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January
2012

i love creston



A love-Haiti relationship

Creston teen reconnects with roots
in humanitarian way

Literacy

Engage in Random Acts of
Reading throughout the month

Creston Museum


Flush with agricultural
success thanks to water works

Sports


Meet the 2011-12
C.V. Thunder Cats



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Do It Yourself Carpentry - pg 10
Private Pilot Ground School - pg 12
Pesticide Applicator - pg 20

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i love creston

One of the 30 handmade quilts generously donated by Creston residents.

5 Mission accomplished – for now

Aaron Gregory delivered the goods to the orphanage he was adopted from in Haiti, but his work is not finished.

The Magazine

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Guest From the editor

Happy New Year to all the faithful readers of I Love Creston magazine, without whom (along with our loyal advertisers) this publication would not thrive.

It hardly seems possible that we are a dozen years into the new millennium, which began with the all-but-forgotten Y2K frenzy that swept the globe for months in 1999 before disappearing – virtually overnight – when nothing remotely apocalyptic occurred once the clocks struck midnight on New Year's Eve 2000.

But here we are in 2012, which gets off to a roaring start in the Creston Valley with a handful of noteworthy events – all of which are highlighted in subsequent pages.

First off there's hockey, C.V. Thunder Cats style. The Kootenay International Junior Hockey League club has been holding its own in the Eddie Mountain Division and boosted its confidence, if not its chances of actually rising up from third place, with a thrilling victory

over the front-running Kimberley Dynamiters before Christmas.

A brutal schedule sees them on the road for seven of 11 games in January, including a three-game road trip at the end of the month, but they are trending upward. You can “meet the Thunder Cats” on a two-page spread that provides a peek at the faces beneath the helmets that normally guard their noggins.

And you can piece together some trivia about the team, such as the fact 13 of 23 players are from B.C., including one home-town product – defenceman Jesse Gartland. Another seven hail from Alberta (including four from Calgary), with the remaining three drawn from more exotic locales (Newfoundland, Whitehorse and Spokane, to be precise).

They're a hard-working bunch under first-year head coach and general manager Brent Heaven, so after checking them out in print be sure to check them out in person up at the John Bucyk Arena.

Speaking of which, the Johnny B. will be overtaken by figure skaters on the third weekend of

the month, when the T-Cats are chased out of town by the Kootenay championships. More than 130 skaters will be vying for berths in the provincials. It's a rare chance to see this calibre of skating so close to home, and a handful of local club members will be putting their best feet forward as well, so turn out and show them the support they deserve.

Judging by the first two editions of Creston's Best Singer, big crowds will not be in doubt when the 2012 version of the popular performance contest hits the stage Jan. 19 at Prince Charles Theatre. As in 2011 it will be a two-part, audience-participation affair (concluding in February), so get your tickets early.

This month's feature, meanwhile, is the feel-good tale of a transplanted Creston teen who's determined to make a difference in the impoverished country from which he was adopted as an infant – Haiti. Read all about Aaron Gregory and then resolve to reach out to the under-privileged in some way, big or small, during the year.

So, without further ado, let's get on with 2012 . . . ■

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Mussotte
mountain school
in southern Haiti.

a heart *for his* homeland

*Aaron Gregory's home is in Canada,
and he's most grateful for that, but his heart remains in Haiti*

Aaron Gregory garnered quite the looks as he passed through terminal after terminal en route to the Caribbean.

Not that there's anything unusual about a Creston kid taking a trip to the tropics with his family. Except this one was literally packing a quilt (a handmade Creston quilt) at all times, practically cuddling it like a security blanket – at age 17.

The sight was incongruous, to say the least, until one discovered this was not a typical sun-seeking junket to escape another cool Canadian fall, and neither was this a typical teen.

Gregory, raised in Canada from infancy but born in Haiti, was a young man on a three-fold mission: connect with his roots; search for his biological mother; and, boost the dozens of underprivileged youngsters who populate the

institutions of the Foundation for Children of Haiti, from which he himself was adopted.

“We had 30 home-made quilts that we couldn’t fit in our luggage because we had all this stuff that was generously donated by Creston (residents),” says his mother, Mary, “so we had this one lone quilt that Aaron actually carried. He had it with him the whole time. He had it on every airplane we had to ride on. He was sleeping on it. We just couldn’t squeeze it in with all the other stuff.

“He carried it into the (foundation) guest house and then we took pictures of it at the orphanage because it was like, ‘We actually got this thing here!’ I found it amazing.”

Much like the story of Gregory himself, who was actually envisioned as a sister for Ebby, whom Mary and then-husband Darren (the couple separated seven years ago) adopted in 1991 – at age three – from an orphanage in Dessalines, Haiti.

“It took us three years to get Ebby home to Canada,” says Mary, who got wind of the foundation’s Haiti Home for Children the second time around, when things progressed more quickly.

“Initially I wanted a little girl, but at the time there were no girls under 18 months like we had requested. The orphanage wrote and (asked), ‘Would the family reconsider?’ I decided, ‘What right did I have to deny a boy child a home if that was what it was supposed to be?’ So the foundation matched us to Aaron. He was able to come home by the time he was 10 months old. I was quite shocked.”

Assimilation was inevitable at such a tender age, yet Mary never hid the boys’ ethnic past – even if that was possible



Unpacking donations at the Guest House.

given the contrasting skin tones. She felt responsible for fostering cultural ties, to the degree each boy wanted them.

“I found Haiti stressful the two times I went there before because I was becoming a mom in a Third World country and uprooting these children from their birth land, so there were mixed emotions,” she says. “You

are taking them from their country to Canada, and they didn’t choose that. So for me it’s always been, ‘That’s part of who they are.’ By choosing them, I chose Haiti.”

Their origins were reinforced by looking at photos, telling stories and even watching TV shows.

“Ebby wasn’t that into it, but as Aaron got older he really wanted it,” Mary says. “So when Aaron showed such an interest we would go out to Nanaimo to camp with other Haitian adoptive families where we looked like everybody else, because we don’t look like everybody else in Creston.”

Gregory is proud of his background and says he feels Haitian despite being raised Canadian.

“I was just born with that love for my country,” he says, “but I also think that my mom wasn’t afraid to show me where I came from. It really helped being taken back to that country to see it first-hand two years ago.”

The 2009 trip was shared with acquaintances from the Vancouver Island camp whereas this one, in November, was conducted through Dillon International adoption services of Tulsa, Okla., as part of a 19-member party, including an

*“Gregory is
background
feels Haiti
being raised*



Facepainting at the Haiti Home for Children.

aunt of Gregory's. Highlights were seeing Gladys Thomas, the foundation's founding director, and delivering supplies and Christmas gifts to the orphans.

"The last time I went we took one suitcase with a few items to donate," Gregory says. "Going a second time I wanted to be able to bring more to the children. My mom and I decided to do a Facebook page called Hands 'n' Hearts for Haiti.

"We were given 30 handmade quilts made locally, and the children from the Lutheran church collected money and items for us. My principal, Mrs. (Sharen) Popoff, put a notice in the high school newsletter telling families about my trip.

"In the end we had three suitcases filled with items for the orphanage and our own suitcases were each half-filled with donations."

*proud of his
Haitian despite
Canadian"*

Gregory fund-raised to pay for luggage fees which wound up being waived by the airline, allowing more than \$1,000 to go directly toward building a new school in Port-au-Prince, the capital of the poorest country in the Americas and location of all the facilities run by Thomas's foundation: Haiti Home for Children orphanage and Seed of the Good Sower

School (in a dangerous slum district); Children's Village (including Hope Home for mentally challenged children and Rainbow of Love nursery on a safer, hill-top location);



Aaron with Gladys Thomas the Director and Founder of the Foundation for Children of Haiti and the Canadian Foundation for the Children of Haiti.

Hope Hospital; and, a school in mountainous Mussotte, housed in a former residence of Thomas which she donated.

"It felt like a real accomplishment, taking all those suitcases all the way to Haiti and then actually handing out (the items) to all the kids," Gregory says. "It made it really worth it."

Having honed his French skills at Prince Charles Secondary School, from which he's on track to graduate in June, Gregory conversed with the kids and shared his expertise in the Haitian national sport.

"We played lots of soccer," he says. "They just loved that."

Gregory visited all the facilities while staying five nights in the foundation guest house. They spent the last two nights in a hotel, much to his chagrin.

"The guest house was such a nice, home kind of feeling. It was what made our group feel like a family," says Gregory, who didn't feel out of place despite being seen initially as a tourist due to his dress and English tongue.

"I'm sure you've had that feeling where you just feel like you're at home or you're at peace with something. That's what it felt like when I was there . . . like I just had a really long vacation from that country."

His warm welcome enhanced not only his own sense of identity but the children's as well.

"If you speak English they're going to think you're not Haitian so if you tell them, 'Yeah, I was born here and I've lived in Canada,' they're like, 'Really?' and they're excited to hear that you came back. Haitians love hearing that



Playing soccer with the children at Rainbow of Love nursery.

adoptees are coming back to see their country. It makes them feel good about their country.”

Another highlight was meeting his “house mom,” who cared for him at the orphanage as the head of his six-child “family pod.” She still works there, and was by coincidence chatting with Gregory’s mother and aunt one day – not knowing who they were – when Thomas entered the room and introduced them.

“Michelle, my house mom, was sitting beside my mom and then Gladys walks in and says, ‘Aaron, this is your house mom,’” he says. “Then (Michelle) starts freaking out and I gave her a great big hug. It was really good to meet her. That definitely helped me with that whole birth-mom thing.”

Alas, Gregory learned just before the trip that his biological mother had died in a car crash. Gregory hadn’t been ready to look for her when he visited Haiti in 2009, but any regret was alleviated by knowing the woman wasn’t even alive at that time.

“(Michelle) knew of his birth mom,” Mary says. “She didn’t know her well but she was able to tell us the story of what happened.”

Dirt poor and making 50 cents a day selling bread on the street, his mother couldn’t afford to raise Gregory after his biological father was killed, also in a car crash, the year he was born.

“We found out she passed away a month before the trip,” Gregory says, “which was better because it would have been really stressful if it happened there. It gave me time to process things. It was kind of sad but I didn’t want to get my hopes up too much because that would be just a

really big disappointment. At the same time, you’re kind of excited, right?”

Mary was proud of how her son conducted himself. In fact, he was upheld as a model of maturity for the other adoptees on the trip, some of whom had to be counselled by the Dillon International staff when they reacted more emotionally to unsuccessful birth searches.

All in all, Gregory considers his mission accomplished, but only in the short term.

“We are very privileged in Canada and we have so much that the children in Haiti do not have access to”

“It’s not over,” he says. “We’ve still got to work hard. I’d like to do lots of fund-raising for the school that’s going to be built, things like bowling . . . maybe a drop-in soccer tournament. I really want those kids to have a nice school (in the Children’s Village) because I know how dangerous it is where the orphanage school is.”

Most of the 160 or so children in the foundation’s care will never know another home as tighter Haitian adoption laws result in only two or three placements per year.

Gregory doesn’t have any definite post-grad plans but hopes to return to Haiti within a couple of years, presumably with more stuffed suitcases and money courtesy of his adopted Creston home.

“I’ll be working toward that,” he says. “I’d love to go back and really help out the country. I’m just trying to figure out how one does that and how you could support yourself (while) doing a job like that.

“We are very privileged in Canada and we have so much that the children in Haiti do not have access to. If I hadn’t been adopted into Canada I would have been one of those kids.

“The foundation run by Gladys does incredible work in Port-au-Prince and I like being able to be a part of it by fund-raising here in Canada and giving back to my roots. It feels really good to be connected to your roots.” ■



The future site for the building of the new school in Port-au-Prince.



From the Mayor's desk

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

Tone at the top!

I'd like to express my sincere thanks to everyone who voted in the recent municipal election, regardless of where you marked your X on the ballot sheet. As your newly re-elected mayor I will continue to work hard to represent this beautiful community of ours to the very best of my abilities at the local, regional and provincial levels.

Ongoing learning is key to a knowledgeable council making informed choices. At the end of November, I attended a two-day orientation and training seminar in Rossland. The seminar was designed to improve knowledge and understanding of some of the many organizations, policy and regulatory documents, and issues that affect our municipality's operations: Municipal Insurance Association, Municipal Finance Authority, Union of B.C. Municipalities, Association of Kootenay and Boundary Local Governments, Local Government Management Association, B.C. Assessment Authority, Community Charter, Local Government Act, Official Community Plans, priority setting, governance issues and much more.

Also in attendance were councillors Scott Veitch, Jerry Schmalz, Wes Graham and

our town manager, Lou Varela.

During this high-intensity seminar, a comment by facilitator George Cuff stuck with me. He noted that the "tone at the top" is essential to running an effective organization.

As mayor, it is important that my attitude and my approach to service be both positive and proactive. A positive tone at the top filters down through to town council, town management, staff and, eventually, to the citizens of Creston and the Creston Valley. I realize that, as mayor, I am the ambassador and representative of our community and I want to do the best job I can in representing you.

During my last campaign I was able to meet with and talk to many citizens and friends about their hopes for our community. While I will not be able to please everyone, I did appreciate the opportunity to listen and hear the many different viewpoints of our diversified citizenry. I encourage ongoing feedback throughout the next three-year term.

One discussion item I'd like to address is the timing/scheduling of our town council meetings. These meetings start at 4 p.m. on Tuesdays and not later in the

evening when interested citizens who are employed in a 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. work structure could more easily attend.

The reasons for this decision are numerous: many delegates are employees of other agencies who present to council during their work day; statutory holidays often fall on Mondays, which requires rescheduling meetings; and, the ability of staff to prepare for meetings in an efficient and timely manner.

Our town staff are on regular time versus possible overtime when meetings are scheduled in the evening. It is also important to note that, when warranted, special meetings can be called to accommodate citizen requests for addressing key issues. Meeting times and dates can be structured specifically to accommodate such delegates.

Given these considerations we'll be continuing with the current meeting schedule of Tuesday at 4 p.m., twice a month.

The position of mayor is an honour and I want to earn your respect. While I am not beyond occasionally making a mistake (the burden of being human), my good intentions and dedication to this community are unwavering.

Wishing everyone in the beautiful Creston Valley a healthy, happy and prosperous new year. ■

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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Family Literacy Day – get caught taking learning outside the classroom

Submitted by the Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy

Every day we send our kids off to school hoping they will learn something – anything – and develop into knowledgeable, successful adults. And while we deal with the daily details of that thing called life, we sometimes forget to encourage learning at home.

Parents are a child's first teacher. Even after they've started school there are still many opportunities for learning as a family. Kids look up to their parents and mimic many of their daily routines. Spending just 15 minutes a day with them can go a long way to helping children develop a love of learning and improve their literacy skills.

In honour of Family Literacy Day, happening across Canada on Jan. 27, here are some activities to do at home

as a family to make learning fun for everyone:

- Establish a night to enjoy activities such as puzzles, crosswords or board games. Switching the activity each week keeps the enjoyment level high.

- The brain is like a muscle – if you don't use it, you lose it. Getting active can help strengthen the mind, so play hide-and-seek, tag or catch outside with your children.

- Use your imaginations by creating stories together. You lead with the first sentence and then go back and forth building on the story. Your child uses their imagination and creativity while together you create a living story. Do this while completing chores to help time pass faster.

- Together, act out the family's favourite book by reading a page together and then acting out what was written. If the kids have friends over, they can engage in this activity and then put on a play for their parents when they are being picked up.

- Still waiting for the lasagna to cook in the oven? Read together while you wait. Pick up a book, magazine or newspaper and open up a world of possibilities.

All of these activities can be done after dinner, outside in the backyard or before you go to bed. By the time they're done you'll be surprised how short 15 minutes really is. Spending time doing learning activities at home is crucial. Practising these activities

will help develop a love of learning for both parents and children, and help to develop important literacy skills.

While we may not think of it, most of

the time spent at home can be seen as a learning activity between you and your child. Even time spent doing the dishes, eating dinner or having a bath can all have a focus on learning without you noticing.

In the Creston area we will be celebrating Family Literacy Day throughout the month with a Random Acts of Reading campaign, co-sponsored by the Creston and District Public Library and the Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy (CBAL). Get caught reading around Creston by our cameramen and take home some great prizes, including bookmarks or coupons for forgiven late fees at the library, plus your name will be entered for the grand prize draw at our Family Literacy Day celebration party.

The party, hosted at the Creston Public Library on Jan. 27 from 1-3 p.m., will be filled with fun games, activities and the draw for our Random Acts of Reading grand prize. So, no matter what you and your family do to enjoy learning together, be sure to come down to the Creston Public Library and share your ideas, meet some other families and enjoy some great games and activities with us. ■

For more information, including literacy tips and activities, and event listings, visit www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca. Also, don't forget to check out the candid photos, posted at the library, of Creston locals who we caught reading.

“We sometimes forget to encourage learning at home”

The Discovery Team

Michael Carpenter Sara Millar




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Affordable housing in demand in Creston Valley

Submitted

In the matter of family housing, the lack of dedicated and affordable family housing in the Creston area should be the highest concern for the community.”

So says Creston Valley Affordable Housing Needs Update, a report prepared for the Creston Valley Community Housing Society (CVCHS) by Alan B. Campbell of the Penticton-based firm Casita Consulting Ltd.

The report is called an update because, since data from the 2010 census is not yet available, Campbell had to use three other sources as a basis for his survey.

One is the 2008 needs survey report done for the CVCHS by the Kootenay Employment Services Society. Another is the Columbia Basin Trust's 2008 State of the Basin Report, and the third is Affordable Housing Assessment and Strategic Planning: The Columbia Basin and Boundary Regions, B.C., dated March 2009, by George Penfield, a retired regional innovation chair at Selkirk College.

To supplement this material, Campbell got “interim updates” from BC Statistics, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Interior Health Authority. He also contacted representatives of existing affordable housing operations in Creston and attended the open house sponsored by the CVCHS on July 6. There he distributed a questionnaire to gather perceptions on the need for affordable housing. This “led to several meaningful discussions about the current state of housing in Creston.”

Campbell's report discusses the need for all kinds of affordable housing – that is, for seniors, families and those with special needs. However, he emphasizes that at present “. . . Creston has no affordable, safe and secure family housing.” He goes on to say, “Based on agency estimates and the census 2006 data, it can be suggested that there is justification for between 30

up to 120 affordable family rental units for the Creston area . . .”

“Affordable,” he notes, means that rent and utilities cost no more than 30 per cent of the tenants' pre-tax income. But to be “acceptable,” a housing unit must also be “adequate” (free of mould and containing the “reasonably expected suite of services . . . that work dependably”) and “fire safety should be demonstrated.”

Campbell points out that affordable housing that meets these criteria is not only essential for those families who need it if they are to have a decent, healthy standard of living, it is also of benefit to the community as a whole.

Studies have shown that families who move from living conditions that most of us would regard as intolerable into decent, affordable housing benefit in many ways. For example, there is less stress and unhappiness in the household, the children usually do better in school and in most cases there is a reduction in the level of crime.

What's more, Campbell says, Creston “needs to secure an affordable housing base for those people of working age in order to sustain the Creston community, and to encourage younger people of working age to move to Creston to staff the suppliers and service providers without whom the town and area will not prosper.”

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Ron Hurry

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The CVCHS has been canvassing ways and means of building affordable family housing units in Creston. It has received “seed money” for its explorations from the Creston Valley Gleaners Society, the Columbia Basin Trust and CMHC to enable it to hire a consultant and has looked at several potential sites, including the former Pioneer Villa and Endicott Centre.

If its hopes are to be fulfilled, says CVCHS president Alexandra Ewashen, it “will need widespread and active community support.”

She adds: “Since my return to Creston six years ago I have been astounded by the generosity of the citizens of this valley. When some have said, ‘It can't be done,’ I have witnessed formal and informal partnerships and collaborations arise which have demonstrated time and time again it can and is being done. I know individuals, small groups and large organizations will come together to ensure affordable family housing is built in Creston.” ■



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Meet the players

CRESTON VALL



1 - Michael Hails
Goaltender

Hometown: Coldstream, AB
Birth Date: October 27, 1994
17 years



4 - Trevor LeBlanc
Defenseman

Hometown: Squamish, BC
Birth Date: March 31, 1992
19 years



5 - Trevor Forward
Forward

Hometown: St. John's, NL
Birth Date: May 18, 1994
17 years



6 - Jonathon Watt
Defenseman

Hometown: Kamloops, BC
Birth Date: July 5, 1993
18 years



12 - Trevor Hanna
Forward

Hometown: Whitehorse, YK
Birth Date: December 24, 1993
18 years



13 - Jordan Johnson
Forward

Hometown: Calgary, AB
Birth Date: May 25, 1991
20 years



14 - CJ Caputo
Forward

Hometown: Calgary, AB
Birth Date: October 17, 1991
20 years



16 - Tyler Akeroyd
Forward

Hometown: Dawson Creek, BC
Birth Date: July 9, 1993
18 years



21 - Andrew Hodder
Defenseman

Hometown: Houston, BC
Birth Date: May 8, 1993
18 years



23 - Dane Birks
Defenseman

Hometown: Williams Lake, BC
Birth Date: August 29, 1995
16 years



24 - Brock Ward "A"
Forward

Hometown: Prince Rupert, BC
Birth Date: October 17, 1991
20 years



25 - Tre Potskin
Forward

Hometown: Prince George, BC
Birth Date: June 29, 1995
16 years

LEY THUNDER CATS



7 - Ryan Murray
Defenseman

Hometown: Kamloops, BC
Birth Date: November 16, 1993
18 years



8 - Brandon Formosa "A"
Forward

Hometown: Mission, BC
Birth Date: March 10, 1993
18 years



10 - Kyle Wilkinson
Defenseman

Hometown: Prince George, BC
Birth Date: October 30, 1994
17 years



11 - Jaiden Ward
Defenseman

Hometown: Prince Rupert, BC
Birth Date: August 13, 1993
18 years



17 - Jesse Collins "A"
Forward

Hometown: Spokane, WA
Birth Date: February 1, 1993
18 years



18 - Scott Swiston "C"
Forward

Hometown: Calgary, AB
Birth Date: March 29, 1991
20 years



19 - Jovi Fabbri
Forward

Hometown: Lethbridge, AB
Birth Date: August 16, 1992
19 years



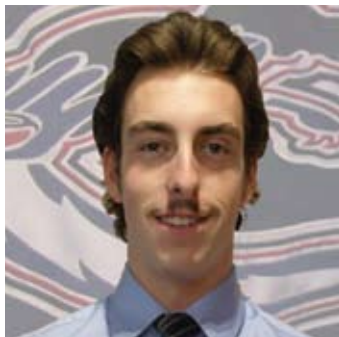
20 - Scott Butters
Forward

Hometown: Chestermere, AB
Birth Date: November 7, 1993
18 years



26 - Darcy Flaherty
Forward

Hometown: Williams Lake, BC
Birth Date: February 16, 1994
17 years



27 - Jesse Gartland
Defense

Hometown: Creston, BC
Birth Date: May 2, 1994
17 years



30 - Tyler Moffatt
Goaltender

Hometown: Calgary, AB
Birth Date: September 27, 1993
18 years



Brent Heaven
Head Coach/GM

A brief look at the history of Erickson irrigation

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

Some months ago a local resident suggested I write an article on the history of irrigation in the Creston Valley. It's a good topic: in a region as agriculturally-focused as this one, getting

water to the crops is absolutely essential, but how often do we pay attention to how that happens?

Erickson's fruit-growing industry started slowly about the turn of the last century and boomed (like the rest of the valley) starting about 1908, when a massive sale

of government land resulted in huge tracts of arable property being bought, in lots of anywhere up to 40 acres. Irrigation in those early days was up to the individual grower using wells and whatever surface water might be available.

The Erickson Irrigation District was formed in 1919 and the following year ran its first line from Sullivan Creek in the Skimmerhorn mountains. There was no way to dam the creek to build a reservoir but the natural flow of the creek was considered sufficient, even through the summer, to ensure adequate supply for the demands of the time. The water was carried into Erickson through a pipe across the Goat River, just below the train trestle.

In the mid-1920s the number of new orchards began to increase, as did the number of acres under cultivation on older fruit ranches. A map from 1926 shows a total of 366 acres cleared and ready for planting to orchards, of which only 205 acres were irrigated. The Sullivan Creek system could not begin to supply such an increase.

The Arrow Creek Irrigation District, formed in March 1926, immediately began working on plans to build a much larger system. As the name implies, its source of water was Arrow Creek and it would provide water to all the ranches in Erickson.

It was not all smooth sailing, though; some of the major landowners, especially real estate baron Robert Lamont, fought the district bitterly because the principal source of funds to build and maintain the system would come through taxes.

Finally, after three years of effort – during which the local newspaper referred to the district supporters as “irrigationists,” in much the same tone as one might refer to “abolitionists” in an earlier era – Erickson held a vote. The Creston Review of June 28, 1929, reported that landowners in the community voted 53-5 in favour of borrowing \$150,000 “and getting on with construction as quickly as possible.”

Plans called for concrete pipes in 18- and 21-inch diameters for the main lines and smaller steel pipes for the distribution lines. The concrete pipes were made

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Cement pipe being laid during construction of the Arrow Creek Irrigation System, 1930.

locally – right alongside the highway at Arrow Creek, in fact – by BC Concrete Company, but the steel distribution lines were brought in from Scotland.

The ditch for the mainline was being dug within the month. On Aug. 26, however, the Review announced: “Work on the irrigation ditch is at a standstill at present, the workmen having been conscripted for forest fire fighting last week.”

It would be the following spring before any substantial work was done, and in the meantime Erickson residents had to rely on the old line from Sullivan Creek. A cold snap in the middle of January 1930, though, caused that line to freeze solid, and the community’s wells were reopened for the first time in 10 years. Between the freeze-up itself and the damage it caused to the pipes it was the middle of April before water was once again flowing through the Erickson irrigation system.

Meanwhile, work on the Arrow Creek system was progressing rapidly. The ditches were dug and ready by the time the pipe was received, and within the space of a few months the work was complete. The last piece of cement pipe was laid on July 5, 1930; the first water went through the pipes six days later.

The system was formally opened on Aug. 4, when the fountain at the corner of 33rd Avenue South and Highway 3 was turned on during a special ceremony. The fountain, constructed by BC Concrete Company, was made from all the different-sized pipes used in the irrigation system: 18- and 21-inch concrete pipes at the bottom followed by lengths of four-, six-, eight- and 10-inch steel pipe, and topped

with the various smaller sizes used by the orchardists.

The completion of the system, though, did not bring the controversy to an end. One of my sources believes that at least one farmer lost his land on Erickson Road because he could not pay the increased taxes that the Arrow Creek system brought.

Water policemen patrolled to ensure that everyone was following the complicated schedule of watering that was established to equalize the water pressure, which could fluctuate wildly from one part of the system to another.

The East Creston Irrigation District, which grew out of the Arrow Creek district (the ECID name was in use even as the original construction was being completed), has supplied water to the northeast part of Creston in an agreement that dates back to at least 1939, and that agreement has been the subject of many debates, discussions and disputes over the years. Logging in the Arrow Creek watershed has involved the district in many other bitter disputes.

The question of chlorination, when it cropped up, was equally heated. For years, the district (by then the Erickson Improvement District) resisted and even ignored provincial requirements to install chlorination systems. The original ultraviolet purification system was considered more than adequate, especially since something like 90 per cent of the water supplied was used for irrigation, not drinking.

The battle raged until, finally, the provincial government and RDCK summarily dissolved the district. That decision might well have contributed to the downfall of a local MLA.

We take irrigation for granted. We drive past the landmarks that hint at its history, without even noticing them. But I for one would like to take this opportunity to salute those who have worked and struggled for so many years to make it possible. ■

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

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Wetlands in Jamaica

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

I had the honour of attending the fifth Pan American meeting on the Ramsar Convention of Wetlands in Jamaica in December. The Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area was invited to present a poster and give a presentation on our wetland and interpretation centre.

A special thanks to the Regional District of Central Kootenay (Area C director Larry Binks) for a grant that made this trip possible.

As many here may know, the CVWMA is a designated Ramsar site, which means it is recognized to have international importance. The Government of Canada is a contracting party in the Ramsar Convention and has designated 37 Ramsar sites across Canada in the last few decades. (For more information on Ramsar, visit the Web site at www.ramsar.org.)

Canada was represented at the meeting by Elizabeth Roberts of Environment Canada in Ottawa. I went as an observer, able to make comments and ask questions, and was asked to present a poster and give a presentation.

Another Canadian observer was the director of education for Ducks Unlimited Canada in Winnipeg, Richard Wishart.

The meeting consisted of two days of panel sessions where experts talked about such issues as wetland management, wetlands and climate change, and wetlands and tourism and recreation. Then there were two days of discussions on resolutions to the Ramsar Convention by the countries (contracting parties). These discussions were in preparation for the 11th meeting of the contracting parties in Romania in 2012. There were discussions on regional experiences and progress as well as priorities for action for the region.

It was fascinating to see the process by which Ramsar operates. Delegates from contracting parties in the Americas (North, South and Central) as well as the Caribbean were represented – close to 30 countries.

I created a poster that highlighted the mandate and mission of the CVWMA as well as our interpretation centre and programs. (This related well to the theme of wetlands and tourism and recreation.) I also had the opportunity to give a 15-minute Power Point presentation to all the delegates and observers.

I received a lot of positive comments about the poster and presentation, answered many questions over the four days and made some great contacts with others involved in Ramsar wetland sites.

We also got a tour of a Ramsar site in Jamaica. It is located in historic Port Royal and consists of cays, shoals, mangrove lagoons, coral reefs and seagrass beds. We got a chance to take a boat ride into the mangroves and see some birds we don't get around here, including nesting brown pelicans and frigatebirds. ■

If you would like to keep up to date on the CVWMA's projects, programs and activities, get on our e-mail list by sending us your address at askus@crestonwildlife.ca.



Back pain simplified

Story by Jesse Moreton, BSc DC

I know what many of you are thinking: “There’s nothing simple about my back pain. It acts up sometimes without explanation and it doesn’t go away. It complicates my routine and makes sleeping difficult. Sometimes it refers into my legs; sometimes it’s unbearable.”

While I’m not trying to argue with you, I still maintain that most back pain is simple. So do Hamilton Hall and Robin McKenzie.

Hall is a Canadian orthopedic surgeon who has written and lectured extensively on the lower back. He started the Canadian Back Institute, a series of clinics that specialize in his approach to back care.

Most recently his approach has been adopted by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health to address problems that exist in the way doctors, chiropractors and physiotherapists manage back pain.

McKenzie is a physical therapist from New Zealand who has also written and lectured worldwide and developed a similar but distinct method of treatment for back pain. Both practitioners have also been involved extensively in research. They have conducted many studies to prove their

strategies work . . . and they do.

What’s so unique and special about their approach to back pain? Well, nothing really, and that’s where many people lose interest and don’t give it a chance.

The key to resolving back pain is to find relieving positions and postures while avoiding the positions or movements that cause pain. In other words, if you have back pain during prolonged sitting or leaning forward (such as many household tasks require) then stand up, go for a walk or stretch backward.

It’s an extremely simple and no-nonsense approach to back care. It seems too “commonsensical” to work and pushes many of us to a more difficult or theoretical approach that, ironically, doesn’t work.

Hall has found the above description is the most common pattern: pain with bending forward that can be relieved by bending backward. A smaller group of back pain patients have the opposite description (pain bending back relieved by bending forward).

Then there are smaller populations who have different patterns of pain, often more serious. Obviously these cases would be picked up by your chiropractor or doctor and treated appropriately.

Once a pattern of pain is recognized the prognosis is improved dramatically. No

longer are we doing the same treatment for every patient (although the majority of people have the same characteristics), but each patient is getting treatment and instructions based on the postures and positions which should minimize and control the pain.

So let’s get back to your back pain and talk practically. What can you do about it? The first step I’d recommend is paying attention to the positions or movements that make it better and the positions or movements that make it worse. The second step is to avoid the painful positions and adopt the opposite positions to obtain relief.

Although the basis of this is simple, the execution requires more expertise. That’s why I have a job. When people come in for help with back pain I’ll use the information they give me to recommend specific stretching and exercise programs that counter the pain-producing movements.

Of course, I also provide treatment through appropriate muscle and joint therapies. Treatment helps tackle the pain immediately and decreases the likelihood of flare-ups.

Whatever your type of back pain, I hope these few words of advice from the experts help you manage it. And if you don’t have any back pain in the first place then good on you. ■

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Chinese symbols and our health



Story by: Shifu Neil Ripski

The conceptual ideas behind the martial arts are what allow us as modern practitioners to look into and gain the deep meanings behind the practices we so enjoy. The cultural background and Chinese methods of thought are of great importance when trying to understand the way these arts are supposed to be practised and impact our health positively.

One of the most difficult-to-understand symbols in Chinese culture has to be the ba gua or eight

trigrams. This is a small design usually painted on wood that can be found in most any Chinese restaurant or home, and is said to bring good luck.



The diagram itself, however, is actually a Taoist depiction of the fundamental principals of reality, seen as eight interrelated concepts. Each of the guas or trigrams is made up of three broken and unbroken lines stacked on top of one another. The eight trigrams are as follows:

八卦 Bāguà—The eight trigrams

乾 Qián ☰ Heaven/Sky 天 Tiān

兌 Duì ☱ Lake/Marsh 澤(泽) Zé

離 Lí ☲ Fire 火 Huǒ

震 Zhèn ☳ Thunder 雷 Léi

巽 Xùn ☴ Wind 風(风) Fēng

坎 Kǎn ☵ Water 水 Shuǐ

艮 Gèn ☶ Mountain 山 Shān

坤 Kūn ☷ Earth 地 Dì

Each trigram represents a different aspect of reality and other very esoteric methods of thinking. For our purposes, as students of martial arts and especially the internal arts like tai chi, we see the trigrams as methods of interchanging yin and yang in our body. (For more information on the subject of yin and yang, see my previous articles in this magazine.)

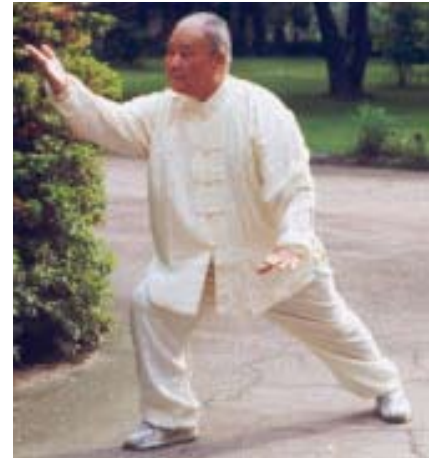
Let's look at one of the trigrams and how understanding its methods can help our practice.

離 Lí ☲ Fire 火 Huǒ

The trigram is read in these arts from top to bottom as examples of how our bodies should be energized. A solid line is yang energy (expansive, full and powerful) and a broken line is yin energy (soft, receptive and fluid).

In the case of the trigram of fire (li) we see that the top of the body (the arms in this case) is yang, the middle of the body (the torso) is yin and the lower body (the legs) is yang. This shows our energy should be full at the extremities and soft in the middle, allowing us to move.

A prime example of this in our practice can be found in the tai chi movement Parting the Wild Horse's Mane.



The waist and torso are soft and as such allow for the turning energy to reach the extremities (hands and feet) and also allow for our spine to twist and the internal organs to be pushed around in the body cavity, creating a massage effect and removing stagnant blood from each of them. This is where we start to see the crossover benefit of the trigrams on our training and subsequently on our health. The massage of the internal organs is an important part of our health and flexibility of the core. Each trigram makes an appearance throughout our tai chi forms and movements in other martial arts as well. This keeps the body in balance and moving continuously which is, of course, the benefit of being active – a basic requirement of a happy, healthy life. ■

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

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A new year, a new Earth, a new you!

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



Oh, the pressure of writing, although I am delighting, 2012 has arrived, oh my – how contrived! Are we in for a ride, of the time of our lives?

Perhaps 'tis the time, to your own self be true, by shining within, you will never be blue. A question to ponder, within and out yonder,

Who are you becoming, and is your soul doing the summoning?

It's time to let go, and get on with the show!

Controlling and fighting, are no longer working.

Allowing and collaborating, are becoming much stronger.

Embracing your life, with heart and soul, goodbye monkey mind, Is the new goal.

The Earth has shifted, and you have been lifted.

You are different now, and wow, oh so gifted,

a diamond of sparkles, all shiny and new!

Shine your light, for now is the time, to be so bright, like a diamond mine!

We need you now, no worry of how, shift and lift your vibration, you know how.

Away with the blame, and also the shame, we are now playing a whole new game.

Let go and just flow, as changes do come, As above, so below, let's go have some fun.

Ask for guidance you will, then listen and be still,

Remember to open, and you will receive, we're not jokin'!

Like a new baby boy, just be in pure joy.

It is your birthright, happiness, friends and good health. It is the new way, of the 2012 wealth.

Miracles are everywhere, and that includes you.

Do you see them and celebrate, oh yay, what a day!

Synchronicity is here, be open and share, As together we grow, into more light and inner glow.

And when you feel stuck and down in the muck,

move your body with tai chi, yoga, dance and ballet.

Out with old, move into the new you, The old energy will transform into the shining new you.

Trust the transformation, and the new information,

Stay grounded to Earth, while living give birth,

to the you who you chose, like a blossoming rose.

It's all energy you know, and with synergy you flow.

Emotions are power, during our golden hour,

feel it and allow it, tears, fears, laughter and joy,

the potential within, is a beautiful win-win.

We can do it better, as we thrive together.

Look within with a hum, who am I to become?

The vibration of love, like a white-feathered dove.

We all got it, we all want it, what are we going to do with it, this love?

Are you up for the challenge, with your brave heart and courage?

Let the new year begin, as we all grow within,

and let's make this, The Best Year Ever! Happy New Year to all, as we hear our hearts call, Hhhaaaaa . . . beautiful! ■

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 or visit www.annetteshealthaction.com.

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Is Creston's best singer the Kootenays' best singer?

Submitted

For the third time Creston will be able to witness who its best singer is, but this time there is a bit of a twist that wasn't there for previous contests held at the Prince Charles Theatre in 2010 and 2011.

This time, the winner of the Creston's Best Singer Contest will move on to compete against the winners of other "best singer" contests held throughout the Kootenays to determine the region's best singer.

"It is an exciting development in the evolution of an idea that originated right here in Creston," says producer and creator Vern Gorham. "After the success of the first two contests in Creston I figured I might be able to hold this event in other communities throughout the Kootenays, eventually culminating in a final contest that would feature the best singers from all of the Kootenay communities singing against each other.

"Thus far I have had successful events in Nelson and Grand Forks and am going

to be hitting several other Kootenay communities prior to June 2012. At that time I will have the Kootenays' Best Singer Contest, with big prizes for the winner."

But, prior to a regional contest, all of the local contests have to be finished, including Creston's. Thus it is time to find out who Creston's Best Singer for 2012 will be and who will represent Creston at the Kootenays' Best Singer contest.

The format for the Creston event is similar to 2011 in that the event will be held over two nights. The first night will be an audition contest, otherwise known as a "you be the judge" contest where the first 250 people in the audience to be seated in the auditorium (who are old enough to read and write) will receive a scorecard. They get the opportunity to judge all the singers to determine who the top 20 will be. There will be enough time to have approximately 30 singers perform for three minutes apiece.

At the end of the night, all of the scorecards will be gathered up by Gorham and the top 20 singers, as voted by the audience, will advance to the Creston's Best Singer Contest, otherwise known as The Big Show. Those top 20 singers will be announced exclusively in the I Love Creston magazine and Web site on Feb. 1.

Just like last year's contest, three judges will be brought in from out of town to eliminate any possible perception of bias. Each of the 20 singers will have the opportunity to sing one song, with the top three singers as judged by the out-of-town judges singing a second song.

First, second and third places will be determined at that time, with the top three earning prizes and the top singer moving on to represent Creston at the Kootenays' Best Singer Contest to be held in late spring.

The audition contest will be held Jan. 19 at 6:30 p.m. The Big Show will be held Feb. 9 at 6:30 p.m. ■

Tickets will be available at Black Bear Books and Kingfisher Books. Tickets for the audition show are \$6 for seniors and students/children and \$8 for adults.

For more details contact Gorham at (250) 428-0305, e-mail kootenaysbestsinger@telus.net or visit www.kootenaysbestsinger.com.

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Kootenay Regional Figure Skating Championships coming to John Bucyk Arena



Submitted

More than 130 skaters from all over the East and West Kootenays will arrive in Creston for the weekend, Jan. 20-22, hoping to carry off gold medals in men's, ladies', pairs, dance and skills events at the 2012 Kootenay Regional Figure Skating Championships.

For some, this will be the latest in a long line of skating competitions; for others, including five youngsters from the Creston Valley Figure Skating club, the regional championships will be their first competition ever.

"It's a great opportunity for our local skaters," says head coach Cassie Bloy. "I'm trying to encourage our skaters to enter as many events as they can because it's a great feeling to skate on home ice."

The schedule for the different events hasn't been finalized yet but will probably be something like this: dance and skills competitions on the Friday evening; men's, ladies' and pairs programs all day Saturday; and, interpretive and elements competitions on Sunday morning.

The final schedule will be posted at crestonevents.ca when it's available.

The entire competition is open to the public and admission is free. ■

Come out and cheer on your local Junior B Team!

January Home Games
All game start at 7:30 unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday	Jan 4	Golden
Friday	Jan 6	Spokane
Saturday	Jan 14	Columbia Valley
Sunday	Jan 15 - 3:30pm	Revelstoke

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Out & About

Submitted by: www.crestonevents.ca

January 4

Creston Valley Thunder Cats vs. Golden Rockets

Watch exciting Junior B Hockey action!

Location: CDCC

Starts at 7:30pm

Contact: Joanne Endicott

Phone: 250-428-3965

www.crestonvalleythundercats.com

January 6

Creston Valley Thunder Cats vs. Spokane Braves

Watch exciting Junior B Hockey action!

Location: CDCC, Starts at 7:30pm

Contact: Joanne Endicott

Phone: 250-428-3965

www.crestonvalleythundercats.com

January 14

Creston Valley Thunder Cats vs. Columbia Valley Rockies

Watch exciting Junior B Hockey action!

Location: CDCC

Starts at 7:30pm

Contact: Joanne Endicott

Phone: 250-428-3965

www.crestonvalleythundercats.com

January 15

Creston Valley Thunder Cats vs. Revelstoke Grizzlies

Watch exciting Junior B Hockey action!

Location: CDCC

Starts at 2pm

Contact: Joanne Endicott

Phone: 250-428-3965

www.crestonvalleythundercats.com

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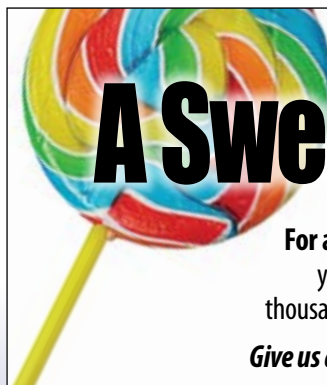
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