston Valley into the same category as many Scottish peatlands, Australian lagoons, Malaysian mangroves, Ecuadorian deltas and even Cameroonian floodplains. Even though wetlands are found in so many different shapes, sizes and varying environments all over the world, their overall functions and contributions to the landscape are strikingly similar. I love looking out at the Creston Valley through my office window and being able to connect our wetland to a significant environmental concept and massive global initiative. And that is extremely super duper cool!

For more information on the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, you can visit its website at www.ramsar.org. As a happy reminder, here are a few quick facts (stats provided by the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Ramsar convention) on all of the amazing things that wetlands do for us all over the world:

- In terms of biological productivity and diversity, wetlands are some of the most productive ecosystems in the world; only six cent of the world is



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Marc-André Beaucher (above)/Laura Brandon (opposite)

covered in wetlands, but more than 100,000 freshwater species alone call these places home — that’s on par with tropical rainforests!

- Wetland plants, sediments and marine life play a critical role in absorbing pollutants, such as heavy metals and toxins from pesticides, industry and mining, on the landscape.
- Wetlands reduce the impacts of

extreme weather events by acting as natural sponges to absorb excess precipitation and reduce flooding in streams and rivers.

- Wetlands play a vital role in climate change mitigation by storing carbon; peatlands alone cover approximately three per cent of the world’s land area, but hold up to 30 per cent of the world’s carbon on land

— that’s twice the amount stored by all of Earth’s forests!

- Humans have traditionally viewed wetlands as areas to be drained, filled in or repurposed for often short-term economic gains; since 1900, 64 per cent of the world’s wetlands have been lost. ■

Questions? Feel free to call 250-402-6900 or email askus@crestonwildlife.ca.



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Wetlands Restored to Help Endangered Frogs

FISH AND WILDLIFE COMPENSATION PROGRAM

Approximately 3.4 hectares of wetland were restored in November and December 2016 in the Creston Valley through a joint initiative between the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP), the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, and the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area (CVWMA). The goal of the project is primarily to help the federally-listed endangered northern leopard frog.



Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program

Equipment at work restoring wetlands at the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area.

The wetland area is located next to Old Goat Channel, south of Duck Lake, which has been previously diked and modified over the years. There are now six new functioning wetlands ranging in size from about 3,500-7,500 square metres, built in fields dominated by reed canary grass.

They were designed by wetland specialist Tom Biebighauser specifically to provide breeding habitat for northern leopard frogs, and will be filled naturally by precipitation and runoff. They are designed to dry up in the fall in order not to support exotic fish or the invasive American bullfrog, which has already crossed the border from Idaho, but not yet reached the CVWMA.

The key feature to support northern leopard frogs is the provision of varying water depths. Large areas of shallow water, averaging 30 centimetres in depth, were shaped for egg laying. Deeper areas of water were made in the centre of each wetland, ranging from 1.3-1.8 metres deep, critical for larvae development, especially in dry years.

“It will be exciting to see what happens this spring,” says CVWMA head of operations Marc-André Beaucher. “We’re keeping our fingers crossed that some of the frogs will be using the new wetlands for breeding.”

With four of the six new wetlands constructed closer to Old Goat Channel

and to the east of the road that runs along the dike that bisects the area, it is also anticipated that the work will help to reduce road mortality for the frogs.

Although the target species is the northern leopard frog, the wetlands will contain a wide diversity of invertebrates, and provide outstanding migratory and breeding habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds. Even as the last were being completed in mid-December, two killdeers visited for several days.

Other features support burrowing habitat and increase plant diversity, and logs have been placed to provide basking sites for western painted turtles and loafing areas for waterfowl. The wetlands were built to require little, if any, maintenance, and do not have any water control infrastructure.

“Wetland restoration and conservation activities are one of our board’s project priorities for this year,” says FWCP Columbia region manager Crystal Klym. “Added to this, the project supports recovery actions for the northern leopard frog, one of our priority species of interest, and we anticipate great results from this work in the years ahead.” ■

The Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program is a partnership between BC Hydro, the Province of BC, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, First Nations and public stakeholders to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife impacted by BC Hydro dams. Visit fwcp.ca for more information.

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A dining room before (left) and after staging, which can speed up home sales, as well as increase closing prices.

Homes Sales Improve With Staging

BY WENDY REEVES SEIFERT
Over the Valley

Home staging is the act of preparing a private residence for sale. The goal of staging is to make a home appealing to the highest number of potential buyers, thereby selling a property more swiftly and for more money. Staging techniques focus on improving a property's appeal by transforming it into a welcoming, attractive product that anyone might want.

Staging a home for resale is, in many ways, the opposite of interior decorating. With staging we want to depersonalize the home, while with interior decorating we use the client's personal items, hobbies and interests to make an interesting and comfortable decor. It is very difficult for a

homeowner to see past their possessions to the heart and bones of the home.

This is the stager's job — to simplify the home so that the prospective purchaser can visualize their possessions there. By staging your home you can expect it to sell two to three times faster and for at least seven to 15 per cent more money than an unstaged home (taken from a recent study by Coldwell Banker).

An empty home is more difficult to sell as it is hard for people to judge sizes without some furniture to show them how theirs will fit. A cluttered space will look much smaller than it actually is. It is important to simplify the home, as people will focus on personal items such as photos and trophies, and

therefore losing concentration on the home itself. We don't want anything to distract the prospective purchaser.

A stager will go through a home with a checklist of over 30 items. Hard to believe, but true! Some of these items are so simple, such as improving the lighting by upping the wattage on your light bulbs to give a brighter and warmer appearance.

No longer are realtors emphasizing location, location, location, but rather staging, staging, staging!

With the spring real estate market on top of us, get a jump on the competition by staging your home. You have only one chance to make a first impression! ■

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Home & Garden

Build A Peace Garden for Social Activism

Look for peace gardens anywhere in the world and you will find a diverse variety — at country borders, war memorials and community projects. But did you know you could plan a peace garden or a labyrinth in your own garden?

These gardens are spiritual places, a place to go for quiet moments and contemplation. The design of peace gardens and labyrinths comes from a deep need for peace. It became an integral part of the peace movement after the Second World War, growing from the belief that humans should not wage war with each other or engage in violent ethnic conflict. The efforts of peace activists have been a powerful vehicle for change in the world.

“Peace does not just mean putting an end to violence or war, but to all other factors that threaten peace, such as discrimination, inequality and poverty,” explains Aung San Suu Kyi, a Burmese politician, activist and Amnesty International ambassador of conscience.

Peace activists can work on many human rights issues. And each has the capacity to define peace activism for themselves and build their own true dynamic of personal strength for others to follow. It can start with a garden and it can change the world.

Find more information at www.amnesty.ca/get-involved.

—News Canada



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Successful Renos Start With Budget

Spring is the time for house sales and renovation projects. Besides deciding what neighbourhood is best for your family or what tile pattern matches the kitchen, there are a lots of costs to consider and often many unexpected expenses.

Creating and sticking to a budget is key to keeping your finances on the right track. A budget will show you where your money is going and whether you have enough to cover your expenses. It will also help you allocate funds for unexpected expenses.

The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada has a tool to help. Its budget calculator is a free tool designed to give you a snapshot of where your money is going based on how much you spend in a selected time period.

“A budget is the best way to deal with the number one stressor: money,” says Jane Rooney, Canada’s financial literacy leader. “A budget is like a GPS and shows you the best way to get to where you are going.”

A budget is key, no matter how you spend your money. But if you don’t have a budget yet, you’re not alone. Only 46 per cent of Canadians have a budget. Of those who do have

one, 93 per cent stay within it most of the time and are in control of their finances.

Find more tips and information online at itpaystoknow.gc.ca.

—News Canada

“A budget is like a GPS and shows you the best way to get to where you are going.”

FINANCE

Stress-Free Tax Tips

Filing your taxes can be a busy and time-consuming experience, but a little planning and these top three tips will go a long way toward ensuring a much smoother process.

1. Get organized. Mark your calendar for a quiet time of day when your brain is usually in peak form to get to work. If you're not a morning person, schedule filing time for the evening. Collect all your receipts, slips, proof of

income and other paperwork you may need ahead of time. Research your eligibility for a variety of tax credits, for everything from child care to energy efficient home renovations.

2. Ask for help. Doing your taxes can be hard, so don't be afraid to seek assistance. Ask a trusted relative or friend, hire a tax expert, contact the Canada Revenue Agency, or explore tax clinics in your neighbourhood.

3. Sign up for direct deposit. Enroll for direct deposit now to ensure that you get your payments faster when you file. Get your income tax refund, GST/HST credit and other tax-related payments deposited straight into your bank account by signing up for direct deposit. It's the fastest, safest and greenest way to get your payments. Sign up by visiting your financial institution or go to directdeposit.gc.ca for more information. ■

—News Canada

50 Years of Protection

The truth is, bank failures happen in Canada. But the reason you may not have heard about them is because the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation has been around for 50 years protecting your deposits. Since it was established, no one has lost a single dollar under its protection. Learn some key milestones of one of the most important organizations for Canadian depositors below.

1967: CDIC is created to protect deposits up to \$20,000.

1983: CDIC protects depositors up to \$60,000.

1983: Number of CDIC member institutions peaks at 188, and drops to 154 by the end of the 1980s.

1997: CDIC launches its website.

2005: CDIC protects depositors up to \$100,000.

2017: CDIC marks its 50th

year with an unprecedented number of bank resolution tools, including bail-in.

For more information on the CDIC, visit cdic.ca. ■

—News Canada



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Springtime Rejuvenation with Herbs

TILIA BOTANICALS

While March traditionally heralds the arrival of spring, at least on the calendar, it can be anything but spring-like in reality. Rain, mud and cool temperatures are more the norm in March as we transition from winter to spring, and unfortunately it can often be a time when people suffer with a range of health issues that peak after a long winter. This year, I think we can all agree that winter has taken its toll on our bodies. Coming out of winter, especially after a long and tiresome season, many of us can take a long time to recover and rejuvenate ourselves.

Ongoing gray skies can lead to an increase in symptoms of depression, such as fatigue, lack of motivation, feelings of sadness and despair, and either insomnia or desire to sleep excessively. We think of these symptoms in the winter months but they can be equally prevalent at this time of year.

We also see the arrival of those notorious spring colds that seem to linger on, not to mention the colds we might not have shaken from the winter. To add to that issue, allergy symptoms may arise, due to leaf mould with the melting snow, and the results can be miserable sneezing, coughing and sore throats.

And finally, of course there are the aching muscles and joints from the damp weather and overexertion

shoveling all that snow we had in February! Yes, March may be the start of spring but it certainly doesn't always make us feel spring-like by any means.

Now is an important time to support the body with a diet of whole foods, fruits and vegetables.

So how do we make the transition from winter to spring as easy as possible health-wise? Well there are several ways to take care of ourselves to welcome this season while feeling our best. During the winter months, we may become nutrient deficient as many of the garden-fresh fruits and vegetables are not readily available to us. Now is an important time to support the body with a diet of whole foods, fruits and vegetables. It is especially important to avoid sugar-laden foods as they lower immunity and cause blood sugar spikes that can create depression-like symptoms.

Herbs can also be of help at this time of year to help build up our immunity,

support the nervous system, ease aches and pains, and add needed minerals and vitamins to our bodies. With all of the nutrient-dense, cleansing and anti-inflammatory herbs that begin to grow in the springtime, it seems that Mother Nature has our back! Herbs such as dandelion, chickweed, red clover, cleavers, nettles, alfalfa and many more are ready to harvest in the spring. They work wonderfully for a healthy spring rejuvenation when we include them in teas, topical remedies and even cooking!

At Tilia, we want you to know that you're not alone when you are feeling down this time of year. Our medical herbalists are always right here to help develop a plan to keep you feeling happy and healthy, no matter what the season! ■

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If fatigue, pain and poor health have been a problem for you, you no longer have to live that way. Adding Vital Greens to your supplement regimen can help give you back that feeling of health and well-being that you've been missing. After a short time, you may notice that those familiar aches and pains have become a thing of the past and you'll know Vital Greens is the right choice for your health.

Naka's Vital Greens is a great mint-flavoured gluten-free liquid providing fast, superior absorption for maximum results. ■

Linda Gigliotti is a registered holistic nutritionist with studies in applied nutrition, homeopathy, herbology, symptomatology and other complementary therapies, now offering consultations at Golden Herb Health Food Store in Creston. For more information, call 250 402-0033.

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Get Ready for Spring by Valuing Self-Worth

BY DIANE TOLLESON

I feel we have all had enough of winter, and are ready for spring! We will certainly appreciate it a lot more this year. Every day brings its own challenge; as I write this, we are in "melt time" and about to have a full moon, lunar eclipse and a comet go by. The universe keeps changing and flowing, and we are along for the ride!

My big lesson today is clarity. It seems to be a natural human tendency to assume some things, especially when it comes to relating to other humans. We all have our own experiences, opinions and lessons; how we translate those into our daily

lives can be a challenge when dealing with other people on our path.

First and foremost is valuing our self-worth and to project that in our interactions with others. I met a young fella years ago on Vancouver Island that felt people didn't trust him because of his colour (which I didn't even notice). I trusted him with some money and he didn't disappoint me, and thanked me for trusting him. My words of wisdom to him were, when you feel and project self-respect from inside, that's what people will pick up on and notice. Project self-respect! If we don't believe it about ourselves, no one else will either. The same is to be

Better Health Through Cleansing

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There is no denying that we live in a toxic world. Never in our history have we been so exposed to toxic chemicals in our water, air and food. Combine this with our hectic lifestyles, processed foods and an overall lack of activity, and it is a serious combination. The sad part is that toxic overload destroys our health slowly and from deep within the body. By the time you start to see physical symptoms, the damage has already been done.

There is hope, and you can take charge of our health and reverse the damage being done. One of the best ways to help ensure optimal health is to perform an herbal cleansing program two or three times per year.

The body has seven channels of elimination that are directly utilized to eliminate toxins:

- **liver** — changes or detoxifies harmful toxins into substances that can be safely eliminated from the body;
- **colon** — eliminates toxins from the liver, as well as the waste that has accumulated in the intestines;
- **blood** — flows through the vascular system and carries oxygen and nutrients to the cells of the body while removing harmful waste;
- **lymphatic system** — eliminates poisons from cells through a network of vessels that extend throughout the body;
- **skin** — eliminates waste and toxins through perspiration;
- **lungs** — expel toxins (such as carbon dioxide) through breathing. Deep breathing stimulates lymphatic flow to eliminate toxins; and,
- **kidneys** — receive water-soluble waste from the liver, so that they can be further filtered and finally eliminated through the bladder.

There are many types of cleanses for many reasons.

said about love — you have to love yourself before attracting the love you seek in life.

Arts from the Heart now has tarot and oracle cards and some other new goodies. You can have a free 10-minute reading with me when you purchase a deck.

Come by and see what's new and get your free hug from me. We are gearing up for a very busy spring and summer.

Go with the flow, love and respect yourself and in-joy each moment. Until next month, big heart hugs to all! ■

There are full body cleanses that work on all channels of elimination, cleanses that target parasites and candida, and cleanses for the liver, colon and kidneys specifically. Cleansing can help bring your health to a whole new level.

No matter which cleanse you are performing, fibre is a must! Fibre works to absorb toxins and eliminate them from the body. However, not just any fibre will do. It needs to have a balanced ratio of soluble to insoluble fibre. Soluble fibre acts like a sponge to absorb excess cholesterol and toxins and insoluble fibre “scours” the intestinal tract and colon clean. Both types are essential for good health.

After undergoing a complete cleansing program, many people have experienced the following benefits: blood pressure and/or cholesterol stabilized, clear skin, increased mental clarity, weight loss or weight stabilization, improved elimination, reduced inflammation and joint pain, and increased overall vitality.

When one considers the sheer quantity of toxins that enter our body, cleansing is no longer an option, it's a requirement. ■

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Stay Safe While Wearing Backpacks

BY JESSE MORETON, BSc DC

This month's topic comes as another suggestion from a patient: Backpacks. However, instead of doing my own research as per usual, this time I'll be taking the easy way and borrowing from resources published by the BC Chiropractic Association (BCCA). As an effort to educate and engage the public, the BCCA launched a program a few years ago with posters, handouts, presentations and ads about proper backpack use.

So, backpack safety. I know it sounds silly. It's not as if backpacks have a malicious gremlin living inside waiting to pounce on you. But it is one of those things that can lead to problems over time. For example, most backpack users are kids. Their spines simply aren't developed to carry much weight. That's probably the biggest issue. Research shows that kids shouldn't be carrying more than 15 per cent of their body weight. For younger kids it should only be 10 per cent. If you have kids, do some measuring. If your child is 23 kg (50 pounds), she should carrying a maximum of 2.2 kg (five

pounds). If he is 50 kg (110 pounds), then seven kg (16 pounds) or less is appropriate. For an adult who is 86 kg (190 pounds), the suggested max is 13 kg (28 pounds).

Carrying too much weight can lead to poor posture and excess strain on the muscles and joints. Over time this will lead to pain and sometimes injury.

Other tips? Pack it right. Put heavy items close to the body. Use the pockets to help space out the load. Don't hunch forward when carrying. If you see your child leaning forward, it's a good indication that the load is still too heavy.

Use both shoulder straps and the waist belt, if available. This helps to more evenly distribute the load. The pack should fit snugly to the body. If you see your child's backpack dangling down or bouncing on their bum while running, give those shoulder straps a cinch.

How about putting it on? Use a bench, table or desk if available and put your bag on one strap at a time. (I realize some of these suggestions aren't always practical.) When lifting it from the floor, remember the old adage, "Lift with the knees, not the back."

Shoulder bags may look cool but they force the spine and muscles to compensate for the uneven weight. This loads the mid and lower back in an unnatural way. The same applies for kids who use only one shoulder strap. I'm out of the loop now, but I remember when I was a kid the one-strap look automatically added 10 points to your cool factor. Fashion over function. I suppose it's not a new problem. If you have to look cool or use one shoulder, at least alternate sides somewhat regularly.

When buying a backpack, the more adjustable, the better. Backpacks with adjustable shoulder straps are a must and fortunately are standard. Straps with padding and an ergonomic design add comfort and distribute forces. A shaped, padded back and waist straps will also add comfort. Look for a backpack with lots of pockets and that is proportionate to the wearer. Some of this may go without saying. With most things, you get what you pay for. The difficulty I've found, however, is that the cheap stuff with no pockets has really cool pictures of princesses and cars on the back. Picking something like that over a boring back with pockets is a no-brainer for many kids. Perhaps leaving the kids at home would help.

Another problem we've encountered is the sheer amount of stuff kids need to carry. There's the lunch bag with food and liquid containers, the extra change of clothes for accidents or emergencies, the snow pants, the workbooks and sometimes items for projects or show and tell. It's nice that most schools allow kids to keep things like supplies and shoes at school. In deciding what to pack and not to pack, think practically and do what you can. No secret tips here.

Well, that's it for this time, hope you found this article helpful and learned something new. Happy backpacking! ■

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