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January  
2011

## Smile for the Camera

Cracking up stiff  
subjects all in a  
day's work for  
photographer

### Mayor's Desk

Bright outlook for  
municipal election year

### My Side of the World

New Year's resolutions  
for the entire valley

### Entertainment

Smash hit fine-tune  
for second edition



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Hire a pro or do it yourself, but preserve your special memories in pictures.

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#### The Magazine

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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

**B**ack in November, on the night of the inaugural Creston's Best Singer competition, the air was thick with anticipation and intrigue. Who would the singers be? What would they sound like? Who would win?

By the time it was over, some three-and-a-half hours later, and Jordan Janzen had claimed the title, only one question remained for those fortunate enough to find their way inside Prince Charles Auditorium for the sold-out show: who the heck is Vern Gorham?

The little-known, five-year resident of Creston created, promoted, emceed and practically starred in the event, patterned after the reality show Britain's Got Talent. At a facility that typically features dozens of empty seats for even the biggest out-of-town acts, an estimated 100 people expecting (and why wouldn't they?) to walk up to the door and buy a cheap \$5 ticket were surprisingly turned away because all the seats, extra chairs and available floor space had been scooped up.

The contest created a buzz that lasted throughout an evening that did not drag despite its length, and left the audience looking forward to the second edition of what Gorham pledged would become an annual affair. Few likely banked

on it coming so soon, as Gorham announces in this New Year's issue of I Love Creston magazine that the 2011 contest – a two-parter – is planned for late winter.

So who is this sharp-dressing, smooth-talking showman, who revved up the crowd with a little pep rally and had it demanding an encore after a rousing rendition of Bon Jovi's Dead or Alive? He even tinkled the ivories of a baby grand to kill time during a dead spot while judges tallied their votes, striking one item off his bucket list by playing for a paying audience. Hailing from northern Alberta, Gorham's background is in banking, not entertainment, although he loves crooning in the company of friends with a high-end karaoke machine he bought a couple of years ago as part of a burgeoning DJ business. Calling himself at peace with his self-proclaimed status as an "average" singer and musician, Gorham nonetheless concedes that his Jon Bon Jovi impersonation "was a fantastic experience. The crowd was so great. I hope that all of my singers felt as loved by the crowd as I did.

"The formula for success was already blazed by American Idol and Britain's Got Talent," continues Gorham, who was motivated to make a few bucks off the show for his family during a spell of under-employment while he developed a nutrition-related venture. "I just

brought it closer to home and tried to make everyone feel a part of it. Then I just went out there and tried to have a great time, and over 350 people joined me. It was a lot more work than I anticipated, but it was enjoyable."

If he can prove later this winter that Creston's Best Singer 2010 "wasn't just a onetime fluke or a one-hit wonder," he may expand the concept to a neighbouring city like Trail or Cranbrook, and perhaps even promote a regional version of the contest.

"It was so much fun the first time, I would like to see how far we can go with this," he says, "and I won't know unless I try."

Gorham's got guts, if nothing else.

As for the rest of this January edition of I Love Creston, here's hoping it finds you well and brimming with even a small portion of Gorham's optimism for 2011. ■

*Happy New Year!*  
*Brian Bell*

## Mailbag

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

The December cover is awesome, so beautifully created. Thank you to your very talented artist!

*Faithson*

Hi Faithson,

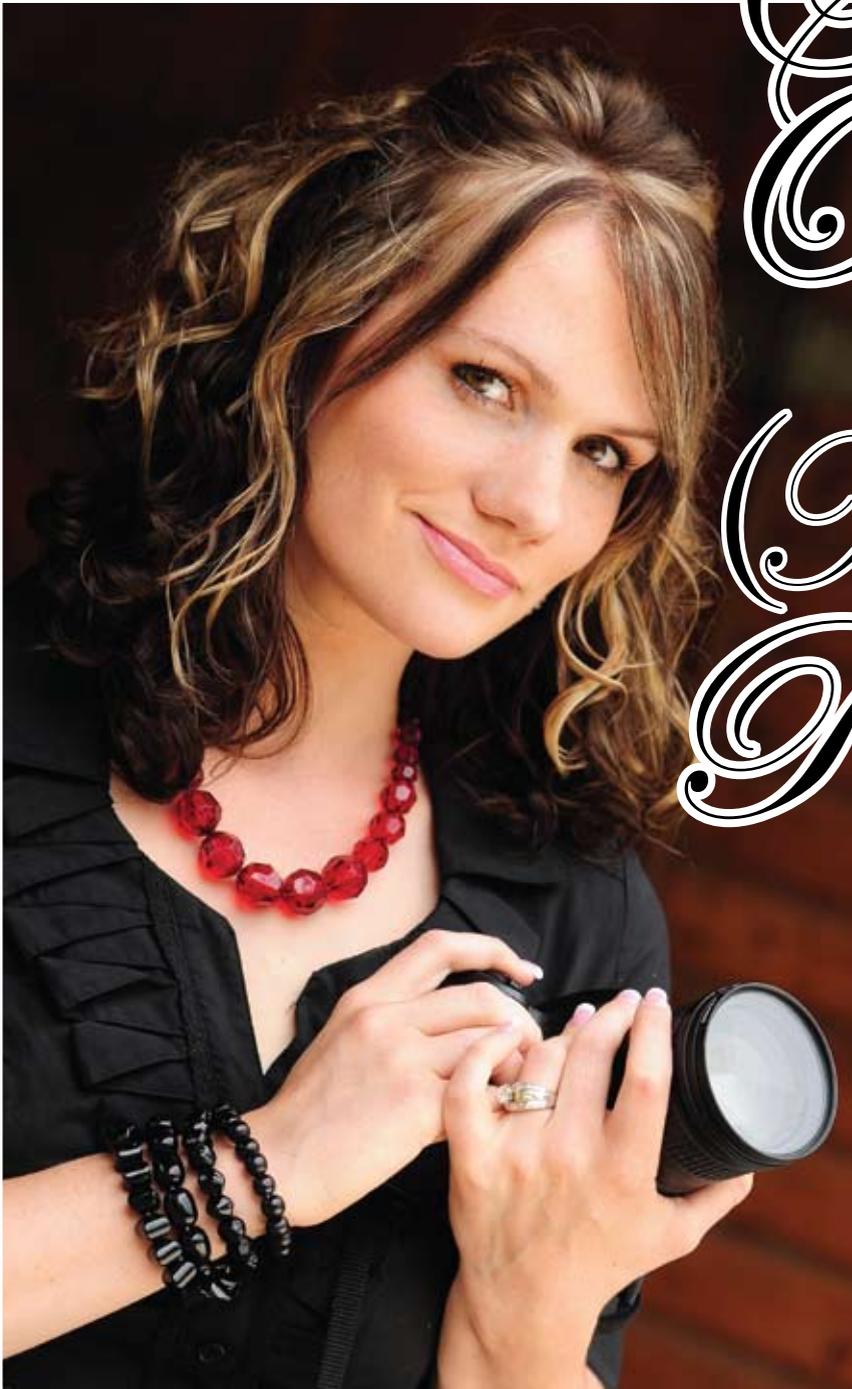
It's so nice to hear positive feedback on my work.

Thank you!

*Wendy Franz*  
*- Graphic Design*

# 2011

# She Oughta Be (Making) Pictures



Story by Brian Bell

**N**atalie Santano has experienced “camera shy” from both ends of the lens.

Some of the Creston photographer’s subjects are painfully uncomfortable in front of a camera, while Santano herself is at her most effervescent, outgoing best when she’s behind one.



*"Newborns are so pure and beautiful, and everything about them makes me feel like things are 'right' with the world."*

It's a contrast that works well for the 25-year-old, whose budding business has exploded in the past year thanks to a host of satisfied faces whom she has snapped, as well as an even greater number of Facebook followers who have rendered conventional paid advertising redundant. Word of mouth and the World Wide Web have the mother of one as busy as she wants to be.

"Right now I'm almost completely booked with weddings for 2011 (and) already booking into 2012," says Santano, whose services are sought after by customers from around the Kootenays and beyond. "I'm surprised that I've got so

*"Ever since I was a little kid I just loved snapping pictures"*

many bookings for January and February this year. Usually winter is slower.

"Facebook has been huge for my business. I just put my pictures on there for friends and family to see, and a couple clients, but I didn't think it would go as crazy as it did. I've got a photography page on Facebook with almost 3,000 fans, and that right there has been a huge boon. A huge percentage of people find me on Facebook."

Natalie Santano Photography wasn't founded until 2008 but it had been in the cards since its sole proprietor was in grade school – even if she didn't realize it while growing up in Salt Lake City.

"I'm obsessed with pictures. Ever since I was a little kid I just loved snapping pictures," says the dual American/Canadian citizen. "I would sneak up on people and take their picture, whether they were doing something silly like sneezing or blowing their nose or whatever it was.

"I remember doing it when I was 7 or 8 with just this little cheap, second-hand piece of junk, a little tiny point-and-shoot. I would save every penny I got to develop film. As I got older and more self-conscious about how I looked myself, I wanted to capture other people's beauty and the moments that make them beautiful.

"It wasn't really something I thought I would be until I started taking pictures of friends and they said, 'Hey, you're pretty good at this.' Then I started charging a small amount and getting my name more out there."

Santano, who moved here with her mother and one of eight siblings in 1996, remembers well the first assignment for which she was paid – and reluctantly at that.

*"I am PASSIONATE about what I do. I have fun, but I also take my job very seriously. You don't get a second chance to capture certain special moments like the kiss!"*



*"I wanted to capture other people's beauty and the moments that make them beautiful"*

"It was for a friend's wedding," Santano says. "It was spur-of-the-moment and I was like, 'Oh, I can't charge you,' and she was like, 'Yes, you charge me something,'"

"I felt so guilty. (But) she loved the pictures and (said), 'You really have a gift. You need to be doing this.' That was what really jump-started everything."

Within months Santano launched her career along with the business, the second one she'd been in on the ground floor of, having helped partner Kitt Santano establish Pro-to-Call Computer Services the year before. The couple married in 2008 and have an 18-month-old son, Porter, who remains a priority for his multi-tasking mom.

"I like to keep a balance between home and family," she says. "The most important thing to me is being a wife and mother. That means more to me than my business. I try not to get too out-of-control busy that I forget about that."

Nonetheless, Santano entrusts Porter to the loving care of his grandma while conducting an average of eight photo shoots per week. She can't comprehend that people from Cranbrook, Kimberley and Nelson – even Lethbridge and Kelowna – bring their business to her.

"It absolutely amazes me that they would travel all that way," says Santano, who has a small home-based studio but conducts most of her shoots in outdoor settings like backyards and parks. Family and individual portraits, engagements, babies, children and even advertising and corporate work are within her repertoire.

"I love this business because I get to meet the most amazing people, and most of the time these people are

*"The beauty of this photo will always be a classic."*



celebrating the happiest moments of their life," she says. "It's when people are the happiest that they call me. That's what's so awesome about it. When I show up for my job every session it's like, 'We want to celebrate. Let's get pictures.'"

"That gives so much energy. Each photo shoot makes me fall in love with photography again."

Santano is self-taught, possessing no more formal an education than attending a couple of workshops and leafing through a few books.



*"Nothing cuter than a puppy and a baby - together."*



*"Wedding pictures that have tons of character and life in them, is so much fun to create!"*

*"That's what I love about it, being able to capture each unique personality"*

"Mostly it's just trial and error," she says, "doing things and doing them again and learning from that."

Beyond the technical aspects of composing and touching up digital images there's a component of human psychology to the job for which Santano also has an affinity. Like what to do with the person who not only won't smile but looks as though undergoing a root canal – minus the freezing – would be more palatable than striking a pose.

"No two photo shoots are the same. That's what I love about it, being able to capture each unique personality,"



*"Fun pictures that make you smile, is what I crave! (And yummy props like cake is always a bonus)."*



*"I am a hopeless romantic. Passion and love are a MUST in my photos."*

she says. "Most of my photo shoots now, I don't know anybody and it's like, 'Is this who they are? Is this what they want to portray?' I just talk to the people at first and interact with them a little bit before we start. Usually I can get a sense within the first few minutes.

"I recall several awkward instances where the clients might at first seem a little unapproachable and very hard to work with. They're stiff and absolutely uncomfortable, shy, not camera-friendly, and I know that the last place they want to be is in front of the camera.

"But I try to make a witty remark or whatever it takes to get them to smile, whether it's barking like a dog or jumping in a puddle so they loosen up and let go and just embrace the moment."

It's her worst professional nightmare – the subject she can't crack – but one that's never come true.

"My mind is running 1,000 miles a minute," she says. "What can I do?" especially dealing with kids who don't want to co-operate. (Or) it could be a 40-year-old man who absolutely hates the camera and just doesn't want to smile.

"After the photo session is done and the client sends me an e-mail or leaves a message saying, 'Thank you. That's exactly what I wanted. You're the best,' that's what really makes me feel like, 'OK. I'm really doing what I need to do.' (Those are) the magic moments."

Santano fires off hundreds of frames from which she selects 50 or more for editing.

“That’s when the real work starts,” she says. “I like to say that showing somebody their picture on the camera is like showing a cake before it’s frosted. Once I get home and do the editing, that’s when things really start to happen. I never make them not look like themselves but always enhance their beautiful features.”

Unlike many portrait photographers who retain the rights to all images, Santano releases the final product on disc for clients to do with as they please, “because I feel once I’ve taken the pictures, they’re their pictures. I don’t feel like I should be keeping them to myself. They can go to whoever they want to get them printed, (although) more and more I’ve had people coming to me for prints lately, which is great.”

What’s the secret to her sudden success, which includes 2010 awards for best photography and best wedding services in the East Kootenay, as determined in a public vote?

“Let’s just say that I have the confidence now that I can get the pictures that the clients want,” she says, “whereas five years ago if you would have asked me to do your family pictures I wouldn’t have been able to sleep at night.

“I think I’m probably an introvert by nature, but really, once I have the camera and I’m doing my job, I’m really out there. This is who I am.”

*“You just have to take the time to create memories . . . because we forget”*

Santano’s passion for photography is such that it doesn’t matter whether she’s taking the pictures or not, as long as the pictures get taken.

“I recently had a bride send me a heart-felt e-mail saying that her mother-in-law passed away this summer,” she says. “The pictures I got from her wedding are the last ones of her mother-in-law and definitely the best to date because I was able to capture her smile, whereas usually she’s very uncomfortable in front of the camera. That was another affirmation (of) how important it is to preserve these memories.

“You don’t have to be a professional. You don’t have to have a super-expensive camera. You just have to take the time to create memories . . . because we forget.” ■

For more information on  
Natalie Santano Photography  
call 250-402-9127  
or visit [www.nataliesantano.com](http://www.nataliesantano.com)



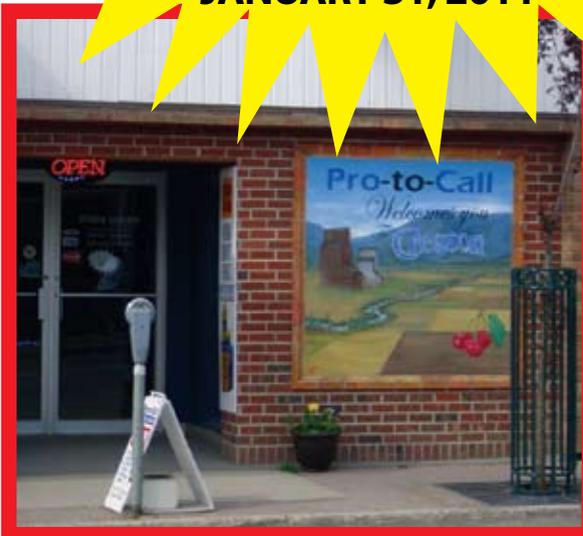
Natalie with the loves of her life:  
Husband Kitt and son, Porter.



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# Creston's Best Singer 2011

Submitted

**W**hat started out as a onetime contest appears now will become an annual fixture on the Creston music scene. For those who missed the first Creston's Best Singer Contest in November, you missed an exciting evening of local singing talent in front of a sold-out auditorium vying for the title of "Creston's Best Singer."

It was hoped the show would be a success but it was still a surprise to contest creator Vern Gorham.

"When I first thought of doing this contest I hoped to create a fun evening for all, both audience and singers alike, and hoped to sell about 200 tickets," Gorham says. "I did not anticipate selling out all 320 tickets by the afternoon of the show and having to turn away over 100 people at the door, as there were no more seats available for them. Creston's support was amazing and the show was a complete success."

Following up on the success of the first contest, Gorham will be getting ready for "Creston's Best Singer 2011" early in the New Year, with a few changes.

In spite of the positive response from the audience to the first show, Gorham believes there needs to be some changes, including the timing of future contests so they don't take place in early winter when cold and flu viruses are most active. Several contestants were affected by seasonal viruses but still managed to sing. Upcoming contests will be moved to late winter/early spring.

**"Creston's support was amazing and the show was a complete success"**

Secondly, Gorham plans to change the scoring for judges so that obtaining each singer's score will be a much quicker process.

But the biggest change is that there will be two contests in 2011. The first will probably occur in late February and be an audition. It will be open to up to 40 contestants who will have about two-and-a-half minutes each to sing.

Each person in the audience will have a scorecard and will judge each singer. At the end of the night all scorecards will be gathered and scores will be totalled over the following few days.

The top 20 singers, as voted by the audience, will go on to the second contest which will be similar to the one in November. The anticipated date of that contest is late March. ■

*Gorham is looking for singers for the first contest. If you are interested in singing, please contact him at 428-0305 or [verngorham@telus.net](mailto:verngorham@telus.net). For further details, please visit the contest Web site at [www.kootenaysbestsinger.com](http://www.kootenaysbestsinger.com).*

*As many people were unable to get tickets to the last contest, Gorham reminds interested people to buy tickets early to guarantee themselves a seat. Tickets will be available at Black Bear Books.*



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Wanda Powell singing in the finals at the Creston's Best Singer 2010 contest.

Photo by Jeff Banman

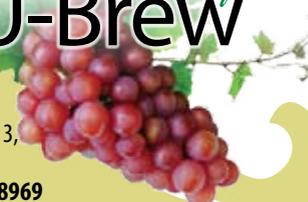
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## From the Mayor's Desk

Story by: Ron Toyota  
Mayor of the Town of Creston

### New Goals for a New Year

As we start the new year of 2011, town council and staff look forward to achieving new goals while continuing to address ongoing community challenges.

At this time of year, the most visible issue is the snow. After a heavy snowfall, the majority of my phone calls and messages are usually about this concern. I believe that our town's crew does a very good job of maintaining our 48 kilometres of roads and numerous parking areas. It's a big job and we encourage citizens to do their part

by ensuring sidewalks are cleared and de-iced.

Working together, we can keep our roads and sidewalks passable during our winter season.

**"Look forward to achieving new goals"**

Another current concern is our doctor shortage and I am pleased to be serving on the Creston Valley Health Working Group. This group includes me, regional

district directors John Kettle (Area B) and Larry Binks (Area C), two town management staff (Lou Varela and Iain Bell), an Interior Health representative (Karyn Morash), Dr. Atma Persad and our physician recruitment advisor (Marilyn States).

It is with much excitement that the Health Working Group announces that we have been advised of two new group medical clinics being developed in town to compliment the two existing medical clinics (Family Practice Associates and Dr. MacKay and Associates), both of which are at full capacity. It is anticipated that both new clinics will be ready to receive new physicians by early to mid-2011. The availability of these facilities will greatly assist in our recruiting campaign.

## Creston Valley Business Buzz



KC Dyer and Darla Fabbro  
Old Country Treasures Gifts & Collectables

The original idea behind Old Country Treasures started with an outcry from the community. A demand to find locally made products from local artisans for reasonable prices. The concept sounds simple enough but there in the midst lye a barrage of challenges just waiting to be conquered. Sustainability of small business in a small community is continuing to get harder and harder with the development of big box stores.

With much thought and through many brainstorming sessions we've begun to embark into the online world to gain additional revenue streams with many of our high quality items. Old Country Treasures has teamed up with Victorian Cottage Treasures, a well established and successful online embroidery supply and quilt shop, and Kootenay Candles, a long time locally owned and also well established candles factory. These partnerships were created to try and meet the online and local markets with high quality products and joint marketing strategies.

Locally supplied artisans such as Evon's Stained Glass, Knots and Knobs, Bills Woodworking, Lotte's Hand Crafted Jewelry, Sheila Arnot's Watercolour Paintings, Country Cousins Clothing Line and Jan Stoyanowski's Photography, (just to name a few) Stop in and take a peek, you just might find what you're looking for!

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## "Serving as your mayor has been a great privilege"

Reflecting on the past year, I consider the work that has been undertaken and the achievements that have been made. I was elected for a three-year term and I have now entered my last year of this term. In 10 months' time, with the pending election in November, I must declare my intentions to the citizens of Creston as to whether I will seek re-election for another three-year term.

Serving as your mayor has been a great privilege and I believe that much has been achieved by council

and staff. Please contact me in the New Year and let me know your hopes for our community in the upcoming year.

Wishing you all the best in 2011. ■

Ron Toyota can be reached by phone at 250-428-2214, e-mail at [Ron.Toyota@creston.ca](mailto:Ron.Toyota@creston.ca) or on the Web at [www.creston.ca](http://www.creston.ca).



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# My Side of the World

Story by: Kristen Cook

## New Year's Resolutions for our Community

**T**he holidays are officially over. We've rung in the New Year, taken down our trees and gone back to work. We've sworn to lose the extra holiday pounds. We're determined to quit smoking, clean our closet, take more chances. Three months till spring, anyone counting? At least we can use them to focus on improving ourselves.

**“Because that’s what we are whether you’ve embraced it or not”**

What if we also made resolutions for our community? How can the valley become its very best? Let me let you in on the key. A community is its people – you, me and our neighbours.

I've created Creston's New Year's resolutions for 2011. If you also add them to your own list we can make this work.

Learn to love ourselves as a small town:

Because that's what we are whether you've embraced it or not. We can focus on the lack of nightlife, retail giants and bustling city streets. Or we can focus on the time we have to spend with people, the famous small-town feeling and the wide open spaces so worth loving. The more we embrace Creston the more that spirit will spread. We'll grow,

but we haven't room to ever become a city. That's just fine. I would miss the small town.

Network with people who care:

This might seem obvious. To have a positive outlook we need to get involved with others who do. It's not hard to find people who are doing good things. It might be strictly local or it might have a worldwide outlook. Find what you care about. Oh, and also spend time with the people here that you enjoy. If you leave for any longer period of time you'll all of a sudden realize there are so many awesome acquaintances you forgot to hang out with.

Become an active community member:

You must expect this one from me. I believe it's important. And I believe we have better opportunity here than most do. What is more important than our health? From a local point of view, the atmosphere of an active town is energetic and inspiring. Active living will also improve involvement appeal in a big way. We can pull it off. Trust me. Every little bit helps.

Improve the local economy through local shopping:

Think of it as a pyramid. If you can, buy locally produced. From there go to purchasing an item at home. To buy something produced in China from a source outside of Canada should be a last resort. A bit of effort into finding the most effective balance is well worth it. I've worked enough miscellaneous jobs to have witnessed how a business can survive or suffer based on where you shop. Our businesses are our economy. In addition, local products are



beneficial in many different ways, not least of which is quality.

Invest in our youth:

I get it. We're a retirement community. I'm not going to deny the benefits that come from this. But youth are the future. I'm not saying that we should give more to young people. Honestly, I think they have too much handed to them already. What I mean is, give them chances to fight for it.

## "See our beautiful surroundings through the eyes of a stranger"

Look throughout history. They're capable of it. Best of all, they know it. It takes just a look at teen pregnancy rates, drug use and mass exodus from the valley to realize that offering a little more opportunity for them would be a good thing. Thank goodness for College of the Rockies courses and the sports programs that exist. What could we bring about for further benefit?

Try seeing the valley with new eyes:

This one is much easier said than done. Last year I was chatting with a friend and I said that I was staying in town and I would have to work to make peace with it. She replied, "What if we pretended we weren't from here?"

It's a novel idea, one that twisted my brain around. Generally a simple visit to the grocery store has me running into people who've known me since I was born.

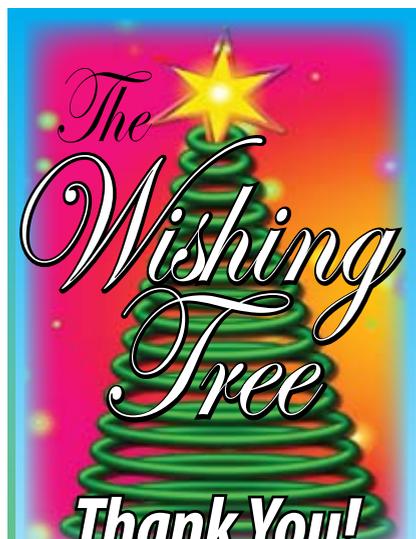
It challenged me. It's not quite possible to truly succeed. What I . . . we can do is try to see our beautiful

surroundings through the eyes of a stranger. I started reading bulletin boards, talking to people outside my circle. I learned to appreciate the hidden places I know about.

There are definitely benefits to being a local. Creston is the only place in the world where I can claim that definition. I'll just continue to work on seeing past that and realizing there are still things left to discover. This year I'll visit the Skimmerhorn Winery. I'll plan bowling with my peers who are still in town. I'll plant some sort of a garden and I'll visit the farmer's market. I'll attend a local production.

What will you do to make Creston its best? ■

*Any ideas for Creston's resolutions in 2011?  
Visit [ilovecreston.com](http://ilovecreston.com) to leave your comments  
and get the discussion going.*



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# Local Vet Shares Stories of the Korean War

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

Everybody has a story to tell, I've noticed, and one of the best parts of my job is that I get to hear those stories. Recently, for example, I got to sit down with George Stagg. I first met George last June, not long after he moved to Creston. At that time he told me about his love of ballroom dancing and the many years he'd spent square dancing. But a few weeks ago I learned that there is much more than that to George. He'd heard we were looking for war stories to supplement one of the museum's exhibits, so he called me to share his.

In January 1951, George was living in Moose Jaw, where he was born in 1927. He was between jobs, due in part to a scandal at the Scott National Fruit trucking company where he had been working for four years. Seven of the men there had been fired for stealing. "I wasn't one of them," George says, "but after that if you had worked for Scott you couldn't get a job anywhere."

North Korea had invaded South Korea six months earlier. The UN immediately called on its member nations to support South Korea. China got involved on the North Korean side in December and Canada was actively recruiting people to rotate the troops who were already overseas.

One Friday morning, George's mother told him that if he went in and signed the papers to join up she would give him \$5. So he did. "That's the bet I made," says George, "and I guess I won it."

**"I learned all about the human body, from head to toe"**

went through a six-month training course to be a nurse's aide. "I learned all

George Stagg

George was sent to the Royal Canadian Army medical corps at Camp Borden, Ontario, where he

about the human body, from head to toe," he recalls. "I graduated with honours, and they thought that was marvellous because I'd only gone up to Grade 10 in school." (George's father's butcher shop was small and not doing well, so George had to give up his education and get a job to help out the family).

In the early spring of 1952, George shipped out for Korea along with the 37th Field Ambulance. They were being sent to rotate out the 25th Field Ambulance, which had



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been in Korea since May or June of the previous year. George recalls that they were seven days at sea, then got the night off when they first arrived in Tokyo. The next day it was back on board for the final leg of their journey to Korea. They arrived on April 10, 1952.

The field hospital was located about 25 miles north of Seoul, within a few miles of the front line, and the 37th's duties were to provide initial first-aid treatment and evacuation of casualties. They'd been in Korea for two or three months before their commanding officer contacted an American medical corps, who provided everything needed to set up a hospital.

George remembers the hospital as a one-storey building with two wings, holding 25 beds per wing. The unit comprised between 500 and 1,000 people, ranging from the commanding officers to nurses and doctors, ambulance drivers and support staff.

George's role as a nurse's aide was to go with the driver to pick up the casualties where they'd fallen. "We'd bandage them up," he says, "then put them on the stretcher and bring them back on the Jeep. The Jeep could take two men, and sometimes we'd have the 'decker' – it had room for two more casualties up above. Sometimes we'd be out all day bringing them back."

By this time, the Korean War had settled into a period of static

warfare. The front lines changed little but there were constant raids and counter-raids, bombardments, mines and booby traps to keep the field hospital busy with wounded. George remembers that "they'd be in action for five or six days, then take a break."

An article I found on the RCAMC in Korea states that "Canadian medical units . . . in spite of many difficulties and privations, provided a very high level of medical and surgical attention for the Canadian soldiers fighting in Korea. In addition to the thousands of Canadian casualties who passed through the Canadian medical units, there were additional thousands of Commonwealth and U.S. Army casualties who received care and attention at the hands of the RCAMC personnel."

George was a part of that effort, a part of the medical care that helped reduce the mortality rate to only 34 per 1,000 Canadians wounded – the lowest of any of the wars of the past century.

After his return from Korea in April 1953, George spent three years in Germany with the Peace Corps, then six years working in a military hospital in Ottawa for Second World War veterans. He returned to Korea for a visit in 1996, and today lives in Creston. ■

For more information contact the Creston and District Museum and Archives:  
 phone (250) 428-9262;  
 e-mail [mail@creston.museum.bc.ca](mailto:mail@creston.museum.bc.ca);  
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**"They'd be in action for five or six days, then take a break"**

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# Winter Detective: Searching for signs of animal life

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

**I**t is really quite fun to play detective in the winter, to look for clues and try to determine what happened in that very spot only hours or days before.

A fresh dusting of snow provides the ideal environment to do your detective work. Animal tracks can be seen crisscrossing the landscape in the new powder. Being able to determine who left the tracks and what they were doing is an art.

Determining who left the tracks is the more scientific part of the puzzle. My first suggestion would be to get an identification book for tracks – one that covers our area. Lone Pine Publishing puts out small, inexpensive pocket books on

tracks of Western Canada and B.C. which are a good starting point.

Snow conditions and the freshness of the tracks both play a critical role in trying to determine who left the evidence.

**“Animal tracks can be seen crisscrossing the landscape in the new powder”**

Once you have an idea of who might have been frolicking around, I like to let my imagination take over and try to put together a tale of what went on. When you have multiple tracks from different animals, the stories get better and better.

After one of our first snowfalls I saw tracks in the snow around the Wildlife Centre going from a pond, across the trail to a channel. The track was thin; no feet marks, just a long, winding indentation in the snow. It looked very much like a snake slithering along, and if it was, wow, that must have been a slow slither!

Snakes do hibernate in the winter, but if a day is sunny and warm there is a chance, especially in the fall, that they will move about.

Aside from tracks, one can look for evidence of chewing, scratching, rubbing and shredding (sounds dangerous) of trees. Starting in the late summer and early fall, male deer



and elk will rub their antlers on trees to remove the velvet that has been growing on them throughout the summer.

Rubbing intensifies in the fall rut season when they are trying to find a mate. They rub to mark their territory, show their dominance and intimidate other males. And in late winter, rubbing is done to help them shed their antlers.

Moose, elk and deer will browse on shrubs such as willow and dogwood as a source of food in the winter. The tips of the branches will look mutilated and shredded due to the gnawing done by their dull teeth. Did you know that elk are the only North American animals that have teeth made of ivory?

If an animal is out and about in our winter wonderland, they will be eating and therefore leaving behind

evidence. So be on the lookout for scat. There are also identification books to help you determine who

## “One can look for evidence of chewing, scratching, rubbing and shredding”

left behind the present. This is not the most glamorous form of detective work but it will nonetheless

provide you with more clues as to who has been hanging around.

Above all, have fun. And let us know what you find out there by dropping us an e-mail at [askus@crestonwildlife.ca](mailto:askus@crestonwildlife.ca) or by joining us on our Facebook page. ■

*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](mailto:cahern@crestonwildlife.ca) or 250-402-6905.*



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# The Brilliant Beeswax Candle

Submitted

**B**eeswax candles offer a honey scent, a golden flame, and the longest, cleanest burn of any candle.

But there is much more benefit to beeswax candles compared to paraffin candles that are made from polluted petroleum sludge, or even vegetable-based candles that are a big improvement over paraffin: When beeswax candles burn, they clean the air like a great, natural, air purifier, and they are a link to a deep spiritual belief system.

For each pound of beeswax provided by a honey bee, the bee visits 33 million flowers. It eats 10 pounds of honey. It secretes the beeswax from its abdomen, and then uses the wax to construct a honeycomb. Beekeepers recover the wax from the comb by heating it in water where the melted wax rises to the surface and can be removed.

Many have written about the wisdom of the beehive, and how burning beeswax puts a person in a special mood of reverence. It is easy to

imagine why, given that millions of flowers have been visited and pollinated to make any one beeswax candle!

Healing and spiritual powers have been attributed to all products of the beehive. Honey has always been considered holy, a gift from God, and endowed with esoteric and mystical qualities. The Path of Pollen, or bee shamanism, is a calling into the secrets of healing, longevity, and spiritual powers of bee products, including honey, wax, and pollen. The Hebrew word for bee is *dbure*, meaning word, with the message being that the bee brings the Divine word. Specifically beeswax candles are designated for the Christian Roman Mass.

To burn a beeswax candle is to enter into the wisdom world of the bee, and you enter, too, into a world of benefits from the bee. Compare this to breathing toxic fumes from paraffin candles! ■

## Cleaning the Air by Burning Beeswax Candles

Submitted

**A**ir contains billions of electrically charged particles called ions. Ions act upon our capacity to absorb and utilize oxygen, and therefore cause powerful effects on our lives and well being. The ions in the air can affect our mood, energy and health. Negative ions actually feel good. Too many positive ions make us feel bad and they are loaded down with pollution and allergens that are drawn to them and suspended in the air. Negative ions, on the other hand, remove the pollution and allergens from positive ions, allowing them to drop harmlessly to the ground.

Beeswax candle fuel is the only fuel that actually produces negative ions, which not only helps remove pollution from the air but increases the ratio of negative ions to positive ions, the ideal and necessary scenario for clean air. This also helps to remove static electricity which is essentially a buildup of positive ions in a person's household. ■

For more information visit  
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# Creston Valley Thunder Cats

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



**T**he Creston Valley Thunder Cats had plenty to be merry about this Christmas, they hadn't lost a game since late November. Along the way they beat the first place club Fernie Ghostriders twice, the third place club Golden Rockets (who are chasing Creston in the standings), Beaver Valley Nitehawks, Kamloops Storm and a few more. "The timing couldn't be better for us, going back to November it seemed like every day a new player

## "Plenty to be merry about this Christmas"

had an injury but once we hit December all injured players came back at once. Combining that with recent acquisition Brandon Formosa the team got the results we wanted."

Now in the new year the team plans to improve their play in certain situations, most importantly special teams.

"Going through the statistics we are above average on the penalty kill- which is a result of the passion of hard working players, but on the power play we are below the league average and this is something we intend to improve upon." ■

Check for game updates and schedules at [www.crestonvalleythundercats.com](http://www.crestonvalleythundercats.com)



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# Happy New Year

## The Origin of New Year

[www.newyearfestival.com](http://www.newyearfestival.com)

**N**ew Year is the world's most popularly celebrated festival. The Origin of New Year dates back to the era of emperors. They thought of celebrating a special day which should dot a day for beginning and end of the year.

### Ancient New Year Calendar

First New Year celebrations were noticed in Mesopotamia around 2000 years. It was celebrated at the time of Equinox in mid-March by the Egyptians, Persians and Phoenicians while Greeks celebrated it on winter solstice.

As per the ancient Roman calendar New Year fell on March 1. This calendar just had ten months and March was the first month of the year. The calendar originated by the cycles of the moon, beginning in spring and ending with autumn planting.

### Inclusion of Two Calendar Months

It was Numa Pompilius, the second king of Rome who divided the year into twelve lunar months by adding the months of January and February. The New Year was shifted to January as it marked the beginning of the civil years in Rome.

### January 1- an Official Date of New Year Celebrations

The Roman emperor Julius Caesar officially declared January 1 to be

a New Year in 46 B.C. Romans worshiped God Janus who had two faces, one looking forward and the other looking backward. The month of January was named after this Roman God and it gave an idea to the emperor to establish January as a gate to the New Year. It is said Caesar celebrated January 1 - New Year by ordering the revolutionary Jewish forces to route back.

### Abolition of Roman New Year Date

In the medieval period, pagan festivals were given more importance and March 25 was announced as the beginning of the New Year. March 25 was called the Annunciation Day as on this day Mary got the news that she should be impregnated.

Later, the King of England ensured that Jesus' birth December 25 should be commemorated as New Year.

### Gregorian Calendar

About 500 years later, Pope Gregory XIII abolished the old Julian calendar and introduced Gregorian calendar which comprised of a leap year after every four years to maintain balance between seasons and calendar. Finally, in 1582, Gregorian calendar was set to celebrate New Year on the first day of January. ■

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# Happy New Year

## New Year Superstitions

[www.newyearfestival.com](http://www.newyearfestival.com)

**P**eople across the globe trust in certain superstitions related to New Year's Day. Underlying idea behind most of these superstitions is that events occurring on New Year's Day sets the pattern for the rest of the year.

### **Wear New Clothes**

People believe that one should wear new clothes on a New Year's Day. This would mean receiving more new garments during the year.

### **Avoid Crying**

It is said that one should avoid breaking things or crying and wailing on the first day of the year, if you don't want to continue the pattern for the entire year.

### **Be Polite**

People say that one should behave nicely on New Year and must refrain from using foul language.

### **Lucky New Year Babies**

Babies born on 1st January is said to be the luckiest of all throughout their lives.

### **Letting the Old Year Out**

At midnight, all the doors of a house must be opened to let the old year escape unimpeded.

### **Stack Up Cupboards and Wallets**

It is believed that cupboards stocked up with food and wallets and purses full of money bring prosperity in New Year.

### **Do not Wash Dishes**

In several societies washing dishes and doing laundry on New Year's day is said to lead to a death in the family during the year.

### **Make Noise**

People believe that Evil One and his attendants and servants hate din and loud noise. So, scare them away by being as loud in New Year celebrations as possible. Church bells are rung at midnight for the same reason.

### **Don't Keep Debts**

Pay your bills and loans before New Year Eve, so you don't have any debt left for New Year.

### **Kiss at Midnight**

It is believed that kissing at midnight ensures that affections and ties will continue throughout the New Year.

### **Dance in the Open Air**

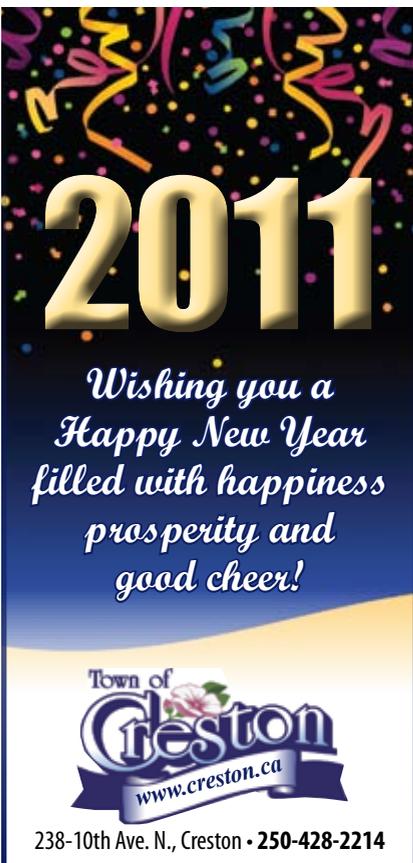
To dance in the open air, especially round a tree, on New Year's Day ensures luck in love and prosperity and freedom from ill health.

### **Find Future Groom**

On New Year's Day if, on rising, a girl should look out of her bedroom window and see a man passing by, she may reckon to be married before the year is finished.

### **Drain the Bottle**

You could ensure yourself good fortune by draining the last dregs from a bottle of drink on New Years! ■



# Happy New Year

## Baby New Year

[www.newyearfestival.com](http://www.newyearfestival.com)

The Baby New Year personifies the start of the New Year and is one of the most popular symbol of New Year Eve celebrations. The Baby New Year is a cute and chubby baby who wears nothing more than a diaper and a sash across his torso that shows the year he is representing. This Baby New Year quickly grows up into an elderly bearded man or Father Time at the end of his year. At this time, he hands over his duties to the next Baby New Year.

### History of Baby New Year

It is said that the custom of using a baby to depict the beginning of New Year began in Greece around 600 BC. At that time, the Greeks honored their God of Wine - Dionysus, by parading

a baby in a basket. This ritual represents the annual rebirth of Dionysus as the spirit of fertility.

Early Christians denounced the practice of using a baby as they felt that the custom was Pagan in nature. But the significance of baby as a personification of rebirth later forced the Church to reevaluate its position. Eventually, it was decreed that Church members would be permitted to celebrate the New Year using a symbolic baby, provided it illustrated the birth of the baby Jesus.

The use of a baby's image as a banner for New Year celebrations was brought to America by the Germans, who had used the effigy since the 14th Century. ■

## New Year Trivia

### Burning "Mr. Old Year"

*In Colombia, Cuba and Puerto Rico families stuff a life-size male doll with things that have bad memories or sadness associated with them, and then they dress it up in old clothes from each family member. At the stroke of midnight, this 'Mr. Old Year' is set on fire.*

### Carry a Suitcase

*In Venezuela, Argentina, Bolivia, and Mexico, those with hopes of traveling in the New Year carry a suitcase around the house at midnight.*

### Gifts in Shoes

*In Greece children leave their shoes by the fireside on New Year's Day with the hope that Saint Basil will come and fill their shoes with gifts.*

### Eating 12 Grapes

*In Spain people eat 12 grapes as the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve. This originated in the twentieth century when freak weather conditions resulted in an unseasonable bumper harvest of grapes. Not able to decide what to do about so many grapes at the King of Spain and the grape growers came up with this idea.*

### White Clothes

*In Brazil most people wear white clothes on New Year's Eve to bring good luck and peace for the year that will follow.*

### Burn Crackers

*The people in China believe that there are evil spirits that roam the earth. So on New Year they burn crackers to scare the evil spirits. ■*

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## Lessons from the Past

**B**ack in the mid 1980s a small boy dreaded his walk home from school. The first field from the school he had to cross was what he dreaded; and it was there, around the corner next to the “smoke pit,” that the big kids would hang out and bully him as he went by.

Nearly every day this became an exercise in sprinting and endurance, speed and longevity, in order to avoid the bruises, black eyes and humiliation he would feel if they were able to catch up to him. If he could make it to the trees at the end of the field they would usually give up the chase and he could walk,

panting, the rest of the way home – safe until the next morning.

Most of the time the bullies would kick and punch him in places that would not leave obvious marks so that none of the teachers or parents would know what they were doing and the usual threats were uttered from teenaged mouths about how much worse it would be if he told anyone what they did to him. Out of fear he would keep his mouth shut and never tell a soul what was happening. Nurse the bruises to his body and emotions alone and wish he could find some way out.

**“Fighting is always a last resort and a kung fu man should never take joy from it”**

Finally one day at a local hangout he and his friends saw a poster advertising self-defence with the art of kung fu. All of them had silently resolved to take the class and hopefully one day fight off the bullies as they tried to deliver another beating to them.

The first class, he walked into a school gymnasium full of fear and hope that the man in the black uniform could help teach them how to stop being hurt. Stretches, pushups, agonizing leg squats, repeated kicks and punches, blocks and holds – he realized he had found something he truly enjoyed and felt empowered doing.

Years passed and, as his body grew stronger, his confidence grew. The beatings began to subside due to his

ability to run faster and farther than the aggressors could. More training allowed him to begin to understand the body of an opponent and its telltale signs of aggression before movement really began, how to remain calm in the face of a more powerful, older, more experienced opponent.

The master would push him farther and farther, even though he was young, in order to perfect his movements and control his emotions.

When the day finally came that he chose not to run from the bully who had been hitting him for years, since elementary school, he stood defiantly with years of fear and hatred in his heart as he faced him. The strangest thing was that even in striking and kicking the other boy in the head, throwing him to the ground and stalking around him like a predator, no joy came from it. No feeling of satisfaction surfaced as he walked away from the first fight he ever won, only the regret from having to strike someone else, from having to cause harm, to draw blood.

His master sat with him after being told and said, “Now you are beginning to understand the way. Kung fu is not for fighting but growth. Fighting is always a last resort and a kung fu man should never take joy from it.”

Although the path has continued for more than two decades since then, my master’s advice still rings true in my ears. Martial art is for self-preservation, as a last resort. Self-development is its true purpose. ■

*Neil Ripski teaches kung fu and tai chi at Red Jade Martial Arts in Creston. He can be reached at 250-866-5263 or [www.redjademartialarts.com](http://www.redjademartialarts.com).*



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Story by:  
Annette Agabob  
Owner – Annette's  
Health Action

The winter season is upon us,  
the snow is falling and the  
blanket of white has arrived.

I love winter,  
and for some reason it brings  
upon me a feeling of quiet and  
peacefulness as the snowflakes fall.

Although you may have an entirely  
different experience,  
such as anxiety and stress,  
And being worried about driving in  
this snowy mess,

Or slipping on the ice,  
Is not very nice,  
Winter is a good time,  
To sit back and drink wine!

(Wine . . . did I say that?  
Well maybe that homemade  
elderberry, dandelion,  
or blackberry wine could be just  
what the herbalist ordered?)

## Winter Wonderland and Warm Movies

It is true,  
As all the farmers know it too.  
No more planting, seeding,  
weeding, watering or nurturing  
crops.  
The hay is up, the grain is harvested.  
Now is the time to rest at the  
homestead.

### “Reduce the stress and anxiety of these winter wonderland days”

When we look outside and notice  
Mother Nature, we have a message  
she asks us to nurture.

Winter is a time of rest,  
slowing down is the test.  
Many Locals head south,  
following the birds,  
and being known as “snowbirds.”

Now on with the story . . .  
without all the poetry.

For those of us who do not  
“fly south for the winter,”  
looking out your window,  
you will see less activity.  
There are fewer birds,  
no bears to be seen,  
the trees have dropped their leaves,  
and there is a quietness to be  
seen.

One way to REDUCE THE  
STRESS AND ANXIETY of these  
Winter Wonderland days,  
is to slow down too.

If you are used to being busy,  
sitting still may have you feeling  
lazy, so below I have listed some  
movies. These are Healthy Movie  
suggestions for you, providing  
education and inspiration.

get a jump on  
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The movie Raw for 30 Days shows how diabetes, both Type I and II, have been reversed naturally. This is an amazing film, and really opens your mind to the possibility of healing anything naturally.

Raw for 30 Days isn't only about diabetes, it is about how your body can heal itself of the most difficult challenges, naturally. You can find this online at:

<http://www.rawfor30days.com/cmd.php?af=1281769>

This would be a great way to stay motivated, pick and choose the things you want to add to your lifestyle and stay on track in 2011.

Other movies you may want to watch are:

1. Sicko – found in your local video store.
2. Food Inc. – also found in your local video store.  
*(The above movies may not be suitable for young children; please check the movie ratings.)*
3. Pay It Forward – a heart-warming movie that is also inspiring.

The first two movies demonstrate what we have not been told, and give us clarity as to why your health seems to be deteriorating faster than you can acquire the knowledge on how to reclaim it!

Education + Action = Transformation.

Winter is a great time to gather together and watch movies, stay

warm and relax.

Have a great winter season resting, relaxing and repairing your body before the season of spring is upon us. ■

**Annette's Health Action is offering a 75-per-cent discount on Coaching to Overcome Your Health Challenges Naturally in January, when you mention you saw it in I Love Creston.**

*Note: This article is intended for informational purposes and does not replace your regular doctor's care.*

*Annette Agabob has been serving the Creston Valley as an iridologist, chartered herbalist and whole food nutritionist since 1997.*

*For information on Annette's Health Action or Products, phone 250-866-5737, e-mail [info@annetteshealthaction.com](mailto:info@annetteshealthaction.com) or visit the web site [www.annetteshealthaction.com](http://www.annetteshealthaction.com).*

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# Out & About

Submitted by: [www.crestonevents.ca](http://www.crestonevents.ca)

**January 2**

**Thunder Cats vs. Golden**

Location: CDCC, 2pm

Contact: Joanne Endicott

Phone: 250-428-3965

[www.crestonvalleythundercats.com](http://www.crestonvalleythundercats.com)

**January 7**

**Thunder Cats vs. Columbia Valley**

Location: CDCC, 7:30 pm

Contact: Joanne Endicott

Phone: 250-428-3965

[www.crestonvalleythundercats.com](http://www.crestonvalleythundercats.com)

**January 22**

**Thunder Cats vs. North Okanagan**

Location: CDCC, 7:30pm

Contact: Joanne Endicott

Phone: 250-428-3965

[www.crestonvalleythundercats.com](http://www.crestonvalleythundercats.com)

**January 29**

**Thunder Cats vs. Fernie**

Location: CDCC, 7:30pm

Contact: Joanne Endicott

Phone: 250-428-3965

[www.crestonvalleythundercats.com](http://www.crestonvalleythundercats.com)

**January 29**

**Yahk Winterfest**

Contact: Penny ap Anderson

email: [pennyap@telus.net](mailto:pennyap@telus.net)

**January 30**

**Thunder Cats vs. Golden**

Location: CDCC, 2pm

Contact: Joanne Endicott

Phone: 250-428-3965

[www.crestonvalleythundercats.com](http://www.crestonvalleythundercats.com)

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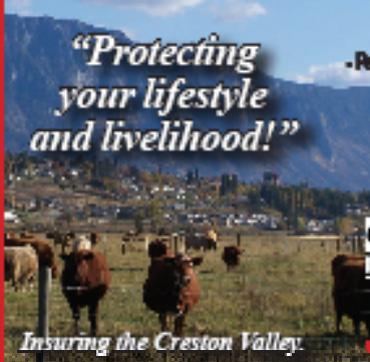
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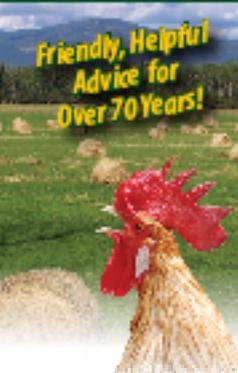
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