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Garden club volunteers spreading cheer
at Swan Valley Lodge

Artist Profile

Transplanted Albertan finds
niche in love of animals

Creston Museum

What's in a name?
Tracing the roots of "Creston"

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5 Giving back to the community

National Volunteer Week falls during April, and none demonstrate the essence of volunteering better than Creston gardeners who spruce up the grounds and boost the spirits of residents at Swan Valley Lodge.

The Magazine

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Guest From the editor

Here are some figures about volunteering from Volunteer Canada, which promotes April 15-21 as National Volunteer Week:

- 12.5 million Canadians volunteer their time to the country's 161,000 non-profit organizations.
- Canadians volunteer 2.1 billion hours annually, equivalent to 1.1 million full-time jobs.
- Less than eight per cent of the population accounts for nearly 80 per cent of the total volunteer hours.
- 54 per cent of non-profits have no paid staff.
- 73 per cent of businesses either support or accommodate employee volunteering.
- The top three reasons why Canadians volunteer are: 1) To make a contribution to their community; 2) The desire to make use of personal skills and experiences; 3) Having been personally affected by the cause.
- Children and youth are more likely to become engaged citizens if they see someone they admire, such as their parents, helping others.

There are plenty of examples of this in Creston, one beneficiary of which is singled out in this April issue of *I Love Creston* magazine: Swan Valley Lodge. The extended-care home benefits from numerous groups and individuals conducting everything from religious services and musical performances to walks and other outings.

One of them, the Creston Valley Garden Club, begins its third year of dedication to the Swan Valley grounds this month. Chairman Jean Wilson, a member since retiring here from Calgary in 2003, finds the lodge a good fit for the club.

"They've done great work there. It was a mess when we took it over," she says.

"It's working out really well, and Swan Valley are really appreciative of what they do. They're very grateful, and it's a worthy cause for sure. Most of those people have been gardeners in their time.

"And the garden club funds what they need. They come and tell us, 'OK, we need peat moss, new plants,' whatever, and we try and give them money for that."

The connection was made a couple of years ago rather by chance, although Wilson says the club had been looking "to be part of something, to be able to help somewhere."

"One of the ladies originally said, 'Oh, Swan Valley needs a timer for the water,' so a few of us went to have a look at the place and we all said, 'This is what the garden club could work with. We could help here.'

"And so the people who can go, go. I have in the past, (although) I have other commitments (now) so I don't go there (anymore)."

It's a cause she and the club as a whole obviously believe in, just as she is a firm proponent of volunteering in general as part of fulfilling one's responsibility to society.

"I've always volunteered all my life in various capacities, sometimes more than others depending on my work situation," says the former high school teacher. "I've always found something to volunteer in."

The spirit of volunteerism is more apparent in her adopted rural home than it was in the urban area she left, likely due more to the nature of the lifestyle than to an uncaring populace.

"Absolutely," she says. "There's more time for things here. In the city everybody's in a hurry. You go here and we know everybody's name and, 'How are you,' that kind of thing. It's very different than being in a big city. It's nice to be in a small community."

Wilson chose Creston because she "wanted to retire somewhere where we could garden longer. It's wonderful. We just love it."

In addition to Swan Valley, the club has also contributed labour and garden-related supplies to benefit Millennium Park, the Community Greenhouse at the College of the Rockies, Creston Public Library, Creston Museum, Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors and the community garden. The club also sponsors an annual bursary for a graduating Prince Charles Secondary School student pursuing education in an agriculture-related field.

"I believe you have to give something back to the community," Wilson concludes, "and since we came here people have been really good to us so I think it's just nice to give back for what people have given us, (such as) friendship . . . well, half my garden is plants from other people," she adds with a laugh. "It's just wonderful."

For more on this and other feel-good topics, dig in to the pages that follow. And don't forget to thank a volunteer before the month is out; they're probably not doing it for the gratitude, but a little appreciation is an apt reward nonetheless. ■

Mailbag

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

What a great story you did on our daughter, Candi!! She was always determined, even when she was a child. When she set her goal, she usually reached it as proven by her running passion.

Thank you for a super job!!

Bea Burlingham
(proud Mom)



Volunteers to the rescue

Donations of time and talent occur throughout the Creston Valley, but perhaps none are more appreciated than at Swan Valley Lodge.

“Hope springs eternal in the human breast,” wrote 18th century English poet Alexander Pope. So, too, is hope spawned by spring itself, the season of rebirth.

A sense of optimism unique to this special time of year will be renewed this month, courtesy of the Creston Valley Garden Club, in a setting sorely in need of every uplifting



“They wanted to know if they could come out and clean up our grounds because they saw that they needed some help”

influence it can get. Club members will be marching on Swan Valley Lodge for a third straight year armed with spades, shears and sprinklers, not to mention wheelbarrows full of goodwill to share among residents, their relatives and the staff who also benefit from the gardeners’ benevolent efforts.

Louise Moberg, the co-ordinator of recreation, day programming and volunteer services at the extended-care home, first fielded a call from the club in 2010.

“They wanted to know if they could come out and clean up our grounds because they saw that they needed some help,” Moberg says. “Lots of the shrubs and stuff needed trimming so they all came in on a weekend and did a complete cleanup.

“It was awesome. We don’t have a gardening maintenance program

here. We were trying to do it ourselves after hours and on our lunch breaks.”

Club members kept coming back and eventually “decided they were going to take us on as their pet project.”

Fittingly, the gardeners’ first appearance of the year coincides with National Volunteer Week, which runs April 15-21 in recognition of Canada’s 12.5 million volunteers, a small portion of whom help make the Creston Valley the beloved place that it is.

The contributions are clearly not lost on the 100-plus lodge residents and their caregivers.

“They really appreciate them,” Moberg says. “They think it’s wonderful that they take their own time to come and do that for them. It makes them feel blessed and honoured to have somebody care that they get to look at nice things too, because they can’t do it on their own.

“The residents that we have are basically . . . here for the last six months of life. We don’t have a lot of people who can just go out and water or weed.”

Though physically unable to help, some share the moment in their wheelchairs by simply observing or spinning tales of their own green-thumb pasts.

“A lot of our residents have been gardeners during their lives and so they appreciate the gardens,” Moberg says. “They love to see the flowers. Last year we started a vegetable garden as well, so we have nice, fresh tomatoes and peppers

and carrots. As soon as there was a ripe tomato, it was gone.

“All of our staff think it’s wonderful (too). It makes the morale better . . . seeing new flowers blooming or seeing that there’s not a bunch of weeds.”

Nielle Baugh is a regular Swan Valley visitor among the 10 or 12 different club members who take part in work bees that run weekly early in the growing season and taper off to every second week in the heat of the summer, culminating with a major cleanup after the first frost.

“I think all of us are doing it because we like to volunteer in the community and it’s nice to do it through your particular interest,” says Baugh, a retiree who joined the garden club shortly after moving from Battleford, Sask., in 2010. “I enjoy working with a group of people who are involved in a project of some kind and this seems to be a very rewarding one.”

Club membership is 50-strong. Guest speakers expound on pertinent topics during monthly meetings, and the club also



organizes a biennial tour of selected private gardens in the valley.

“Some people work at the greenhouse at the college,” Baugh says. “Some people just work in their own yards, and there is a group that works at Swan Valley as soon as the weather improves.”

They are buoyed by the positive feedback, though not dependent on it.

“I don’t think that any of us are doing it for that reason, to be thanked,” Baugh says. “But it’s nice to see the difference we make. The staff are very appreciative and I think that the residents (are), as well. They say that it’s made a huge difference and that the grounds are very pleasant now. I think they had been badly neglected for awhile.”

Only one of four garden areas is visible from the street. Another one separates two new wings erected in 2005 to the west of the main structure; it was known as the “dandelion garden” before being planted in 2007, but even that represented only a modest improvement.



“These shrubs were planted when they first did the gardens and the trees and we found that a lot of them are inappropriate because they’ve just overgrown and people can’t see out their windows anymore,” Moberg says. “We’re trying to change some of that because everything had just gotten unruly. They did a lot of trimming and a lot of cleaning up and brought in bark chips.”

The hard, clay soil had to be rehabilitated with bags of peat moss to make it workable.

Another club member, Harvey Reese, went so far with the beautification project as to paint wooden planters, benches and trellises in the garden, which surrounds a summertime fountain. The former dandelion patch is now known as Olga’s Tranquility Garden in memory of a Cranbrook woman, Olga Kramer, in whose name the East Kootenay Foundation for Health contributes an annual sum of money used to buy gardening supplies.

A larger common area behind the main building features space for barbecuing, a wheelchair-accessible swing and a massive rock unearthed during a Swan Valley expansion in 1995.

“They trim up all the trees and look after the roses,” Moberg says. “They put some grasses in these planters because it gets a lot of sun out here and they realize that we can’t put a lot of plants out here because they need a lot of water.”

Grounds to the east of the lodge feature large planter boxes that may

give way to shade trees this year.

It all adds up to a lot of work but it’s a labour of love for the club members, who have the expertise and tools to take care of business.

“Whatever’s required,” Baugh says. “Sometimes it’s raking. Sometimes it’s pruning, planting, watering. We’re all experienced gardeners so when we arrive we look around and see what needs to be done.”

They spend two hours tops at any given time, including a break for refreshments that allows for social interaction among themselves and with residents. But 10 people going at it for even just one hour represents 10 hours of work.

“We get a lot done in the time that we’re there,” Baugh says.

Club input actually begins before the digging starts as part of a program in which Moberg and





“Everybody realizes that if a community is going to be a community, everybody better join in and do something”

half-a-dozen residents make weekly trips to the College of the Rockies Community Greenhouse. Club members recommend what plants would be suitable for the Swan Valley grounds, and those are the seeds Moberg and company plant and tend in the greenhouse until they are ready for transplanting.

This year the club is installing an automatic drip irrigation system in Olga’s Garden, with plans to phase in more of the same in subsequent years. Until then, Reese is the man with the watering can.

“His wife lives in Swan Valley Lodge and he visits her every day so he waters for us,” Moberg says. “It’s nice that we can rely on Harvey.”

Reese’s dedication may be extreme because of his personal ties to Swan Valley but he’s not alone when it comes to boosting morale there.

“One individual who recently moved here from Calgary comes in four times a week and helps with our bingo program,” Moberg says, referring to Leslie Kelner, a semi-retired accountant. “She’ll help with our Happy Hour program, our birthday tea and other special functions like that.

“As well, she is willing to go on one-on-one walks with some of the residents that just want to get outside and go for a 20-minute walk. I would say she probably puts in 10 hours a week.

“She also volunteers at Gleaners and the library – pretty busy lady.”

Then there’s a woman who plays piano for a Monday morning singalong, a dozen musical groups and individuals who entertain during the Friday Happy Hour program and a handful of church groups which take turns leading non-denominational Sunday services.

“Pastor Ron Benty (of Wynndel Community Church) comes in every three months and does an in-house memorial service for us,” Moberg adds. “He volunteers his time to do that, which is nice because a lot of them can’t get out to the funerals.”

All in all, volunteers enrich the lives of Swan Valley residents immeasurably, an outreach that is recognized through annual volunteer appreciation luncheons.

“So much would be missed if we didn’t have our volunteers, because we just don’t have the staff to do it,” says Moberg, a Swan Valley employee since 1995. “It would be pretty boring for them here.

Recreation tries to do what they can throughout the day but we’ve had quite a few cutbacks within Interior Health. On the weekends we don’t have as many staff working anymore and when the volunteers come in it really helps.”

The only requirements are a free criminal record check through the RCMP and an application/interview process through Interior Health. Moberg has a couple of specific roles on her wish list.

“I would definitely like to get a volunteer who would come in and do shopping for our residents once a week,” she says. “Another program I’d like to start with volunteers would be writing letters, Christmas cards. We have a really nice oak desk here and it would be nice to have a volunteer come in, even if it was in the evening, (to help) anybody who would like to write a card or a letter, because a lot of people don’t have use of their hands anymore.”

Of course, there will always be opportunities to simply get residents outside for some fresh air, a walk around the block or window shopping downtown.

The rewards, though intangible, are well worth the effort, as far as Baugh is concerned.

“All volunteers, I think, volunteer for the same reason,” she says, summing up the volunteer spirit. “Everybody realizes that if a community is going to be a community, everybody better join in and do something, and for us gardeners to be able to volunteer (by) gardening is particularly pleasant.” ■



From the Mayor's desk

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

Municipal policing for the Town of Creston – a growing community

TRIGGER:

In the Province of British Columbia, when a community grows and exceeds 5,000 in population, the requirement for a Municipal Police Unit Agreement (MPUA) is mandated and the municipality becomes financially responsible for 70 per cent of their community policing costs.

On Feb. 8, the 2011 Canadian census was released and, officially, the Town of Creston grew to 5,306 from 4,826 (9.9-per-cent increase from the 2006 census).

Growing to a community with a population exceeding 5,000 has been anticipated by the residents of Creston for over 15 years and we finally made the leap. Maybe the secret is getting out about just how great this community is to live in.

NEGOTIATIONS:

In January a conference call meeting was held with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General staff. Town council and staff were advised that eight of the 13 officers serving at the Creston RCMP detachment would be assigned to the town. As such, the municipality would be responsible for all associated expenses. With this call, negotiations began.

The town's request to lower the number of assigned officers was given consideration by the ministry staff and, subsequently, the town was assigned financial responsibility for seven of the 13 officers.

In addition, the number of required civilian administration staff the town will now be responsible for is 1.5 FTE (full-time employment positions) instead of the originally

assigned 2.0 FTE. With both of these concessions by the province, the town has successfully negotiated savings of approximately \$190,000 per year.

Creston Valley Business Buzz



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- Owner
Gerry Dyer

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Our new MPUA is effective April 1, 2012. This is a 20-year agreement with a five-year review clause and a two-year “opt-out” notice clause.

PROCESS:

Our existing Creston RCMP detachment will continue to be staffed with 13 officers and three public support staff, with the town being responsible for 70 per cent of the costs of seven officers and the 1.5 administrative support staff. The costs for the remaining six officers in the detachment will remain the responsibility of the province and federal government.

At this time our local detachment has one staff sergeant, two corporals, nine constables; one GIS (general investigation services) officer and three public service employees.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

The ability to set objectives, priorities and goals for the MPUA with our community is a notable benefit of the new policing arrangement. As mayor I will meet with the detachment commander on a regular basis to review and set local objectives. It is important that

I receive input from citizens to assist in these meetings.

POLICING RESERVE AND TAXES:

On your 2012 property tax notice, the “Police – Residential” line will be replaced with a “Police – Municipal” line.

“Growing to a community with a population exceeding 5,000 has been anticipated”

The town’s policing reserve contains \$1.1 million, created by previous town councils about 15 years ago in anticipation of going over a population of 5,000. This reserve will be used during the next five years to offset the initial costs of increased policing.

At the end of five years, residential property owners will see a 12.72-per-cent increase in their total tax bill, if everything else that determines taxation doesn’t change.

In 2011, for a \$200,000 residential assessment, your police tax was

approximately \$60. In 2012, the same \$200,000 house will be taxed at approximately \$110 to \$115 to accommodate the increased costs for policing.

Beyond the increase for policing costs, of which council has no control, your elected representatives are striving to achieve a zero-per-cent tax increase for the municipal portion of your taxation bill.

COUNCIL COMMITMENT:

I want to assure all Creston taxpayers that your council is working diligently to find ways to reduce the impact of the increased policing costs, wherever possible. As a result, 2012 budget discussions have been difficult, to say the least.

All areas of the budget have been affected by this increased cost and council and staff have worked hard to establish a budget that maintains current services, but leaves little to no room for expansion of services. The challenge to council over this next year will be to continue to find improvements and efficiencies that will benefit our taxpayers. ■

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

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Let's be honest

Story by: Alfred (Alfie) Seidl, Business Consultant and Life Coach

Thoughts on living a richer life and creating a better world

Hello, and thank you for taking a few moments to read this article and maybe share it with your friends. Yes, I know it's a busy world these days, what with updating your Facebook and Twitter pages, reading the latest issue of I Love Creston and all those other things which need doing.

However, it's good to relax for a bit and read; you never know what you might learn and what good may come of it.

It has been said that knowledge must be applied to be useful, and love must be given to be of benefit. Not much good in knowing something if you don't use it, and what good to love someone but never show nor tell them.

There are many attributes we humans have which perhaps too often we don't stop and think about. Perhaps if we did we might live more enriched and enhanced lives.

What about honesty? Is it something we just hope exists? Is it something we practise and make part of our daily living? Is honesty only talked about but no longer relevant and thus not used?

I'm sure we've all been talking with someone who at some point in the conversation used the phrase, "I'll be honest with you." Now isn't that an interesting statement? Just what are they saying to you, that up until that point they have not been honest with you?

Perhaps they used it for emphasis, to give more credence to what was about to be spoken. Maybe they were trying to deliberately mislead you.

What about the phrases, "May I be honest with you" or "Let me be perfectly honest with you?" Are they asking your permission to be honest? Were they "imperfectly" honest with you before?

"You never know what you might learn and what good may come of it"

I don't know about you, but I tend to get my guard up when I hear anyone use words or phrases like, "Let me be honest with you." Not that I am naive, but I expect people to be honest with me, and themselves, when talking with me. In fact, I expect people to be honest with me in all dealings they have with me.

I think honesty, like courtesy and common sense, are required if we want to live in a civilized and caring society.

At times it seems that those in positions of leadership and trust have failed to provide good examples. Thus, some may think, "Well, if the ones at the top are doing it, why bother?"

Almost every day we read or hear about another top-end scandal in the business world or politics and even in law enforcement. Maybe, and perhaps

inadvertently, we are all guilty of allowing things to become less than what we want them to be.

Perhaps honesty, courtesy, common sense and many other caring attributes have lost their importance in this world of instant messages and anonymous, unaccountable cyber-communications. Are we so busy following what is "going virile" that we have neglected what is integral to what we all really want? Have we lost sight of what is really important in daily living?

This morning I looked into the mirror and had a chat with the guy there. I try to do that every morning. When we make the time to think about our own actions we can make whatever adjustments and changes we want. In doing so we enrich and enhance our own lives, and the lives of those around us as well.

This day was granted to you. Make it the best you possibly can, for yourself and others. ■

For more information, Alfie Seidl can be reached by phone at 250-428-2750 or e-mail at a_netexecutive@hotmail.com.

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Self-taught painter thrives despite art class horror

Story by: Trish Bartlett

Sheri Marean discovered her passion at an early age.

“I have always loved horses and dogs and have always drawn them,” she says.

As we speak, I discover she is self-taught, making pencil sketches of animals, copying from pictures.

“I almost failed art in high school,” she says with a smile. “I didn’t like having to draw apples and bananas. I wanted to draw horses. The teacher assigned a project where we had to draw something on a grid and I just couldn’t get it. I got 53 per cent on the project.

“That same year I entered an art contest at the Calgary public library. I won second prize. My art teacher

asked me what it was all about and I told her. She didn’t say anything, just made a face.”

She shows me her winning drawing; it is of horses.

Having survived high school Marean travelled, always drawing, before returning to Calgary where she became the resident artist for the Alberta Bowhunters Association.

“Whenever a hunter achieved a certain number of kills he was made a master hunter and presented with a drawing,” she says, showing me examples of drawings she had made, the hunter portrayed in the middle with images of bears, moose, elk and deer surrounding him.

“People are hard to draw. The animals were much more fun.”



Other work came her way as she attended various horse and dog shows.

“People gave a photo of their animal and asked me to draw a picture,” says Marean, who received a lot of commission work that way and through word of mouth.



She moved to Creston in 2008 with her immediate family, following her parents who had moved here earlier. That was when she wanted learn to paint and began to experiment with acrylics.

“I took a painting class to learn the techniques of painting but it was like high school art and I didn’t really learn much,” she says. “I took a second class and it was much more relaxed. The students were able to learn from each other.”

She is, in essence, a self-taught painter, moving from acrylics into oils.

“I’ve entered what I call my ‘tree’ period,” she laughingly explains, showing me a number of pictures of hauntingly beautiful, lonely trees created in vivid colours.

Marean has found a lucrative market on the Internet where she sells originals and prints of her works.

“I make use of the online auctions like eBay,” she says.

Lately, she’s ventured into a new area



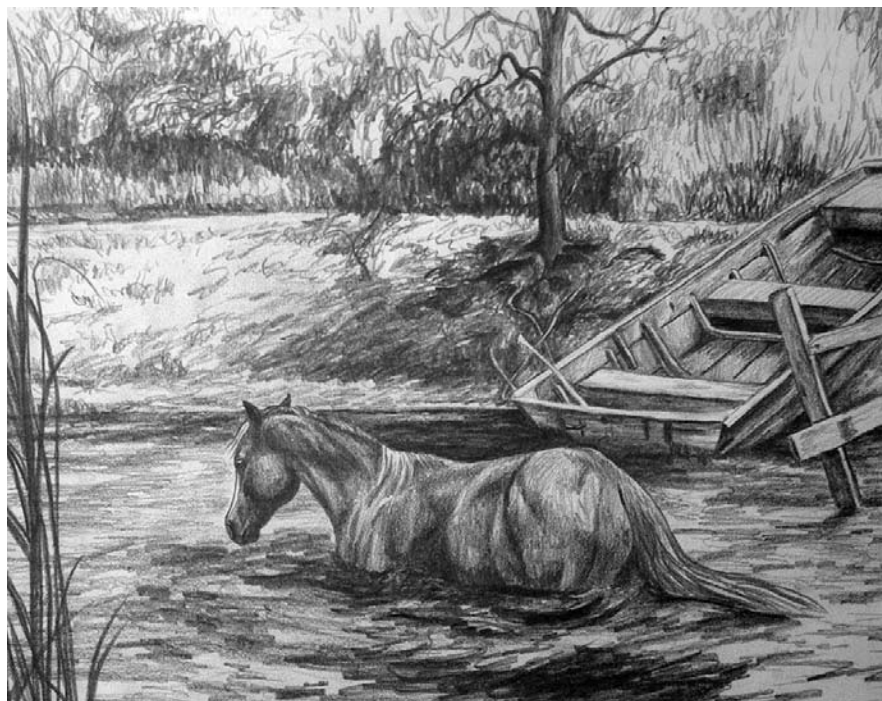
and has begun offering decorated horseshoes on eBay. “They sell well and I really enjoy making them.”

She is only starting to display her work locally.

“I was in the art and craft show before Christmas and did well there,” she says.

Some of her work is displayed at Kootenay Candles and in Bragg Creek Store. She’s also been offered the opportunity to hang her works in Creston Valley Hospital and Canyon-Lister Elementary School.

We look forward to seeing more of Marean’s artwork around town. ■



It's Creston! It's Sirdar! It's Creston! It's ... confusing

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

It started with a small paragraph in the Nelson Daily Miner newspaper of Jan. 24, 1899:

“The lively little town at the eighth siding on the Crows Nest Pass line is having considerable trouble with its name. First it was called Creston and then when the CPR named its stations and one was called Sirdar the public mixed it up with Creston. But the CPR changed Creston to Fisher, not Sirdar, and as Fisher it went. Now word comes that it is to be called Creston after all. Just how it will end, time alone will tell.”

Talk about a puzzling paragraph!

Let me back up a bit and I'll try to explain why. I think I'd better start with a quick history of the town's name.

In the early years, Creston didn't actually have a name. It was referred to as “Fred Little's ranch,” after the fruit ranch of one of the earliest settlers. People living here were described as living “near Rykert's on

short while later, the CPR renamed it Fisher.

This is nothing unusual; many pioneer communities got their official names when the railway came to town. After all, the railway had to put something on its schedules.

Trouble quickly arose, though, because a second railway was building into town – the Great Northern – and the Great Northern referred to the town as Creston. This created considerable confusion.

“In the early years, Creston didn't actually have a name”

the international border” and mines in the region were staked “in the Goat River district,” but that's about as far as it went in terms of official names.

Then, in December 1898, the CPR opened its Crows Nest Pass railway. Creston was the seventh little stop west of Cranbrook on that line so it became known as Seventh Siding. A

So, on Nov. 24, 1898, at a meeting of the local citizens, the decision was made to write to the CPR asking it to change the name on its schedule to Creston.

That the name of Creston was chosen over that of Fisher was no doubt due to the influence of Little, often referred to as “the mayor of Creston,” even though



Station at Seventh Siding (just visible to the left of the train).

the community wouldn't be incorporated until 1924. He chose the name after Creston, Iowa, a town he had visited and liked.

So, back to our puzzling paragraph.

This is the first thing I've ever seen that hints that Creston might have been called Creston before the arrival of the CPR. However, Little arrived here in 1891 and it is entirely possible that he and his neighbours were referring to the community as Creston – Little's preferred name – well before 1898, then the CPR changed it to Fisher and later back again to Creston. A perfectly reasonable speculation, I think.

But then, there's that pesky reference to "the eighth siding." Maybe that was a typo and the author of the paragraph really meant to say "seventh."

Umm, maybe not. Because on Dec. 9, 1898, the Miner published this little snippet of news: "The CPR has changed the name of the new town of Creston on the CPR railroad to Sirdar in honour of General Kitchener."

Things got even murkier with this announcement a day later: "The complete list of the changes in names made on the CNP line up to date is as follows: . . . 5th Siding now Yahk; 6th Siding or Russell Creek, now Kitchener; 8th Siding or Creston, now Sirdar."

OK, so now it seems clear that the town of Creston/Sirdar the newspaper is referring to is what we now call Sirdar, and the community at the seventh siding didn't have its name changed at all. This is supported by an article on Dec. 23 detailing the cost of travelling from

Nelson on the new Crows Nest Pass line: \$2 for the steamship fare to Kootenay Landing at the south end of Kootenay Lake, then five cents per mile on the train. Total cost to Sirdar, \$2.15; to Fisher, \$2.95; to Kitchener \$3.35; and so on.

So, clearly, they were two different communities – one close to the south end of Kootenay Lake,

"Many pioneer communities got their official names when the railway came to town"

formerly called Creston, now called Sirdar, and another about 16 miles further away called Fisher, later to be renamed Creston.

Are you still with me?

But (there's always a "but") . . . on Dec. 19, 1898, the Miner published an article that's your typical promotional piece, highlighting all the glories of a new town in order to attract new settlers and new business. It's exactly what you would expect to see about the communities along a brand new railway line.

The title of the article is "Sirdar Booming" – but it refers to Creston.

The article says the community, about halfway between the border and Kuskonook, was previously known as Fred Little's ranch. It mentions a sawmill owned by "Messrs Byers and Bigelow" (that's the Goat River Lumber Company, later renamed the Creston Lumber Company, which was located across the tracks behind the present-day Extra Foods).

It talks about the seven hotels and five general stores being built – the exact numbers that appear in the Creston listing in the Henderson's

Directory of BC Towns for 1899. (Sirdar, on the other hand, barely registers at all in that directory.) It says there are numerous mining claims near the town, on Goat Mountain.

My conclusion? The editor of the Daily Miner didn't have a clue which town was Creston and which was Sirdar. Or maybe he was

deliberately trying to mess with people's minds. Either way, I don't think I'm going to take his word for it that Sirdar was ever called Creston, or that Creston was ever called Sirdar. ■

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

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Home & Garden

How to prune spring flowering shrubs

www.canadiangardening.com

The bright yellow blossoms of forsythia and the fragrant purple sprigs of lilacs are welcome springtime sights. Shrubs such as these launch the seasonal flower display with fireworks of colour.

Prune for blooms, beauty and health

Judicious pruning keeps shrubs blooming their best. Cutting off spent flowers diverts the plant's energy from unnecessary seed production to the creation of plentiful flower buds for next year. Pruning can also improve the shape and structure of a bush, enhancing its beauty and keeping it healthy by improving air circulation and allowing sunlight to penetrate into the centre of the clump. And because many spring-flowering shrubs produce flowers on new wood, pruning out old branches promotes the growth of young, blossom-bearing ones. However, shrubs younger than three years generally do not need pruning.

Use the right tools

Most shrubs can be pruned using one or more of four basic tools: a

pair of secateurs, loppers, a small pruning saw and pole-mounted pruners. For twigs and stems measuring less than the diameter of a thumb, hand-held secateurs will do the job. Loppers, ratcheted for better leverage, can handle thicker stems. Large branches may require a Japanese pruning saw, which cuts on both the pull and the push strokes, making them more efficient than saws fitted with conventional blades. For cutting high branches, pruners mounted on an extensible pole make it easy to reach to the top without a ladder.

The blades of secateurs and loppers should be sharpened and honed after every few cuts. When pruning out diseased branches, sterilize blades with rubbing alcohol after each cut.

Know when to prune

Spring-flowering shrubs are able to bloom so early in the season because they produce their flower buds during the previous season. Forsythias, for example, start forming flower buds over the summer, and these nestle behind leaf axils where they remain dormant through fall and winter.

To prevent the removal of next season's flower buds, it's best to prune before the buds start to develop. Various shrubs produce buds at different times of the season, and climate plays a role, too, so it's often difficult to gauge just when this will happen. Therefore, the safest time to prune is just after the shrub has finished blooming.

How to prune step by step

- Remove any dead or diseased wood, cutting stems right to the ground.
- Prune out some of the older branches (these are thicker and darker than younger stems), cutting them back to about 30 centimetres from the ground.
- Shorten the remaining stems by about one-third and remove any inward-facing branches. This will control the size of the shrub and open it up to air and sunlight.
- Remove any remaining dead blossoms; depending on the shrub, these can be removed by shearing, pruning or manually snapping them off.
- Pruning shrubs in this manner every year, being careful not to remove more than one-third of the overall size, ensures attractive, floriferous and healthy plants. ■



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Home & Garden

Tips for Spring Gardening

www.handycanadian.com

In Canada our late springs are not easy for starting gardens, especially vegetable gardens. There's no need to push the rites of spring when you can get other things in order that are just as important.

Compost Treatment

Most gardeners have a compost bins that holds leaves, decaying vegetation and kitchen compost. It has been sitting all winter and now it is time to turn it over and get some oxygen into the mix. Besides the fertilizing component compost provides great mulches and other soil improvements. By preparing the

organic compost before your garden is ready to plant you can provide great soil conditioners and nutrients.

Seeds and Plants

When it comes to tomatoes and other plants many Canadians begin with seeds in late February. On warm, spring days these plants are taken outside to test the weather on their own and "harden." When the weather dictates that planting is ready the plants have been allowed to adapt to their new weather patterns.

Pruning

In Canada any time from late February on is a good time for

pruning trees and shrubs. This is only for those trees and shrubs that are not spring blooming. During this time the thinned out bushes can be cleaned of debris that was not easy to reach during the fall.

Yard Clean-Up

After pruning the rest of the yard can be cleaned of debris that has accumulated over the winter. This includes spruce bough and leaves that were spread out to protect the flowerbeds. In addition burlap covers for shrubs and trees can be taken off.

Mulching

When the weather begins to get hot and the ground dries then the garden work can begin. Also remember that the soil should not be allowed to get too dry or the roots will burn. This is where compost and garden mulch will come in handy. ■

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painting is an easy DIY project that delivers surprising value.

1) Take Your Time

Remember that interior paint preparation can take up to three times longer than the actual painting process does. While that might be intimidating, skipping or rushing through the preparation only causes more work later on.

2) Clear Out What You Can

If it's portable and possible move furniture, knick knacks and other home decor out of the room. This includes pictures on the wall and on the table, flower pots, draperies, furniture and clutter.

3) Cover What You Can't

Whatever is left in the room, whether furniture or flooring, needs to be covered for protection. Use thin poly for everything but the floor, where it's a good idea to lay down canvas drop clothes.

4) Do the Same Thing to the Wall Surface

Remove what you can from the wall

surface, such as outlet covers, curtain rods and attached shelving. Tape all of the screws to the back of the covers for easy replacement. All of the permanent fixtures, like trim and moldings can be masked off using painter's tape.

5) Repair Holes or Nicks in the Drywall

With some drywall mud or patch repair product, fill and lightly sand any holes, scratches and gouges that you find.

6) Check the Caulking

Before you begin repainting, have a good look at the caulking around your windows and doors. If it needs repair or replacing, now is the time to do it.

7) Clean the Wall

Even if it doesn't look dirty, a good wipe down with mild soap and water will give your new paint a solid base. Dirt, dust, grime and oils may be largely invisible, but once you paint over them they'll be permanently exposed and you may end up with peeling, uncured paint.

8) Stir the Paint

Make sure your paint is freshly shaken and fully stirred, distributing the pigment evenly through the can. Always work with clean brushes, trays and roller covers. ■



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Spring arrivals in the wetlands



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

I was looking at the results from the Christmas bird count – wow, we are sure lucky to have such a huge diversity of bird species here in Creston. There were 76 species and 12,214 individuals counted. And it was the middle of winter!

“I am on a daily routine of filling up the feeder”

At our house we have noticed a steady increase in the number of species and individuals at our feeders as spring unfolds. I am on a daily routine of filling up the feeder in the morning and, if I am a little late, I seem to detect chips and chirps laced with a subtle tone of agitation.

April marks the return of many migratory bird species. The ice has mostly melted by now and temperatures are warming up. That is all that is needed to trigger the migratory clock of the various bird species that make the north-south journey each season.

In late March the Canadian Wildlife Service conducted aerial bird surveys over the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area, with help from our resident biologist, Marc-André Beaucher. Even then, when ice still lingered on some of the ponds,

thousands of ducks were seen throughout the CVWMA.

Rafts of coots, an estimated 7,000 individual birds, were seen on Duck Lake. There were also lots of mallards, geese, northern pintails, American wigeons and many species of diving ducks.

I always eagerly await the arrival of the ospreys. To me, that means spring has officially arrived.

Usually they return in early April but many factors can contribute to an earlier or later arrival date. After all, it is a long journey from the Gulf of Mexico.

“I always eagerly await the arrival of the ospreys”

The CVWMA has a camera ready and installed on a nest located near the Wildlife Interpretation Centre in anticipation that a pair will return to the nest and make it their home for the season. If the birds do return to the nest, make sure to keep yourself tuned to our Web site

(www.crestonwildlife.ca) as we will be showing the live feed from the nest here in late May or early June. ■

If you would like to keep up to date on projects, programs and events at the CVWMA, please contact us to get on our e-newsletter or mailing list by calling (250) 402-6900, e-mailing askus@crestonwildlife.ca or visiting our Web site at www.crestonwildlife.ca.



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Take the first steps toward employment today

Story by: Kootenay Employment Services

There is always something new starting up at Kootenay Employment Services in Creston.

The new Employment Program of BC (EPBC) begins April 2, and KES is kick-starting the launch with a one-week Job Club starting the same day.

KES is partnering with the new Ramada Hotel in Creston to host a

Recruitment Day at the KES office on April 12. To help eligible residents find local employment, and join the new Ramada Hotel and Ricky's All Day Grill, KES will provide four days of workshops on writing winning resumes, adding finesse to interviews and building essential skills for success in the workplace.

Participants in the April Job Club will end the week with a full-day

certificate course called Worldhost, one of the standard courses for employment in the hotel and tourist industry. Serving-It-Right and WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System) certificates will also be offered during the week.

To find out if you are eligible for the Job Club call KES at (250) 428-5655 or drop by our office at 119 – 11th Avenue North.

In other KES news, our self-employment program for experienced workers (aged 50-plus) is winding up. Valley residents can read more about the exciting new small businesses being created in the next issue of I Love Creston.

At the other end of the age spectrum, KES is currently running the Making the Transition Youth Program.

“KES is partnering with the new Ramada Hotel in Creston”

Workshop participants will start their paid work placements April 2.

Lots of folks know where KES is but hardly anyone seems to know the full extent of all the employment assistance opportunities we offer residents living between Yahk and Riondel. Whether you're looking for work, considering a career change, investigating retraining or thinking of starting your own business, KES has something for you.

Professional employment counsellors are available to help you develop an action plan to get you where you want to go. Many people who are eligible under the new EPBC may access certificate courses as well as other individual supports to increase their chances of being hired. ■



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Happy Easter



<http://www.indobase.com/holidays/easter>

Easter facts:

- The name Easter owes its origin from Eastre, the Anglo-Saxon goddess who symbolizes hare and egg.
- Easter always falls between March 22 and April 25.
- Pysanka is a specific term used for the practice of Easter egg painting.
- From the very early times, egg has been considered to be the most important symbol of rebirth.



Easter Colors

Easter colors wheel is a real comprehensive one and encompasses innumerable colors. Most of the people are unaware about the Easter color philosophy. In fact, all the colors of Easter have their own unique significance.

RED: this color is associated with the blood that Jesus Christ had shed for mankind. Thus the color red is a symbol of love and sacrifice for goodness of humanity.

WHITE: this Easter color signifies purity and grace.

- The initial baskets of Easter were given the appearance of bird's nests.
- The maiden chocolate eggs recipes were made in Europe in the nineteenth century.
- Each year witnesses the making of nearly 90 million chocolate bunnies.
- Next to Halloween, Easter holiday paves way for confectionary business to boom.
- When it comes to eating of chocolate bunnies, it is the ears that are preferred to be eaten first by as many as 76% of people. ■

GREEN: the color green brings ray of hope. Green is the color of grass.

PURPLE: Easter color purple is indicative of royalty. It is said that the color purple brings wealth.

YELLOW: it is the color that is related to the brightness of sun. It's a color that brings joy and happiness.

ORANGE: it is the color that represents hope. It is associated with the dawn of day.

PINK: Easter colour pink indicates fresh beginning. ■

History of Easter

Origin of Easter festival dates back to the Pagan times. It is celebrated to honor the Jesus' return to life. There are many legends associated with Easter history. One of the Easter story says, that the very name Easter has been derived from Eostre, who was the Anglo Saxon Goddess of spring. Thus, it is also said that the Easter celebration is actually dedicated to the refreshing spring season. This Pagan holiday, Easter is one of the principal religious festivals of Christians. It was earlier addressed as the festivity of Eostre that always occurred during the period of vernal equinox, when the ratio of day to night was exactly the same.

But some of the legends say, that this festival Easter actually owes its origin to the Hebrew tradition, instead of the Christian tradition. According to the Hebrew lunar calendar, it falls in the first month also known as 'Nisan'. According to Hebrew tradition, the reason behind its celebration is that, it was during this period, that Israel after having suffered for 300 years finally got rescued from the bondage of Egypt. But in all the legends, one thing that is emphasized is that, Easter is a grand holiday that is celebrated to glorify the victory of life over death and light over darkness. ■



The mind and body

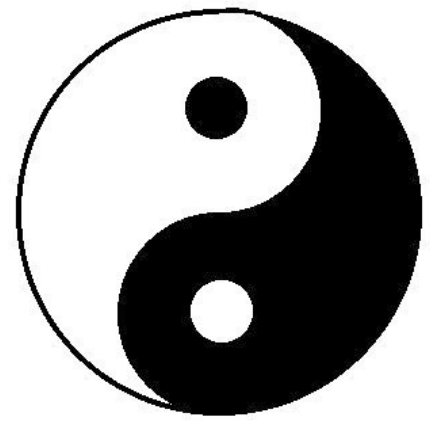
Story by:
Shifu Neil Ripski

Control of our bodies is a much-discussed subject in my tai chi and kung fu classes: place your hand right there, your foot over a few inches, etc, etc.

However, one of the things people don't usually put together is the amount of mental clarity that is

needed in order to be so exact in our movements and what great things that does for our health.

You see, the Chinese do not have an understanding of the mind and body that involves any dualism. It is understood that the mind and body are integrated as one unit. This is why the Chinese doctor may ask you about your dreams or emotions when you come to him/her with an ailment such as a cold or achy joint.



"It is understood that the mind and body are integrated as one unit"

Indeed, that idea is all-pervasive in Chinese culture, including very much the martial arts. The approach is simple: we train the mind to train the body and we train the body to train the mind.

A person who can control their body exactly begins to understand more and more about themselves, not only physically but mentally and emotionally. If we hope to control our bodies in this way we must also be able to handle the inevitable frustration included in doing it incorrectly time and time again.

This asks us to become more calm and collected – people with a high tolerance for frustration – and learn to persevere. These are the qualities I work very hard to instil in the youth who come to train with me at Red Jade.

Time and time again I see young, unco-ordinated people with an interest in martial arts slowly begin to confront their bodies and emotions in a way they did not expect. I see them grow and

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and how we interact with society. Martial arts are not about violence; they are about learning who we really are and becoming better human beings with strong character and morals. ■

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

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change into more calm, articulate people able to express themselves freely through their movements and speech.

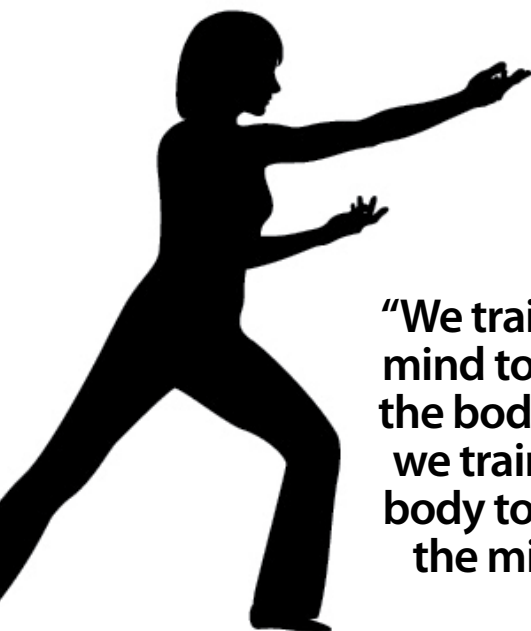
The idea of removing the dualism of our approach to the mind and body changes many things for us as we understand that our minds and bodies are really one. Fine motor

control comes from a clear mind and, indeed, a clear mind creates many possibilities in movement and in life.

Where our health is concerned, the number 1 cause of disease (dis-ease) is the mind. How frustrated and stressed do we live our lives? How often do we comfort ourselves with sweet foods instead of working through our emotions logically and clearly? How often have we heard of a member of our society suffering a catastrophic heart attack and recall, "He had it coming. He was very stressed."

We already intuitively understand the connection but we tend not to

live our lives in a way that reflects this. Arts like tai chi and kung fu allow us to see the integration at work and slowly, over time, not only change our bodies but our minds, emotions



"We train the mind to train the body and we train the body to train the mind"



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Collins, Swiston clean up at T-Cats' awards night

Story by: Creston Valley Thunder Cats

March saw the end of the Creston Valley Thunder Cats' 2011-12 season, wrapping up March 5 with an annual awards banquet honouring individual achievements.

The following players were recipients of accolades at the banquet:

- Most Valuable:
Jesse Collins
- Most Improved:
Jonathan Watt
- Most Inspirational:
Scott Swiston
- Most Sportsmanlike:
Trevor Hanna
- Most Points: Collins
- Coach's Choice:
Scott Swiston
- Windshield Award:
Tre Potskin
- Carson Banman Memorial Award: Brock Ward
- Rookie of the Year:
Trevor Forward
- Best Defenceman:
Trevor LeBlanc
- Mayor's Citizenship Award:
Brock Ward
- Most 3 Stars: Collins
- Most Valuable Player (playoffs):
Scott Swiston
- Fan Favourite:
Scott Swiston and Brock Ward
- Most Dedicated Fan:
Phil Edwards



Pictured left to right: Travis Ludwar, Scott Swiston, Brent Heaven, Brock Ward, and Garth Ludwar.



Pictured left to right: Travis Ludwar, Jesse Collins, Brent Heaven, and Garth Ludwar.

- President's Choice Award (Volunteer of the Year):
Bob Foreman
- Grandma Kepke Supporter of the Year:
Home Building Centre

Two players received Kootenay International Junior Hockey League Eddie Mountain Division awards presented by KIJHL vice-president Milton Crawford at a home playoff game:

- Rookie of the Year:
Trevor Forward
- Most Valuable Player:
Jesse Collins

Forward broke many rookie records of the Thunder Cats, including most points by a rookie.

“Two players received Kootenay International Junior Hockey League Eddie Mountain Division awards”

Collins broke the team record for most points in a single regular season, accumulating 95 points in 51 games, surpassing former Thunder Cat Cole Yurkowski's record of 83 points in 2008-09, including smashing the record for most assists in a single season with 72. (The previous record of 48 was set by Yurkowski in 2008-09).

With a great performance from our coaching staff, the club is happy to have Brent Heaven returning as head coach next season. In the off-season Heaven will be travelling throughout the province recruiting

“Collins broke the team record for most points in a single regular season”

players for next year's team in hopes of finding the key players to help bring a championship to Creston.

Our successful raffle had Jim Hellman of Creston winning the Chevy Cruze car and Selby Forward of Newfoundland and Labrador winning the TV with surround-sound system. Cash prizes were won by Florio V. (Castlegar), Tom Swiston (Calgary), Karen Hanna (Whitehorse), Berwin

Pisony (Creston), Barry Munro (Cranbrook), Travis Ludwar (Creston), Zenon Trischuk (Elkford) and Peter Eigard (Whitehorse). Congratulations to all the winners and thank you to everyone who supported our raffle.

Win the on-ice action done, planning the 2012-13 season has already begun. The organization welcomes any community members to become involved in the junior B hockey club, as volunteers are needed for many jobs to ensure a successful season. Dwindling volunteer support in fund-raising and game nights has the community in jeopardy of losing a Creston tradition of junior hockey.

Become involved with the Thunder Cats, make new friends and give back to our community to ensure

great hockey entertainment stays in our community. With executive positions available for next season and other volunteers needed for many other jobs throughout the year, come to our annual general meeting May 23, 7 p.m., in the ABC Country Restaurant's basement meeting room. Hope to see you there. ■

For more information visit
www.crestonvalleythundercats.ca.

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www.paws-crestonbc.org



Stinging nettle – the ultimate spring tonic

Story by: Maya Skalinska
Master Herbalist, Registered Herbal Therapist

Nettle leaf is among the most valuable herbal remedies. It's packed with nutrients and grows abundantly all over the Kootenays.

Many shy away from this wonderful superfood, as it does sting, but read on to get some great tips on how to harvest and cook the plant, and get rid of the sting.

“Many shy away from this wonderful superfood”

I'll start with the amazing nutritional value you can get from a bunch of young nettle leaf cooked or steamed . . . a true superfood.

It is rich in iron, boron, calcium, potassium, sulphur, vitamin A, B complex, vitamin C, chlorophyll

and antioxidants, as well as many constituents that have anti-inflammatory, diuretic, antiallergenic, decongestant and antihistamine effects, just to name a few. Nettles are also a great source of complete protein. So what does this all mean?

Nettle's iron content makes it a wonderful blood builder, and the presence of vitamin C aids in the iron absorption, which makes nettle an excellent herb for anemia and fatigue.

Boron is a trace mineral essential for healthy bones as it helps bones retain calcium. It also has a beneficial influence on the body's endocrine (hormonal) system, as hormones play a role in helping the body maintain healthy bones and joints. The boron and calcium combination helps prevent osteoporosis.

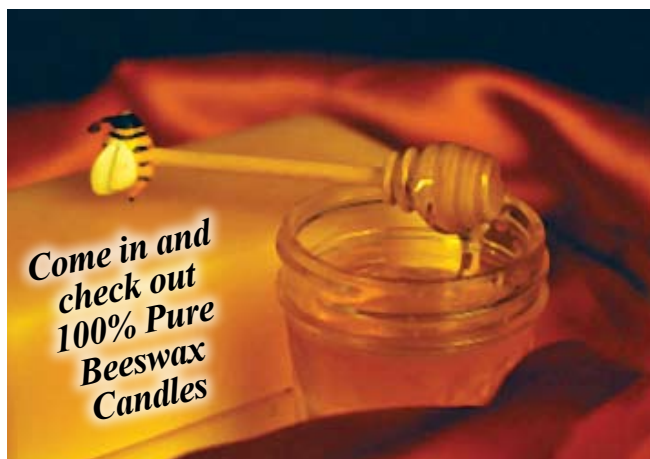


“Nettles are also a great source of complete protein”

The antioxidants and high levels of potassium and chlorophyll help with cardiovascular disorders, tumours and immune deficiency.

In herbal medicine, nettle leaf is very effective for arthritis, rheumatism, gout, kidney disease, fluid retention and bladder infections. It also gently cleanses the body of metabolic

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wastes and has a stimulating effect on the lymphatic system, enhancing the excretion of wastes through the kidneys.

In freeze-dried form, nettle leaf is great for treating hay fever, asthma, seasonal allergies and hives.

Several clinical trials have demonstrated the efficacy of stinging nettle in treating enlarged prostate glands (benign prostatic hyperplasia or BPH). A combination of nettle root and saw palmetto was found to be equally as effective as prescription drugs for BPH, but without any side effects.

Harvest nettles in early spring, wearing long sleeves, gloves and boots. Using scissors, cut five to seven inches from the top. To dry, hang it in bunches upside down in a well-ventilated area. I find twist ties work great for keeping the bunches together.

Once dried, remove the leaves from the stems (I still wear gloves for this) and store in a glass container away from direct sunlight. In case you do get stung, rubbing rosemary, mint or sage leaves on the affected area takes the sting out.

If you have arthritis in your hands or wrists, don't wear gloves. The sting is an effective medicine for arthritis.

I recommend three cups daily of nettle tea made with two to three teaspoons of dried leaf, steeped 10 to 15 minutes in a pint of boiling hot water or, for BPH, two to three teaspoons of the root per cup of tea.

For allergies, take one or two 240- to 300-milligram freeze-dried nettle capsules, three times per day. Nettle is completely non-toxic and safe to use.

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp butter, divided
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 tsp. sea salt, plus more to taste
- 2-3 potatoes, chopped (or ½ cup white rice)
- 4-6 cups chicken or vegetable broth
- 1/2 to 1 lb. stinging nettle leaves (wear gloves to remove the leaves from stem)
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 tsp. nutmeg
- 1/2 cup heavy cream (optional)
- sour cream or yogurt (optional)

Preparation:

In a large pot, melt 1 tbsp. butter. Add onion and 1 tsp. salt. Cook, until onions are soft.

Add potatoes (or rice) and broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to maintain a steady simmer and cook 15 minutes.

Add nettles and cook until very tender. Stir in remaining 1 tbsp. butter, pepper and nutmeg.

Puree soup. Stir in cream, if using. Season to taste with additional salt and pepper.

Serve hot, garnished with sour cream or yogurt. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

As a spring tonic I love making this nutrient-dense soup:

There's something very special about harvesting and making your own medicine. I invite you to try it out this spring. Your body will thank you for it. ■

Maya Skalinska is a master herbalist and registered herbal therapist offering iridology, pulse and tongue analysis, herbal medicine, nutrition consultations and flower essences in Crawford Bay and at Vital Health in Creston. For more information or to book an appointment call 250-225-3493.

Out & About

Submitted by: www.crestonevents.ca

April 4

Andrea SUPERstein

Emerging canadian vocalist tours
Western Canada

Location: Snoring Sasquatch
21 - 11th Ave. North
Doors open at 7pm
Show starts at 8pm
Contact: Paul Hutcheson
Phone: 250-428-4546
www.andreasuperstein.com

April 13

Sasquatch Arts & Music
Society (SAMS) AGM

Location: Snoring Sasquatch
21 - 11th Ave. North, 7pm
Contact: Sandra Zgagnor
Phone: 1-877-264-8543

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Location: Yahk

- 5 pm Cocktails
- 6 pm Dinner
- 7 pm Live Auction
- 8 pm Dancing to Creston Community Band
- 9 pm Silent Auction closes

Contact: Judy Dickson
Phone: 250-424-5580
www.yahkkingsgate.com

April 20 to 21

Creston Valley Home, Garden and Leisure Show

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Location: CDCC

April 20, 2pm - April 21 5pm

Contact: Jim Jacobsen
Phone: 250-428-4342
www.crestonvalleychamber.com ■

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Tuesday & Friday 9 am to 4 pm,
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RTV500 - Features

- 2cyl water cooled 15.8hp Kubota gas engine - Variable Hydrostatic transmission (25mph top speed) - 1102lb tow capacity - 441lb carrying capacity - rear diff lock



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L3800DT with loader - Features

- 31.5 pto hp - 8F/4R gear drive transmission - Cat. 1 3-pt hitch - Foldable ROPS
- with LA524 loader (1152lb lift capacity)

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