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Volunteer Week

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for T-Cats

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Beautiful Stinker

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Growing Season
begins

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- » An IONIZATION smoke alarm is generally more responsive to flaming fires and a PHOTOELECTRIC smoke alarm is generally more responsive to smoldering fires. For the best protection, both types of alarms or combination ionization and photoelectric alarms (also known as dual sensor alarms) are recommended.
- » Smoke alarms should be INSTALLED away from the kitchen to prevent false alarms. Generally, they should be at least 10 feet (3 meters) from a cooking appliance.
- » REPLACE all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

FACTS

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Bree Rael has been Starbelly Jam's Luna Lounge hostess and Moonbelly Stage manager since the dawn of Starbelly Jam.

feature story

5 Volunteering

Volunteer Week gives us an opportunity to recognize the value volunteers bring to our country and its communities.

Cover photo: Students from the Wildflower School volunteering at T.A.P.S. preparing items for sale for the Gleaners

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From the editor



Marc Archambault

Hello everyone!

I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Marc Archambault. I am the very excited and proud new editor of I Love Creston!

"How long have you been in Creston?" seems to be the first question I always get asked, so I'll start with that. I moved with my wife and two

daughters from Vancouver to Creston almost seven years ago, but we'd been visiting in the summers for a few years before that. We're originally from Manitoba.

If I look familiar, perhaps you've seen me on stage in a Footlighter's play, or at a community meeting – I attend quite a few of those. Or it may be because I was recently featured in the Business Buzz section of this magazine for my new business, Marchwrite Services (www.marchwrite.ca). Which leads me to another frequently asked question: where does my business name come from? It's simple, really. M. + ARCHambault = March, and I'm a writer, so Marchwrite.

Part of the reason I was asked to join the I Love Creston team is that I really do love Creston. I chose – and continue to choose – to live here and to be an active member of the community. I am thrilled to have this opportunity to combine my love of writing with my love of this place, this community, and its people. I am looking forward to exploring all the wonderful things we have here in the valley and sharing them with you.

I am also eager to try new things, to have fun with the magazine, and to make it the best it can be. I have a lot of great ideas, but I'm sure you do too. Send me your ideas and suggestion at marc@ilovecreston.com

Volunteer week is coming up soon (April 6th to 12th). I would like to take this opportunity to personally say a big and heartfelt thank-you to all the many wonderful volunteers I have worked with. Volunteering is something I've done off and on since childhood in one form or another. In the past few years - especially this last year - it's much more on than off. I chair the boards of two

local non-profits: the Creston Music and Media Society and the Creston Valley Community Radio Society. I'm a regular participant in Footlighters plays. And I occasionally volunteer for other smaller things like staffing an information table or doing some pro bono writing. But I want to tell you about my favourite volunteer experience.

Last summer I signed up to help out at the Starbelly Jam Music Festival in Crawford Bay. I'll admit that earning a free pass to this festival I'd been hearing about for years but never actually attended was a big motivator, followed closely by the 'cool factor' of being able to say I was part of it.

Sporting a bright red STAFF tank top and a frequently refilled water bottle, I was working security at the backstage entrance in the heat of the July afternoon when Vancouver based soul band the Boom Booms started their set. Minutes later I was dancing along with everyone else. From my station, I couldn't see much of the band, but I could see the crowd: the happy, smiling, dancing crowd of kids, teens, young-adults, adults and seniors all side by side sharing amazing music in an amazing place.

"To the right! To the right!" instructed the singer, and they moved. This whole diverse group moved as one, grinning ear to ear with each bounce. "To the left! To left! To the left!" And they moved again, smiles even brighter. I moved too. And I was moved.

Here in this park with the mountains on one side and the lake on the other, a team of volunteers and staff built this festival and brought these people together where they connected with this music and with each other. This, I thought, this is my community and I love it.

I'm still working with Starbelly, and I'm very much looking forward to this year's festival. I'll be writing a feature on the Festival's 15th anniversary for our July edition.

I was just one of literally hundreds of volunteers that helped, and that's just one story. I know there are thousands of you out there. What are your favourite volunteer moments? Is there a volunteer you'd like to acknowledge? A story you'd like to share? Do you want to get involved and are looking for some volunteer opportunities? Tell us about it! Visit the I Love Creston facebook page or web site and leave a comment. ■

VOLUNTEERISM



Local family, the Pughs, volunteering at the Creston & District Society for Community Living (CDSCL).

Story by: Marc Archambault

“**W**hy do people volunteer?” the trainer asked the group at a recent workshop here in Creston.

It didn’t take long to fill the flip chart with reasons why people give of their time, talent and energy to work for free. To support a cause, to meet new people, to improve the community, to gain skill, for fun, because it looks good on a resume

and “because someone asked me” were just a few of the motivations offered as examples. Another reason to volunteer many may not be aware of is that, according to a study released last year by the University of Exeter Medical School, Exeter, UK, “volunteering is associated with lower depression, increased well-being, and a 22 percent reduction in the risk of dying.”

Whatever the personal reasons that move people to pitch in, volunteering is alive and well in Canada.

Whether we realize it or not, whether we volunteer ourselves or not, volunteers and their efforts impact our lives every single day. For some, the word ‘volunteer’ conjures images of food banks, bake sales and board meetings. And while those well know activities are indeed essential, they are just the tip of the ice-berg. The variety of jobs performed by volunteers is

truly astounding. Did you know the actors and stage crew at Footlighters productions are volunteers who have worked for weeks to prepare for the show? Community events like the Blossom Festival, the Christmas Craft Fair, the Starbelly Jam Music Festival and many others wouldn't happen without the hard work and dedication of hundreds of volunteers. Chances are someone you love has benefited from medical research or hospital equipment that was made possible by volunteer fund-raising. The children playing in weekend sports tournaments are coached by volunteers. Your neighbour's dog or cat has a happy home because of volunteers at the animal shelter. You have most likely walked on a trail or entered a building that was built by volunteers. You have probably listened to music played by a musician donating their talents to a cause. In this very magazine you will find articles written by volunteers. Every day in communities across the country and right here in the Creston area, volunteers engage in meaningful work that benefits us all. Though being publicly recognized for their work isn't usually a top priority for volunteers, it is nevertheless important and it's something we will all soon have an opportunity to take part in as National Volunteer Week approaches.

"National Volunteer Week gives Canadians the opportunity to think about how we can make a difference in our communities by getting involved," said Governor General David Johnston. "Those who give of their time, talent and resources create a better country because they believe that it can and should be done. Their actions inspire us to do more and to be more caring, since each of us

has something to give. They deserve not just our thanks, but also our recognition."

This year National Volunteer Week runs April 6-12. It is "a time to recognize, celebrate and thank Canada's 13.3 million volunteers." (Volunteer.ca) Though it's impossible to measure the full impact of the contributions made to society by volunteers coast to coast and around the world, there is no doubt that it is significant. "Volunteers bring about continuous societal change one hour, one service, and one activity at a time," states a 2012 TD Economics position paper that estimates the annual economic value of Canadian volunteerism at \$50 billion, while acknowledging that "the benefit of volunteering goes far beyond dollars and cents." In BC alone "1.5 million volunteers contribute 114 million

hours a year to better communities all across the province. That's equivalent to 60,000 full-time jobs." (Volunteer BC) Next year's Canada Winter Games being held in Prince George BC are expecting up to 4,500 volunteers to play an important role in delivering the games.

There are a few promotional campaigns going on in celebration of Volunteer week. In addition to the numerous organizations who will be recognizing the contributions of those in their own groups, Volunteer Canada is partnering with Investor's Group for their 11th consecutive year. They have set up the "Volunt-Hear Hotline" for people to call in and leave a message to acknowledge and thank a volunteer. These messages



A crew of volunteers building the arbour at the entrance to the Creston Museum's grounds.



Judy Dickson, current president of Yahk-Kingsgate Rec Centre, has been volunteering for over 40 years.

"They do just our thing also our work"



Joan Halvorsen, February's Volunteer of the month at PAWS.

will be organized into playlists on Soundcloud.com where “listeners will be able to download messages, share them through social media and hear first-hand how volunteer work changes lives and shapes communities.” If you would like to leave message, call 1-855-372-5077 and follow these instructions:

1. State your name and town. (This is John MacDonald calling from Creston, BC)
2. Say who you are thanking and what you are thanking them for. (I would like to thank Wendy Jones for driving me to my medical appointments each week during the past year.)
3. Describe how the volunteer made a difference. (Her help removed a worry for me during a stressful time,

*serve not
ranks, but
recognition"*



and allowed me to focus on getting healthy again.)

The hot-line will be open until April 12th.

Volunteer BC (www.volunteerbc.bc.ca) is holding a photo contest seeking “photos of volunteers that recognize, celebrate and thank volunteers.” Top entries will be awarded prizes and included in Volunteer BC’s annual report. Last year there were more than 105 entries, with the top spot going to the Health and Home Care Society of BC. Perhaps some photos from the Creston area will be contending for this year’s prize.

Creston and the surrounding communities are no exception to Canada’s long tradition of volunteerism. “Volunteering built this town – literally and figuratively,”

explained Tammy Hardwick, director of the Creston Museum, itself an organization that relies on the work of volunteers. Particularly in the early years prior to WWII, volunteers raised funds for and physically built many of the community structures including churches, schools, fire halls, hospitals, playing fields, swimming pools and community halls. That tradition has carried on through the decades, right up to the present. “So many of the things that make the community what it is are, and have always been, run by volunteers,” said Tammy. The area boasts a long list of service organizations and non-profits from international groups with lengthy histories like the Lions and Rotary, to Ladies Auxiliaries, youth groups and church groups, to local arts groups and even ad hoc groups that come together for a single occasion. Volunteers are an integral part of the fabric of our community, our country, and indeed the whole world.

So as we approach National Volunteer Week, “let us remember the large numbers of citizens who, day in and day out, through acts of volunteerism large and small, bring hope to so many... Let us ensure that this wonderful resource, available in abundance to every nation, is recognized and supported as it works towards a more prosperous and peaceful world.” (Kofi Annan) Let us take a moment to consider how much of our community has been built thanks to the work of volunteers. If you are yourself a volunteer, thank you from us here at I Love Creston. If you’ve never volunteered before, why not give it a try? You might be surprised at how rewarding it can be. ■



Volunteers monitoring a “Green Planet” composting and recycling station at Starbelly Jam.



Creston Museum volunteer staff from our 2012 Suffragette Tea, including Gail Kitt and Dorothy Davis.”



From the Mayor's desk

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

2014 AKBLG Convention and AGM

The Town of Creston will be hosting the 81st Annual Association of Kootenay &

Boundary Local Governments (AKBLG) Convention and Annual General Meeting from April 9 to 11,

2014. In my 6 year term as Mayor, the annual AKBLG Conventions have been held in Cranbrook, Castlegar, Kimberley, Trail, and the Columbia Valley. The announcement was made in April of last year that Creston had been selected as the 2014 host community and our organizing committee has been in planning mode since that time.

The AKBLG consists of 26 Local Governments and 3 Regional Districts located within the area from Big White to the Washington & Idaho borders and east to the Alberta border, including the Town of Golden. With elected officials, presenters, partners, sponsors and staff, the Town of Creston expects an influx of 250 to 350 visitors during this 3 day Conference. This event presents a great opportunity for Creston to showcase our community on many levels.

Tours of our Creston Valley will be offered to conference delegates that include four unique experiences designed to showcase some of what the area has to offer:

- On the “brewery & waste-water” tour, participants will experience the processes of brewing, bottling, & boxing of the fine beers produced at the Columbia Brewery, complete with a tasting station. Then, onto a tour of the Town’s new waste-water treatment plant; a technologically advanced plant which will meet the municipality’s needs for the next 25 years.
- On the “winery & organic cheese” tour two award winning businesses, the Baillie-Grohman winery and the Kootenay Alpine Cheese Company, are featured. You can’t miss with wine and cheese.
- On the “wine & wood” tour participants are treated to a visit to Wynnwood Cellars for an

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of Finance for the Lower Kootenay Indian Band, I am only in office from 4:30-6:30pm daily, however you can call anytime to book an appointment, as I have a receptionist during normal business hours. Whether it is for yourself, or your business we strive to make your accounting needs stress free. As a chartered accountant let me put my knowledge to use for you.

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informative seminar on wine making, and of course some sampling. The second part of this tour involves a trip to Wynndel Box & Lumber, an active industry in Creston Valley for over 100 years.

“The announcement was made in April of last year that Creston had been selected as the 2014 host community”

• On the “dairy & wildlife” tour, dairy farming is showcased as an active part of the Creston Valley’s diverse economy at Wayleen farms, a newly built dairy barn located on the Creston Flats. Next, onto the Creston Wildlife Management Area; our beautiful 7,000 hectare area unique and protected wetlands located along the Kootenay River.

In addition, partners of delegates get two unique experiences: “Art Journaling for Beginners” at Creative Fix (a three hour tutorial provided by Brandy Dyer) and, a guided “Tour our Town” (a fun exploration of shops and stops within Downtown Creston).

Sponsorship is key to pulling off this event and many local sponsors have jumped right on board with service provision, in-kind donations, production donation, financial support and more. In addition, corporate sponsorship from around the province has been extremely generous. A special thank you to those companies, organizations and individuals who have supported AKBLG 2014 – we couldn’t do it without you!

AKBLG 2014 is one more example of how economic development is being furthered in the Valley by having our community serve as a conference hub for the region. Other

recent events that have drawn large crowds include the Regional Fire Chiefs Conference, the Columbia Basin Trust Symposium, the Local Government Management Association’s Regional Conference,

and, in May, the BC Cattleman’s Association is hosting their provincial convention with 300 delegates expected.

Our AKBLG 2014 theme is “TYING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER” and we thank you for welcoming this influx of visitors to our community. Check out the event’s website at www.akblgcreston2014.com

As a community, now is our time to shine as friendly, gracious, and memorable hosts. Let’s show our region that Creston is the place they want to be! ■

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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Message from the chief

Story by: Jason Louie, Chief, Lower Kootenay Band

Lateral Violence is destroying our communities

Ki'suk kyukyit (greetings). At the moment, I am in San Diego attending the Native American Men and Women's Conference. The conference information consists of subject matter that ranges from HIV/AIDS to Diabetes. I assisted my partner in facilitating a workshop on Lateral Violence. Lateral Violence is the act of deliberately destroying another human being's character by slander on social media, gossip, and rumour, to name a few examples. Lateral Violence is destroying our communities and families and serves no purpose for anyone. It has become apparent in our school systems and even in the work place in the adult world.

This was my first opportunity to share my personal story of what I live with on a daily basis with respect to cyber-bullying. For the last 3 plus years, I have become a regular topic on facebook where I am depicted as an oppressor, tyrant, and thief of my band's finances. Hundreds of people, the majority of whom I don't even know, will comment on the thread. Sadly, some of the people I do know and see daily don't address their issue with me, but wait for the next facebook rant.

We have all heard the unfortunate story of Amanda Todd in the news and it was absolutely heart breaking. Today was the first day I got an opportunity to share how this act of humiliation feels. In all honestly, there were times where I did feel suicidal as the humiliation was overwhelming. Anything and everything that could be said to destroy a human being's spirit

was being said about me for the world to see and comment on. We may assume that these actions only happen amongst the youth population but I can say from experience that it is alive

"This was my first opportunity to share my personal story"

and well amongst the adults. On one occasion, I recall two very brave youth who called this action for what it was on facebook. The young man stated "these words are highly inappropriate for adults to be saying about our Chief. I know him for who he is and you need to stop". Despite the good intentions of the young man, it didn't stop the author or the comments from ceasing. The thread continued but at the young age of 19 he made a stand against something that has caused so much pain.

I have come to a place in my tenure where my motto has been "one day at time". Sometimes the motto changes to one hour at a time. Being here has been the first time in a very long time where people don't know me nor want something from me. The participants have been so very kind. I have been greeted with a smile and conversations are not always based around the political. Over 300 Native Americans are gathered to truly move toward a place of wellness. I am well aware that I have many faults and am in no way the epitome of a well aboriginal man. That is why I am here, to educate myself on how to be a better human

being, husband, father, and one day earn an elder's status.

Another strong focus of the conference has been the epidemic of diabetes in aboriginal communities. I see how unhealthy I have been treating my body with respect to food. In my role as LKB Chief I travel a lot and sometimes it is more convenient to eat fast food at the airport or to skip breakfast. Saying I don't have time to eat healthy is saying I am inviting an early death. It is very likely that I could develop diabetes should I continue to not take my diet seriously. Tomorrow morning will be the diabetes health run/walk at 6 a.m. I have not participated in a run since my days in the military and I know due to my service my knees are not what they used to be. I have decided to endure that pain at 6 a.m. tomorrow and run 5 kms for all those I know who live with diabetes. There are some ringers here but there are no trophies or even bragging rights for that matter. All those running do so for the loved ones in their lives who need to inject insulin or take oral medications just to eat.

If you are healthy, continue to do what you are doing! If there are areas in your health and wellness in need of improvement, do something now to prolong your life, regardless of your age. Life at times can be difficult and despair and darkness may be a daily occurrence. For every dark night, there's a brighter day! Eat well, live well. There is a purpose for each of us in this world. Until next time, take care of yourself and each other. ■

Jason Louie can be reached by phone at 428-4428, ext. 235, e-mail at mjasonlouie@gmail.com or on the Web at www.lowerkootenay.com.

Footlighters Theatre Society's upcoming production promises spooky fun

Submitted

The audience can count on being thoroughly entertained when Footlighters Theatre Society concludes its season with *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, which runs at the Prince Charles Theatre from April 10-12.

"It's going to be a fun, spooky romp," says director Jordan Koop.

Adapted from the 1820 short story by Washington Irving, *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* is set in 1790 in the countryside around a Dutch settlement in New York. It follows schoolmaster Ichabod Crane (played by Jesse Moreton), who comes to the farming community of Sleepy Hollow looking for a good life and a wealthy wife who will supply it. Once he sets eyes on the local beauty, Katrina Van Tassel (Bobby Doran), the only child of a wealthy farmer, he's sure his dream will come true. But Katrina has a boyfriend, Brom Bones (Liam Krahn), who is extremely jealous.

To complicate matters, a small army of restless spirits — including the most famous phantom of all, the Headless Horseman (Marc Archambault) —

haunts the graveyard, and Ichabod finds that there's something shadowy and towering intent on taking his life.

The play features nearly two dozen actors with a wide range of ages, from preteen to senior, and experience; some have been onstage with other companies and with Footlighters, and for others, this is their first time. The cast includes Gary Atha, Jennifer Adams, Jessica Adams, Janelle Archambault, Lori Barker, Morgan Bentley, Rylee Blackwell, Julie Draper, Anjali Ewing, Gail Kitt, Axel Marini, Sam Minteno, Kim Nicholson, Michael Niemi, Marybeth Stenhouse, Caleb Wells and Aaron Willicome.

It marks a first for Koop, too: his directorial debut. He studied theatre in university and has worked on film and stage, including several Footlighters productions, and has been enjoying the challenge of directing *Sleepy Hollow*.

"I like seeing them come up with their own creative ideas and helping them along that journey," he says. "I like working with different aspects of the show with the actors, and keeping

them inspired to try different things."

And that inspiration will help them bring *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* to life, in a production that all ages will enjoy. "It deals with love triangle issues," he says. "There's a lot of comedy, and there are a couple of scary moments."

Legend of Sleepy Hollow is the final production of Footlighters' 19th season, and will be followed by Centre Stage, a competition for the Kootenay Zone of Theatre BC, from May 28-31. Four plays are lined up for the festival, with two entries from Creston: *Almost Golden*, written by Suzanne Chubb and Jason Smith, which had its world premiere in December, and *As the Deer*, a one-man play written by Koop. Theatre groups from Invermere and Revelstoke have also confirmed they will perform.

After Centre Stage, the 20th season kicks off with *Dogsbreath Devereaux*, *The Dastardly Doctor*, from July 10-12, followed by a locally-written *Cinderella* from Dec. 4-6 and Walt Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* from April 16-18, 2015. ■

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Pharmacist Corner

Article submitted by: Srinivas Chalagalla B.pharm., Ph.D.

Managing asthma



Asthma is a disease that affects the airways (bronchi). In asthma sufferers, the airways become inflamed and produce more secretions. With every breath we take, air flows through the bronchi to the alveoli. The exchange of gases occurs in the alveoli as oxygen flows to the bloodstream to nourish the body and carbon dioxide is expelled from the lungs.

Causes

The causes of asthma are not yet fully understood. A family history of asthma and other factors such as allergies are thought to be associated with asthma.

Asthma is an exaggerated response by the airway (bronchi) to foreign substances (allergens) such as dust or pollen, resulting in inflammation. Factors such as smoke, air pollution and respiratory tract infections (cold, flu) can also cause inflammation.

The bronchi are surrounded by a layer of muscle. These muscles, which become more sensitive when the bronchi are inflamed, react by narrowing or constricting - this is known as bronchospasm. Exposure to very cold air, strong odours, exercise, emotional stress and anxiety are all factors that can cause this type of muscle contraction.

Symptoms

Bronchial inflammation and bronchospasm obstruct the flow of air, causing the following symptoms:

- difficulty breathing;
- shortness of breath;
- coughing;
- wheezing;
- chest tightness;
- bronchial secretions;
- rapid breathing in young children.

The intensity of asthma symptoms varies from person to person and can vary over time as well. Asthma detected in children often resolves by adolescence.

Diagnosis

To properly diagnose asthma, your doctor will conduct a medical examination and will ask questions to gain a better understanding of your symptoms. To confirm the diagnosis, the doctor may also use other diagnostic techniques such as measuring the maximum speed at which you can exhale air (peak expiratory flow - PEF), maximum expiratory volume per second or FEV1 (spirometry) and methacholine and histamine challenge tests which measure the degree of responsiveness of the airways. Complimentary tests, including skin allergy testing, blood tests and chest x-rays, may also be ordered.

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Treatment

Most asthma treatments focus on the two most prominent components of the disease, namely inflammation and bronchoconstriction (narrowing of the airways due to constriction of the surrounding muscles). Inhaled corticosteroids are considered to be the foundation of asthma therapy. They are commonly referred to as “controller” medication. They are used on a regular basis and in addition to helping prevent asthma symptoms, they prevent symptoms from worsening and reduce hospitalizations and deaths. Acute asthma attacks may require the use of a systemic corticosteroid (ex. prednisone). This type of medication is taken by mouth and travels throughout the body.

Inhaled bronchodilators work by relaxing the muscles in the bronchial tubes. There are two types of bronchodilators: short-acting and long-acting.

Short-acting bronchodilators are used only as needed to treat asthma attacks and to prevent exercise-induced asthma. They are commonly referred to as “rescue” or “reliever” medications since they are used to treat sudden asthma symptoms. They are quick acting and their effect is short-lived. Using this type of medication more than 3 times a week, notwithstanding a daily dose before intense physical activity, is indicative of improperly managed asthma.

Long-acting bronchodilators are used on a regular basis. They should be used in combination with an inhaled corticosteroid. Symbicort® and Advair® are inhalers that combine a long-acting bronchodilator and a corticosteroid. Medications such as theophylline (TheoDur®, Uniphyll®)

and leucotriene antagonists (Accolate®, Singulair®) can also be added to treatment. They are used as adjunct therapy in combination with other medications.

Proper technique

Ensuring a proper inhaling technique is important as it will provide better efficacy. Your pharmacist can show you how to obtain the best results. He or she may also recommend the use of a spacer and metered dose inhaler, making it easier for you to take your medication.

Prevention

The key to preventing asthma attacks is to avoid your asthma triggers:

- Allergens;
- Respiratory tract infections including colds and the flu (a yearly flu vaccine is recommended);
- Big changes in ambient air temperature;
- Cold air (asthmatics should cover their nose and mouth when participating in outdoor activities when it is cold);
- Emotional and stressful situations (use relaxation techniques);
- Smoke (stop smoking treatments are available);
- Exposure to smoke, strong odours and air pollution (purify indoor air);
- Certain medications (speak to your pharmacist or doctor before taking any medications, even if they are natural products or sold over the counter). ■

*For more information or if you have any questions please talk to your local Shopper's Drug Mart Pharmacists: Srinivas Chalagalla and Karl Mottl
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Photo courtesy of Brian Lawrence, Inverted Image Photography

Imagine Ink's new owners move business to 12th Ave

Wendy Franz, graphic designer of 25 years and co-owner of I Love Creston magazine, has teamed up with friend and artist Michelle

Hansen to purchase Imagine Ink from Brandy Dyer, owner of Creative Fix, who established Imagine Ink almost 15 years ago.

The pair took possession of the business February 14th and one of their first tasks was arranging for the move to their new location on 12th Avenue North next to Kingfisher Quality Used books. Moving all the equipment and preparing the new space to receive customers was quite a challenge. Michelle's husband Troy enlisted the help of a cohort of coworkers from the Columbia Brewery to help disassemble, transport and put back together the almost 3000 pound steel cutting machine. Moving the high end printer required bringing in a Xerox technician. Other friends pitched in to help move office furniture and set up the computer system.

"We're very excited about the new location," said Franz, a national ad award winner for graphic design.

"We're very excited about the new location"

"It's our customer service that will set us apart"

"It's a new fresh start and much better access for our customers. We've already noticed a high volume of foot traffic here. We're re-establishing walk-in services such as copying and faxing. And we're now housing Imagine Ink together with I Love Creston under one roof." Also sharing the space part-time is new business Marchwrite Services. Owner Marc Archambault was recently contracted as the new editor of I Love Creston. "It's a great fit all around," explained Archambault, who offers writing and marketing services. "Our businesses complement each other. And now that I'm a part of the I Love Creston team too, the opportunities for us to all benefit from working together are quite remarkable."

Imagine Ink offers custom graphic design, logos, business cards, brochures and other promotional materials as well as copying and faxing. You can see their work on posters, promotional materials and business cards throughout the area. Recent projects include the posters for the upcoming Footlighters production, Sleepy Hollow, and the programs for the Creston's Best Singer contest and the upcoming Creston Valley Bird Fest. "But it's our customer service that will set us apart," said Hansen, who has a background in special education.

The new location puts Imagine Ink in close quarters with two other printing and design businesses, but competition isn't a big concern. "We work well together, actually," explained Franz. "We each offer different speciality services and we each have a different design style. So if a customer needs something that's better suited to one of the other shops, we'll refer them, and vice versa."

Plans for a grand opening party are being made. "Once we're settled in we'll do something special," said Franz. ■



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CRESTON VALLEY

CHAMBER of COMMERCE

Return of the Skunk Cabbage

Story by: Andrea Chapman Acting Director of Communications and Education

Large green leaves, blindingly yellow flowers, and a pungent aroma are the characteristics that make up one of the spring's most dramatic floral highlights. While short and minimal seem to be the trend for most sprouting spring beauties, the Skunk Cabbage is a welcome sight for sore eyes. It may even trick you into thinking you were unknowingly whisked away to the tropics!

It is no secret why the two common names for this plant, Skunk Cabbage and Swamp Lantern, directly describe its characteristics. The word "skunk" very obviously relates to the not so pleasant aroma. "Cabbage" describes the large meaty leaves. "Swamp" describes the habitat you can find it in. And "lantern" so perfectly describes the flower.

Why does skunk cabbage smell? This unpleasant aroma is emitted to attract pollinators to the large flower, which is why the smell is stronger during the spring months. The odour is present in the sap and flowers, however the flowers have a much stronger scent.

What can I say? Some insects crave a little stench from time to time...

What makes the leaves like cabbage? Well those large green leaves have a wax-like finish that can be comparable to cabbage leaves. And even though it is not a traditional food plant, the leaves have been used as an earlier form of Tupperware to wrap food up for later use or as a means to line food dryers and steaming pits. Mmmm, makes me think of cabbage rolls.

What do you mean it lives in swamps? Yes that's right! Swamp Lantern lives in swamps. We do have swamps in this valley, some even exist right in the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area. The term "wetland" can cover both marshes and swamps, and distinguishing between the two isn't as difficult as it sounds. Both are fed by above ground and below ground water sources, yet the difference is that marshes mostly consist of non-woody plants, and swamps largely consist of woody plants. So, as you may notice the next time you walk along the Southern portion of the "Wood

Duck Walk," the swamp area is filled with Cedar trees and Skunk Cabbage. Then as you meander into the open wetlands you mostly see Cattails and Bulrush. Both are obviously "wetland" environments yet have dramatically different plant communities!

And why is lantern part of the name? Look at that flower! The large yellow portion of the plant that your eyes are drawn to is actually a special leaf called a bract that is harnessed to grab your attention, or the attention of a pollinator. The tiny little flowers are located on the spike-like stalk in the centre of the bright yellow bract.

If you want to experience a real treat this spring visit the Balancing Rock Trail boardwalk. This portion of the trail hovers above an impressive swamp that is chock full of Skunk Cabbage. Take a deep breathe (not too deep) and imagine you are in a tropical rainforest right here in the Creston Valley! ■

For more information about our programs and special events please check out our website www.crestonwildlife.ca. If you have any questions call us at 250-402-6908 or e-mail at askus@crestonwildlif.ca.

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Creston Valley Bird Fest Offers a Variety of Events

Story by: Tanna Patterson

The May 9-11 Creston Valley Bird Fest 2014 is a celebration of the art, the agriculture, and the birds of the Creston Valley. In addition to a slate of presentations taking place at the Rec. Centre, PCSS and the Wildlife Centre, the festival also includes early morning bird-watching walks led by expert field personnel and eleven valley events that focus on the nature of the valley.

1. Counting bats at sundown with biologist Juliet Craig from Nelson
2. Viewing hummingbirds at dusk with Linda Szymkowiak and Sharon Lelliott
3. There are three canoe tours at the Wildlife Centre
4. Eying Eagles via the Ramada Inn bus with Sandy Compton
5. Tour of the Community Greenhouses
6. Wildlife trees and cavity-nesting birds with Ian Parfitt
7. Childrens' events at the Wildlife Centre
8. Kootenay Meadows Farm and Alpine Cheese Tour
9. Medicinal plant tour with Rowan Hamilton
10. Artists in their studios tour with Alison Bjorkman
11. Biologist in Your Back Yard with Ed McMackin

The presentation schedule is as follows:

Friday May 9, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.:

Buffet by Demetre's Catering in the Creston Room.

Speakers:

-“Hummingbirds” with Sharon Lelliott and Linda Szymkowiak from Castlegar and Rossland

-“Bats” with biologist Juliet Craig from Nelson

Following the buffet one bus will leave for Wynndel for a closer look at hummingbirds, and a second bus will leave for the Wildlife Centre to count bats at sundown.

Saturday, May 10, 11 a.m. To 1 p.m.:

Following the morning bird-watch, hear more about the birds at the International Migratory Bird Day Luncheon at the Creston Room.

Speakers:

-“Bad News Birds” with Dr. Rick Page from Victoria

-“Eagles of the World” with Sandy Compton

Saturday 2:00 p.m.

Creston Room of the Rec. Centre speaker:

-“Raptor Overview” with Brian Baxter

Wildlife Centre Theatre workshop:

Jim Lawrence's Photography Workshop

Saturday, May 10, 7 p.m.:

Keynote speaker at the PCSS auditorium:

CBC radio's “Outdoor Adventure Guy” Dave Quinn from Kimberley “A Wildlife Biologist's Love Affair with Birds”

At the intermission, Bruce Paterson's festival art “Great Horned Owl” will be presented to highest bidder and there will be a raffle ticket draw. Goodies provided by P.A.W.S. ■

For times and meeting places and event details, or to register, please visit www.crestonvalleybirds.ca.

WHERE THE Birds Are!

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Literary Artists Inspired by the Kootenays

Story by: Tammy Hardwick

Manager - Creston & District Museum & Archives

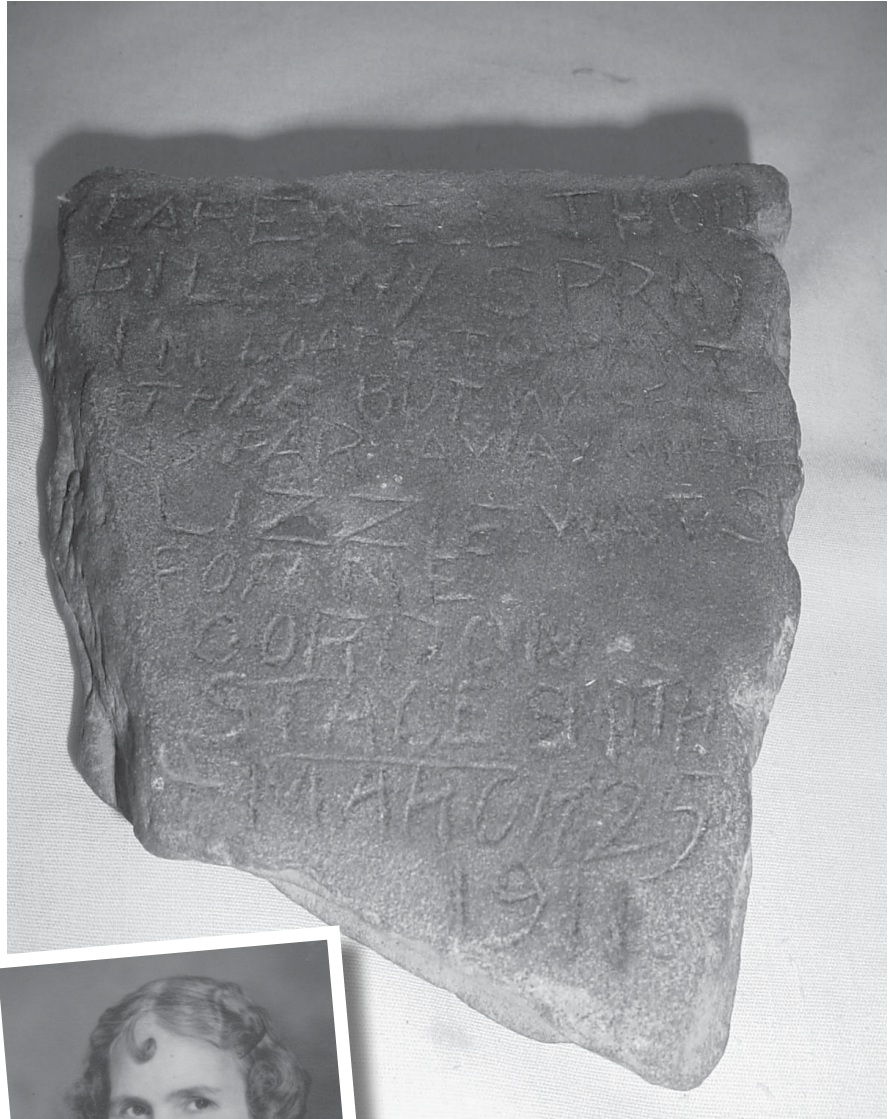
During Arts and Culture Week, at the end of April, you can expect to see a whole range of activities highlighting the wealth of artistic talent in the Creston Valley. Some of that talent will collide with history when the Museum hosts a murder mystery set in the 1950s on April 26.

Speaking of artistic talent and history, this seems like a good opportunity to talk about a couple of literary artists who lived in, and were inspired by, the Creston Valley.

Let's start with Gordon Stace-Smith. I haven't been able to determine exactly when he arrived in Creston, but his father, John, moved here in 1905 and it is possible that Gordon, then nineteen years old, also came here at that time or at least visited here frequently afterwards. By 1911 he was living in North Vancouver; was married in Phoenix, BC in 1914; and was living in Victoria when his father died in 1921. He also enlisted with the 54th Kootenay Battalion in the First World War, though we haven't yet found many details of his military service.

What he did, as a profession, is also a little unclear. His marriage certificate declares he was a rancher; his 1962 obituary has the headline of "entomologist, scholar." But mostly, it appears, he worked in the mining field. His obituary and a newspaper article from February 1931 both state that he "followed the hard-rock mining line" as a young man, living in many places in Canada, the US, and even Australia. Unfortunately, neither of these sources states exactly what he was doing in the mining field.

Perhaps that doesn't matter, because what he is best known for, today, is his book of poetry, *In the Kootenays* and



Catherine Clark.

Photo courtesy of Gray Creek Historical Society

Other Verses, which was published in 1930. The *Vancouver Sun* wrote a glowing review, reprinted in the *Creston Review* of 13 February 1931,

The stone carved by Gordon Stace-Smith and donated to the Creston Museum in 2005.

which declares Gordon Stace-Smith as "one of Canada's youngest poets," in whose work "there run the notes of joy and mystery in life; and above all the note of courage."

Gordon had been writing poems for many years before that book was published. The verse that first brought him to my attention was written in 1911:

"Farewell thou billowy spray, I'm loathe to part [from] thee; But my

heart is far away, Where Lizzie waits for me.”

Gordon Stace-Smith, March 25 1911.

Gordon carved those words on a roughly-triangular chunk of sandstone and flung it into the water at Deep Cove, North Vancouver. Then he departed for Phoenix, where he and Lizzie (Ann Elizabeth Martin) were married. About 1965, a house in Deep Cove was moved from the shoreline to a site higher up on the property and set on a basement built of concrete and beach stones. About a year later, when one of those stones worked itself loose, the verse etched on it was found. The home-owners tracked down the family of Lizzie and Gordon. One of their daughters, Betty Baldry, acquired the stone and donated it to the Creston Museum in 2005.

Catherine Anthony Mary Smith is another excellent example of a pioneer who achieved fame through the literary arts. She was born in England in 1892, and moved to Gray Creek with her widowed father and seven siblings in 1914. Several sources state that she had heard about British Columbia from a friend; one even declares that she was the driving force behind her father’s decision to move the family to the Kootenays.

Cax, as she was known, married Leonard Clark in 1919. In Tom’s Gray Creek, Tom Lymbery describes Len as “a man of independent means,” and the couple as “prosperous fruit growers.” They were able to hire employees for their cherry orchard – the largest in the community – and to purchase vehicles that no doubt helped combat Gray Creek’s isolation from the larger world. Those circumstances, coupled with Cax’s evident enthusiasm for the area, might well have made her life easier than that of many other pioneer women, who often arrived in the region with little idea of what they

were getting themselves into, and even less experience in the tasks and challenges before them.

But “easier” is a relative term. Her life would not have been “easy” by our standards. Gray Creek in 1914 was still a very remote community. Cax lost two brothers in the First World War and suffered through the impact of the Second World War. She struggled during the Depression along with her neighbours and fully accepted her role as a builder and leader of her community. She was, for example, an active member of the Porcupine Club, a women’s service group that was, in Tom’s words, “a force to be reckoned with.” Cax and her cohorts in the Club worked hard for many different things, from raising funds to build a kitchen in the Gray Creek Hall, to instituting a travelling library and dental clinic, to bringing electrical power to the community.

Somewhere, between all this, her work on the farm and raising two children, Cax found time to write. Her first book, *Fairy Tales in the Kootenays*, was published in 1929 under the pen-name Catherine Armsmith. Using other pen-names, she also wrote for church papers and the *Nelson Daily News*. But she is most well-known for the books she wrote under her own name: *The Golden Pine Cone* (1950), followed by *The Sun Horse* and five others before 1966.

In an interview in 1951, Cax commented that she had written *The Golden Pine Cone* after an illness, at a time when she felt depressed and “a failure.” She was sure that very few people had read the book, and even fewer intended to. It is intriguing that a woman, who had accomplished so much, could have such a poor view of her writing – especially since *The Sun Horse* won the Bronze Medal of the Canadian Association of Children’s Librarians in 1952, and *The Golden*

Pine Cone was reprinted in 1994 and is now recognized, according to one review, as “the prototype for a distinctly Canadian fantasy.”

Her books are more fantasy than history, but it is clear that Cax’s life in the Kootenays strongly influenced the activities and adventures of the children in her stories, just as Gordon Stace-Smith’s experiences coloured his poems. As the *Vancouver Sun* pointed out in 1931, “We have no greater heritage than the spirit of the mountain lands. ... Those who read will catch something of the inspiration that inspired the [work], and appreciate more the deeper heritage to which we are heirs in British Columbia.” ■

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 the Web site www.creston.museum.bc.ca.



Mighty Mamas

Story by: Megan Cook, certified Doula, Childbirth Educator, and Licensed Practical Nurse

We were three professional women who felt like new parents. For our first series of childbirth education classes in 2012, we doted and delighted in what has become Mighty Mama Childbirth Education and Doula Services.

Here at Mighty Mama we now run six-week series of childbirth classes meeting on Wednesday evenings. Our upcoming spring series is scheduled to begin April 16th. Topics include physiology in childbirth, psychology of pain, labour comfort measures, introduction to parenting, and information on complications, as well as a hospital tour. The classes are fun, laid back and free of charge, although donations are welcome to help cover expenses.

Our journey together started when my neighbour, Tara Mehrer, and I ended up in the same doula training program. Unknown to us, Victoria Troughton lived within an easy walk from our neighbourhood. She's a medical doctor who had taken time off to raise her family and she was now following her heart to pursue a Childbirth Educator certification. I'm a practical nurse with an American degree in midwifery and overseas experience in maternal health. Our like-passions brought us together and we realized that Creston needed an educational element in maternity care.

"[It was like] suddenly realizing that our community doesn't have childbirth education, so let's give it a shot and see what happens," Mehrer recalls. "The three of us mesh really well . . . We all have strong points."

Here at Mighty Mamas we believe that pregnancy is a unique time in a woman's life that she will never, ever forget. How she perceives it will impact her parenting style, her family relationships, and her interaction with her community.

"With the first live birth I ever saw, [I was] so amazed at the wonder of it," said Troughton. "Suddenly there was a whole new person in the world. I mean, I knew there was a baby in there, but when the baby came out, I was still just blown away. It was so emotional! I have loved pregnancy and childbirth ever since."

"realizing that our community doesn't have childbirth education, so let's give it a shot and see what happens"

So far we've provided prenatal education to approximately forty expectant moms and their partners. This has mostly been in a group format, but we also occasionally provide individually tailored sessions. Parents report how much the information helped them grow in confidence as they navigated childbirth with support from the Mighty Mama's community.

Each of us are also trained in doula services, which entails one-on-one emotional support, education, and comfort assistance throughout the birthing process. We strive to provide high-quality services to our rural community.

With the support of Public Health, we have connected with the Pregnancy Outreach Program, which has generously allowed us to use their Dots-To-Tots room at the former South Creston School for our Wednesday evening classes. Family practitioners and midwives in town are referring their patients

to our prenatal classes and we extend our thanks to these professionals for welcoming us into the healthcare community.

At the end of the day, why do we do what we do? Because we love it. It is a joy to watch an apprehensive mama-to-be grow through our birthing series and leave relaxed and confident. ■

To learn more please visit our Facebook page by searching "Creston Childbirth Education" or to register for classes contact us at 250-402-3487.



Pictured left to right, Victoria Troughton, Tara Mehrer and Megan Cook

Photo courtesy of Amy Chapoton



Considerations when buying a home

Article submitted by: Vern Gorham,
Sun Life Financial Advisor

Regardless of where you live in Canada, or the size or type of property you're looking at, buying a home will often be the single largest purchase you ever make. And, of course, if you're like most people and take out a mortgage, it will likely also lead to the single largest loan you'll ever have!

Lenders will put your finances to the test. They want to feel confident that you will be able to make your regular mortgage payments.

Can you make the monthly payments? Passing your lender's financial tests

Before they give you a mortgage, most lenders want to get a sense of your ability to repay the money they lend to you.

To get a feel for whether your finances can withstand the extra burden of regular mortgage payments, lenders generally have two tests: the gross debt-service ratio test and the total debt-service ratio test.

Gross debt-service ratio test

For this test, lenders add up your estimated monthly mortgage payments and your property taxes. These are called your housing costs—essentially what you have to pay to keep a roof over your head. (Sometimes lenders will also include your heating costs.) In general, this number can be up to 32 per cent of your gross monthly household income.

An example? Say your family's monthly income before taxes

is \$10,000. Up to 32 per cent, or \$3,200, can go towards your housing expenses. If your anticipated property taxes are \$300 a month, that leaves \$2,900 as your maximum monthly mortgage payment.

Total debt-service ratio test

In addition to your housing costs, lenders also want to make sure you aren't carrying too much debt overall. The more debt you have, the more likely it is you may run into trouble making your mortgage payments.

To assess whether your debt load will still allow you to comfortably pay them back, lenders use a second ratio. This is known as the total debt-service ratio.

In addition to your monthly housing expenses (your monthly mortgage payment and property taxes), they add the total payments you have to make on all your other debts, including credit card balances, car loans and home equity lines of credit. Together, these monthly payments can't be greater than 40 per cent of your gross monthly income.

Decide what you can afford to spend

No matter how much a lender says you can borrow, do your own analysis. Just because the bank is willing to let you take out a certain-sized mortgage doesn't mean you should.

While a lender may feel safe lending you a certain amount, it's what

makes sense for you and your family that's important.

Before you decide to spend a certain amount for a property, it pays to:

- Consider how your day-to-day cash flow will be affected.
- Look at whether you'll have to cut back in other areas, such as holidays or entertainment.
- Assess the impact on your savings and retirement strategy.

Your real estate agent will answer your questions about mortgages, mortgage rates, and mortgage lenders. Call me to learn more about the benefits of an individual life insurance policy to cover your mortgage debt. ■

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Vern Gorham is a licensed representative for Sun Life Financial, and works out of his office in Creston. He can be reached by phone at 250-254-0607, or by email at vern.gorham@sunlife.com



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Ag Aware

Story by: The Creston Valley Agriculture Society

Spring is in the air

Spring has come again! The grass is growing and the days are getting longer. Gardeners can start gardening, farmers can start field work. The growing season has begun.

Early season crops like peas, lettuce and other salad greens can be started in the garden now. More and more people are re-discovering the joy and benefits of growing their own food. The last of the “early” farmer’s markets will be held April 5th. This is the same weekend as the Home and Garden show. Regular season farmer’s markets will resume in May. When planning and planting your garden, keep in mind the Creston Valley Fall Fair in September. Plan to participate in this long time Creston tradition.

Farmers will begin their field work around the valley. Some activities to watch for will be farmers in their fields tilling the soil to prepare the seedbed for various grains, canola, and hay crops. By the end of the month some of the beef cows and their calves will be headed out to graze on pastures for the spring and summer season. New crops of calves, lambs, piglets and chicks should all be on the go now.

In the orchards the trees are springing to life as well. Starting in late April blossoms will burst open to brighten our valley as various fruit crops begin their crop year. Apricots are usually first to bloom, followed by peaches and cherries; plums and apples will follow in May. If the weather is warm and the sunshine is plentiful the bees will be busy pollinating the flowers helping to ensure a good crop.

Those of us involved in the agriculture industry in the Creston Valley know that this valley is blessed with the climate and soils to be able to grown an amazing variety of food. Unfortunately, many people, not directly involved in agriculture, take this all for granted. As they travel along they see some kind of field over there, some kind of fruit trees over there, whatever. There’s always food in the store. Things can change. Widespread drought or flooding; civil unrest or military actions can all impact the food supplies from other parts of the world. The stores may not always be so well stocked. Prices may not always be low. Canada currently has one of the lowest overall food costs of any country in the world.

It seems, more so lately, that people in the areas outside the Creston Valley appreciate what we have here more than those who live here. They are more concerned about food security and availability. Fruits and vegetables, meat and milk are in a greater demand from our valley farmers. Grain and hay grown here feeds livestock all over the Kootenays and beyond.

Various organizations and groups are actively involved in developing networks to source and transport real food products to the communities that can’t grow their own. As this trend is growing, so too are the opportunities for local farmers to be involved in supplying products to those areas. Some traditional crops and marketing methods may not be suited to those new opportunities but new methods will take their place.

The bottom line is we have the land to grown food to supply an emerging available market. We must do all that we can to preserve our precious farmland and utilize what we have. It’s always a good time to ‘get to know your farmer’. See where your food comes from and how it is grown. Appreciate the fact the real food doesn’t require a long ingredient list with names that you cannot pronounce. Enjoy your local food in all its many forms.

Be Ag-Aware. ■

For more information on the Creston Valley Agriculture Society contact Randy Meyer at 250-428-7013 or Kris Vanderweyde at 250-428-2920 or email crestonagsociety@gmail.com



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National Volunteer Week is a time to recognize, celebrate and thank Canada's 13.3 million volunteers. 2014 marks the 11th consecutive year we've delivered the NVW campaign in partnership with Investors Group.

Volunteers strengthen our communities and make our country vibrant. The Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, calls Canada "a smart and caring nation." It's our dedication to community involvement that has given us that reputation at home and around the globe.

Canadians from coast to coast are encouraged to call the Volunt-Hear Hotline and participate in a national conversation about volunteer recognition.

The hotline is a toll-free number where people can call to leave a brief impact statement and say thank you to a volunteer.

Messages will be organized into playlists on Soundcloud. Listeners will be able to download messages, share them through social media. ■

<http://volunteer.ca/nvw2014>

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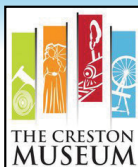
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What is rheumatism

Story by Jesse Moreton, BSc DC

Any of various conditions characterized by inflammation or pain in muscles, joints, or fibrous tissue. It's a somewhat ambiguous umbrella term and one which is actually considered medically outdated. Still we hear about it often enough, and it pops up occasionally in conditions like rheumatoid arthritis or rheumatic fever. What does it actually mean and where did the term come from?

Rheumatism is a late seventeenth century English term that originates in the Greek root 'rheuma'. Rheuma being translated as 'stream' or the conjugation rheumatizein meaning 'to snuffle'. In the infancy of medicine, rheumatism was the

disease caused by the internal flow of watery humours. Obviously not the way we see or understand things anymore, yet the word limps and lingers on.

Rheumatology is a medical speciality which focuses on systemic (circulation) diseases of the muscles and joints, and autoimmune diseases. There don't always seem to be clear borders as to which conditions can be categorized within rheumatology. However, most conditions involve an element of inflammation or relate to the blood.

So what does all this mean to you? Probably not much because if you have a rheumatic disease you will be treated according to that specific disease, not the umbrella term itself. However, finding that specific disease may be more difficult than you think. For example, rheumatoid factor, a blood marker for diagnosing rheumatoid arthritis, is absent in approximately 15% of people who have rheumatoid arthritis. Sometimes the marker becomes present after the first year of symptoms. Other tests like anti-CCP can also give false negative results. Thus rheumatoid arthritis is diagnosed based on a set of criteria including joint involvement, imaging (x-rays), and length of symptoms, in addition to the blood tests.

In practice I've seen patients with vague or generalized symptoms run through the system in an attempt to find appropriate diagnosis and treatment. Treatment, by the way, is typically through painkillers, NSAIDs and steroids. Other drugs that affect the immune system are also used. Methotrexate is often reserved for more advanced rheumatoid arthritis.

It's always unsettling when symptoms and blood tests don't seem to match any known conditions. Occasionally patients come back from specialists without any further answers. It's not to say the specialists don't know their stuff. They do. Rheumatology is an ambiguous world. Immune systems are complex and diagnosis is not always cut and dry. It doesn't help that it's human nature to label and attribute reason to symptoms. We have a need to know why our body is behaving or reacting in a certain way. It can be frustrating when no one has the answers we want. As with any disease or condition, there is a psychosocial component.

One final thought to finish. Since I am a chiropractor, I looked into the evidence of manual techniques for rheumatic diseases. Although patient satisfaction is rated high, few randomized control studies have been conducted. I have found it wise to exercise caution with rheumatic patients. Certain techniques can aggravate symptoms or pose risk, but many mobilizations and modalities can help. I've found, like everything, it depends on the person, the degree of symptoms and the specific type of rheumatism. ■

For more information, please call Moreton Chiropractic at 250-428-3535 or visit moretonchiropractic.blogspot.com.

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Breath of Spring

Story by: Shifu
Neil Ripski

Soon I am going to have to start paying rent at Kingfisher books. The time I spend downstairs hiding and working while drinking coffee is bound to catch up with me soon. But one of the great things about working there is the opportunity to meet with new and interesting people and discuss the matters that always seem to come up in the book store- Health, Philosophy, Music and other things that nourish our souls. Today I had the opportunity to meet a lady with some questions about Taiji (Tai Chi) training and its benefits, the types of questions Taiji teachers field every day. What was particularly interesting today was that the talk turned quickly to that of training the breath.

Breathing is something we take for granted. Until I mentioned it here you were most likely unaware of the intake and exhalation of your breath. By bringing your attention to it you change your relationship to it and it becomes something you observe. In the spring, we tend to go outside and take in a deep breath with a long exhale as though we were removing the stale air of the winter from our bodies and taking in the fresh spring air of the season, of life. The depth and measure of our breath becomes apparent suddenly when we step into the sunlight and warmth of the day. It is this type of breathing that taiji studies deeply.

Using the idea of 'breathing to the Dantien' to use taiji terms we must teach our bodies to have a deep and powerful relationship to the air we breathe. Dantien is located just below the navel and in the torso and in the case of this exercise is seen as a type of balloon that can inflate and deflate. The first and simplest method of breath training is known as Buddhist breathing and is simple to understand. If you place your hands below your navel and

inhale, allow your Dantien to expand as though the air was filling up your belly. Upon exhalation allow the Dantien to resume its normal size and shape. What this does to our bodies is allows us to breathe to and from the bottom of our lungs making the lungs take in more oxygen and exhale more thoroughly the stagnant air normally left from breathing only with your chest.

This type of breathing will regulate and invigorate the body's ability to oxygenate the blood and create a feeling of well being. Taiji forms are practised at a cadence that is deep and slow following this type of understanding of the breath. What is interesting is the influence of ancient Chinese thought, particularly from the Taoist tradition, on the understanding of the breath. Of course what is known as Taoist breathing is another practice but the understanding of reality for what it is allows us to see the benefits of breathing

slowly and deeply and is summed up thus. Living things that breathe slowly live longer lives. If you think here about the breath of, say, a dog and look at their life spans you find they breathe faster than we do and live shorter lives. The same can be seen through other animals and life forms. On the other end of the spectrum a tree breathes a full inhalation and exhalation once per day and they live hundreds of years. The ancient Taoists observed this and found that if they train their bodies to breathe more slowly and calmly health and longevity result. Try just sitting a minute or two each day and count your breaths. Then try this breathing method and watch how much slower the rate becomes and how alert you feel from the use of the whole lung!

Now out into that spring air! ■

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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Amazing Season for the Thunder Cats

Story by: Creston Valley Thunder Cats

2013/2014 is a year of making history for your local Junior B hockey team!

Regular season records were set by the team and players as follows:

- Finished regular season with 80 points; surpassing previous franchise record of 70 points earned in 2008/09.
 - This is the 2nd time in franchise history that the Thunder Cats won their Division for regular season play (last time was 2008/2009)
 - The team won its most games ever in a single season taking the W 39 times (previous record was 30 wins in 2008/09 and 2011/2012)
 - Jesse Collins beat the record for Most Assists Earned by a Player in a Career as a Thunder Cat earning 174 in his 3 years as a Cat and the record for Most Points Earned by a Player in a Career as a Thunder Cat earning 233 points in the same 3 years.
 - Trevor Hanna beat the record for Most Goals Scored by a Player in a Single Season as a Thunder Cat by finding the back of the net 31 times this season.
 - First time in franchise history that the Cats have won the Eddie Mountain Division Championship title.
- Some other Thunder Cats facts and trivia from 2013/2014 Regular Season:
- Averaged 5.42 "goals for" per game (best in the KIJHL for 2013/2014).
 - Averaged 3.10 "goals against" per game.
 - Was undefeated in January.
 - Rode an amazing 13 game win streak from December 31st to February 5th.

At the end of regular season the KIJHL (league) recognizes the individual efforts of players and coaches in each Division. Creston was the proud recipient of 6 of the 7 recognition awards for regular season! The Eddie Mountain Division Award Winners were as follows:

- Most Sportsmanlike – JESSE COLLINS
- Most Valuable – TREVOR HANNA
- Rookie Of The Year – LOGAN STYLER
- Top Goaltender – KYLE MICHALOVSKY
- Top Scorer – JESSE COLLINS
- Coach Of The Year – JOSH HEPDITICH

Also, at the end of regular season the KIJHL (league) recognizes the individual efforts of players and coaches in the entire league. Creston was the proud recipient of 2 recognition awards for regular season! The KIJHL Award Winners were as follows:

- Top Goaltender – KYLE MICHALOVSKY
- Coach Of The Year – JOSH HEPDITICH

We hope that all of our fans have enjoyed this season and that we've made some new fans as the season went on and the excitement built through playoffs! Go Cats Go!!! ■

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



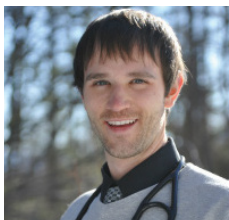
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Is it important to buy high quality supplements?

Story by: Dr. Chris Ford, BMSc, ND

Nutritional supplements come in many different forms and doses which will have an effect on any therapeutic benefit that you are trying to achieve. In this month's article I have outlined a few reasons to be diligent and search out high quality supplements.

1. No additives or fillers

Inexpensive supplements are able to be sold at a lower cost because they use a combination of non-therapeutic ingredients as fillers and low doses of the intended nutrient. A few of the many non-medicinal ingredients from one of the most common multi-vitamins include FD&C Yellow No. 6 Aluminum Lake, Modified Food Starch, Hydrogenated Palm Oil and Maltodextrin. Not only are these ingredients unnecessary, they may actually be harmful to your body and block the absorption of the ingredients that you want.

2. Tested for toxins

There are currently no regulations requiring 'natural' health supplements to undergo testing for dosage or toxins that may be found in certain products. The main supplement of concern is fish oil as some fish contain high levels of heavy metal toxins which will be more concentrated in the oil. High quality supplement manufacturers will have their products tested by a third party to ensure that they are not exposing their customers to poisons.

3. Higher Doses

High quality supplements may cost more because they contain doses of the wanted ingredients that are high

enough to achieve a therapeutic effect. As the cost decreases, often times so does the dose and in order to receive an adequate amount you may have to take a large number of capsules or tablets. When doses are compared directly, it usually leads to the discovery that the "expensive" supplements are actually lower in cost. Again, professional line supplements are third party tested to ensure the dosing is accurate.

4. Most absorbable or active form used

Apart from higher doses, quality supplements will also contain

the form of nutrient that is most available to be absorbed and utilized by your body. Along with higher doses and the absence of unnecessary ingredients, using the most available form will ensure you are receiving the proper nutrients and better equip you on the journey to achieving your health goals.

Overall, look for supplements that contain no artificial preservatives, artificial flavour or colour, yeast, GMO corn, GMO soy, wheat, gluten, milk, sugar, starch, heavy metals or PCBs. Always consult a Naturopathic Doctor or other health professional that is trained in this area before starting a new supplement. ■

For more detailed information please visit: www.roots-to-health.com
Please send any health questions or article ideas to: info@roots-to-health.com
Dr. Chris Ford practices in Creston once per week at Vital Health, Creston.

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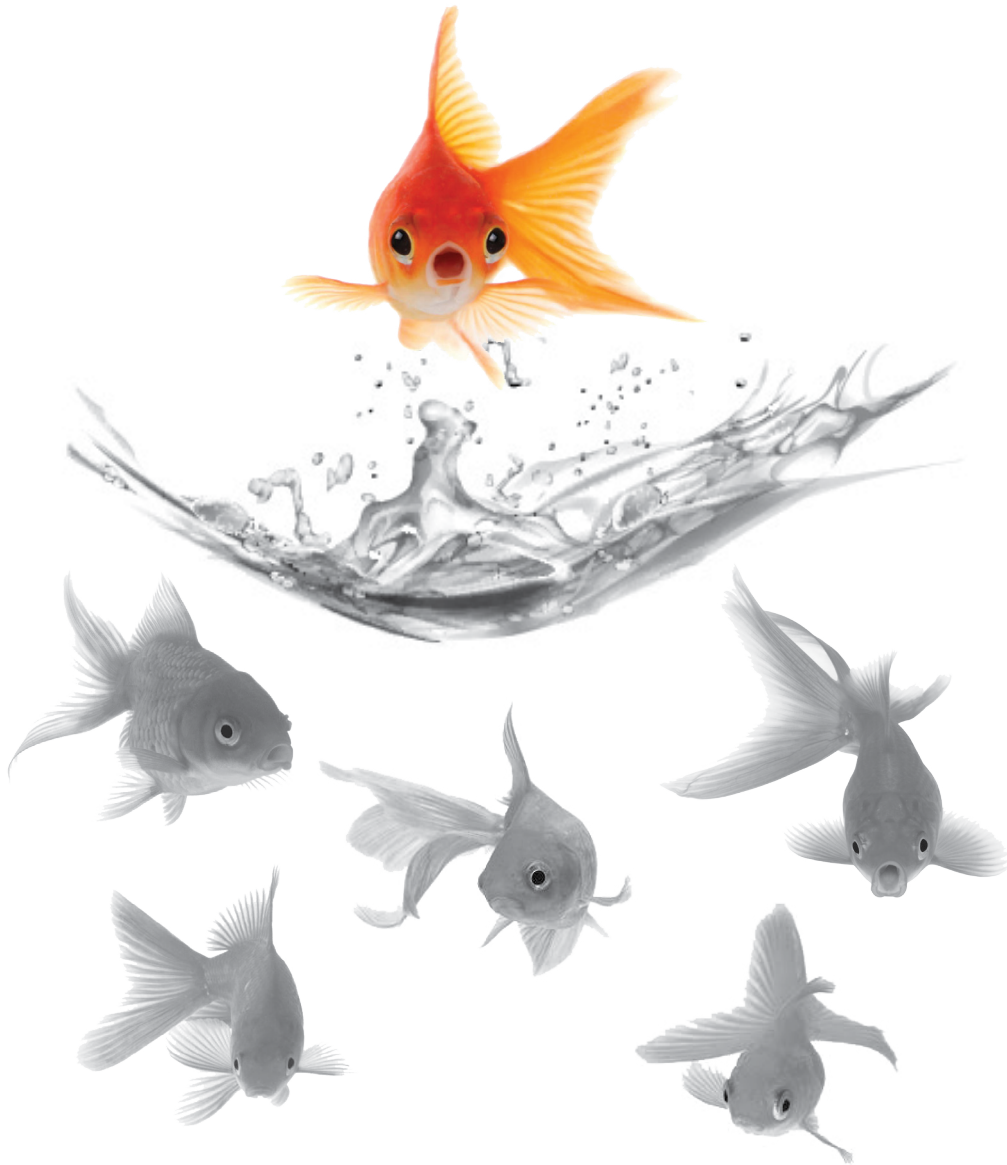


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