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*Season's
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CRATE-IVITY

Kootenay Crate Co. producing
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HISTORY

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creates connections

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Thunder Cats goalie
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From the Editor



BRIAN LAWRENCE

The final days of 2016 are upon us! It's been an eventful year in the Creston Valley — look no further than this issue's submissions by Creston Mayor Ron

Toyota and Regional District of Central Kootenay director Tanya Wall to learn about events in the town and outlying areas. As well, Lower Kootenay Band Chief Jason Louie offers some exciting news about the Ktunaxa Nation.

For many people, thoughts at this time of year turn to Christmas. Mine do too — we actually got so eager to decorate the house that we started in mid-November (early mid-November).

Hey, it takes time when you have three trees in the house! And we're still going at it — the Christmas village is my domain, and it's next on the list.

In the Creston Valley, it's easy to get into the holiday spirit — just take a look at our Season's Greetings section to learn more about the events ringing in the season: the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' spectacular nativity display and the Blossom Valley Singers' much-anticipated Christmas concert.

And don't forget about Pyramid Building Supplies' 25th annual Wishing Tree, which ensures a merry Christmas for children and youth.

While we're on the subject of Christmas... A few people shared their favourite ornaments and decorations with us (you'll find those in the Season's Greetings section), and to the right, you'll see one of mine. It carries with it 55 years of family history; my dad gave



the pink ball, with its delicately scripted "Merry Xmas", to his parents when he was 10. Knowing I can't visit my family at the Lower Mainland for Christmas every year, my grandma gave it to me in 2007 to provide a connection while I was enjoying Christmas in the Kootenays — and it's been a cherished part of my holiday decorating ever since.

From all of us at *I Love Creston*, have a safe and happy holiday season! ■

INSIDE

FEATURE: CRATES

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With a look all their own, crates from a downtown Creston shop are proving both popular and versatile.

ON THE COVER: Chad Wobshall (right) with (from left) his wife, Jessica, and their children, Briley and Hailey.
Brian Lawrence photo

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Thinking Outside the CRATE

STORY AND PHOTOS BY BRIAN LAWRENCE

I Love Creston Editor

Nightstands. Entertainment units. Wine racks. Serving trays. One downtown Creston store offers them all, and with a rustic design found nowhere else.

“People don’t really see stuff like this,” says Kootenay Crate Co. owner Chad Wobshall. “Unique and handmade is the draw. ... People are a little bit sick of Ikea furniture — you get it home and put it together, and it’s all particle board.”

Kootenay Crate Co. follows a different philosophy, though, with wood assembled and stained by hand, a process that customers appreciate.

“People have bought into the brand,” says Wobshall. “They want the Kootenay crate.”

The distinct style has earned the company a following outside the Creston Valley, with photos on social media receiving thousands of likes and shares, even in its early days.

“That’s where the business basically got its legs,” says Wobshall.

Feature



It all got started in 2014 when he and his wife, Jessica, visited yard sales and bought crates, which they stained and started selling in groups on Facebook. When Wobshall decided to try his hand at making his own crates, he was fortunate to be working at the WynnWood sawmill, which allowed employees to take home scraps.

"I had my buddies coming out with an armload every day," he says.

It progressed naturally from there, and Kootenay Crate Co. has since turned out over 12,000 pieces since.

"We never forced anything. ... They come from people's ideas," says Wobshall. "We don't want to get too crazy. We have more luck doing what people ask for — we do a couple of them and see what happens."

For example, a customer who needed something to hold records led to the creation of LP-sized crates.

Other businesses have found the crates useful, as well, taking advantage of their versatility to create commercial displays for trade shows.

"They pack stuff in crates and then set them up."

Wholesale orders are also a big part of the business, with such stores as Leon's Furniture in Lethbridge, Alta., and, closer to home, the Bedroom Furniture Galleries in Cranbrook offering the wood products. On occasion, customers spotting the crates elsewhere appreciate the chance to check them out while visiting Creston.

"People see them in stores, and they come to town and say, 'I want one,'" says Wobshall.



The business had no storefront until he started a shop on Northwest Boulevard in April 2015, eventually moving downtown six months ago. The change created a significant increase in traffic.

“You’d see 20 or 30 people on a Tuesday or Wednesday,” says Wobshall. “Here, in the summer, we see 150, especially after the farmers’ market.”

Developing a business was important to Wobshall, who was born and raised in Creston — and didn’t want to leave.

“I’ve always known I wanted to stay in Creston,” he says. “All my friends in high school wanted to leave, and I just wanted to stay and get a foothold so I could afford to stay here.”

The colour names for his products reflect his passion for the Creston Valley, with Mount Thompson, Kokanee, Sam Steele, the Canyon trestle, Goat River and Twin Bays among the namesakes.

“A lot of people will quote the names when they order something,” he says.

Most customers don’t like to get too wild with colours, though; neutral tones are consistently popular, with interest in red climbing around Christmas. When creating storage units, many will opt for a natural colour for the base, adding coloured crates for a pop.

The Kootenay Crate Co. shop isn’t filled only with crates. Work by a few other local artisans — all in a complementary rustic style — is also offered, and Wobshall’s crates are a base for words and images by Howard and Rose Elliott of Rook Media/Design.

“People come in for a crate or a sign — or a crate with a sign on it,” says Wobshall.

The variety helps to keep



Chad Wobshall assembles a crate in his downtown Creston shop.

customers interested; for the same reason, Wobshall enjoys visiting home decor shops himself.

“You might not buy something, but it reminds you to go back,” he says.

While the Kootenay Crate Co. creations don’t seem to be losing popularity, Wobshall says that his style may have to adapt as time goes on.

“People are going a little bit away from rustic and going toward industrial.”

But if that keeps the creative juices flowing, he’s happy to head for the workshop and try something new.

“When you do something outside the box and completely new, that’s cool,” he says. “What drives you is the creative aspect. ... If you want to be more positive, you hit the shop and get your jam back.” ■

To learn more about Kootenay Crate Co., visit www.kootenaycrateco.com.



From the Mayor's Desk

BY RON TOYOTA
Mayor - Town of Creston

Two Years To Go

It's hard to believe that our current town council is halfway through its four-year term already. In this time there have been challenges, rewards and, most recently, loss, events that have drawn us together as a group.

It is with great sadness that I reflect on the passing of two members of council, one former and one current. Former councillor Ed Gatzke passed away in January at 88. Ed had served the Town of Creston as councillor for 26 years, from 1973-1999. Former mayor/councillor Joe Snopek passed away more recently in September at 75. Joe served 12 years in two elected official roles, both as mayor and as councillor. Both of these fine gentlemen served our community well and will be sadly missed.

With Snopek's passing, an upcoming challenge will be the undertaking of a by-election. This will mark the community choosing a new councillor to serve out the remaining term. This date will be announced early in 2017, with the by-election in the first half of the new year.

I believe that achieving community successes is the impetus that drives us forward as elected officials; these lasting legacies will remain in the landscape for

many years to come. As I highlighted in my *I Love Creston* column last month, the receipt of our recent \$4.1 million federal and provincial funding for the Arrow Creek water mainline replacement project is a tremendous advancement for the citizens of Creston and Erickson. Stay tuned for construction to happen in 2017.

A municipal project that actually hit the ground in 2016 is the recently constructed sidewalk on Railway Boulevard, a project that enhances both safety and connectivity. As a point of interest, the sidewalk was constructed on the west side of the road because this area is municipally owned property; the opposite side of the road is owned and controlled by CP Rail. It took a short two months to construct this project, comprised of approximately 140 metres of sidewalk, curb and gutter. Design features included an expansive retaining wall, a lengthy handrail and large shade trees. Final treatments will include installation of two seating areas and street lighting. What a great complement to our new intersection on Highway 3 at the junction of Pine Street and Railway Boulevard!

Another project that stands out in my mind as a great addition to the community landscape is the new Rotary Pavilion and the public washrooms in Centennial

Park. A heartfelt thank you to the Creston Valley Rotary Club for their organization and construction talent! This \$130,000 project was started and completed in only two months with support from the Creston Rotary Club, the Town of Creston and many local businesses. Together we continue making our community an awesome place to live and play.

To me, the way this community pulls together is a defining component of what makes it a place like no other. Building on this thought, I'd like to thank Chief Jason Louie for honouring me with the Friends of the Ktunaxa Nation Award in July. When I was bestowed this honour at the Ktunaxa First Nation annual general assembly, I knew it would be a highlight of both 2016 and my career as a whole.

Last year at this time we were gearing up for a visit from the CP Holiday Train. While this is not our year to see the bright lights of the Holiday Train pull into town (this happens every second year), it's important to remember that a key purpose of the Holiday Train is to bring awareness and raise funds for local food banks. With December upon us, I wish to remind everyone to give what they are able to the Creston Valley Gleaners Society food bank and/or the Creston Ministerial Association Christmas hamper project. Your generosity and kindness can make a huge difference in the lives of others.

Merry Christmas and season's greetings to all! ■
Reach Ron Toyota by phone at 250-428-2214 ext. 227, by email at ron.toyota@creston.ca or visit town hall at 238 10th Avenue North.



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Message from the Chief

BY JASON LOUIE
Chief - Lower Kootenay Band

Centre Will Fill Need

K'suk kyukyit (greetings). In the early 1980s, the Lower Kootenay Band established a recovery home founded by Mary Basil and the late Howard Michel. The purpose of the home was to assist and transition those who were about to enter into an alcohol and drug treatment centre program. Clients were introduced to a residential group home setting, introduced to Alcoholics Anonymous, and provided the sobriety necessary to enter into an alcohol and drug program.

As time progressed, the recovery home received an alcohol and drug treatment centre status in the early 1990s. The centre thrived until the early 2000s and eventually relocated into the Invermere area. Due to some administrative issues the treatment centre closed and much restructuring was required.

For the past year, the Ktunaxa Nation health sector staff and I have been working hard to obtain operating dollars in our area. We have been

meeting with the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) to secure the treatment centre budget. In October, at a meeting in Williams Lake, the FNHA officially awarded the treatment centre budget to the Ktunaxa Nation.

We are very early in the planning stages, as one of the biggest tasks is finding a place that will suit our needs. We are visiting homes that are for sale in the Creston Valley that would have the capacity to accommodate six to eight clients plus staff. We are fortunate that FNHA will be providing some capital costs to assist in offsetting expenses.

The alcohol and drug treatment centre will service First Nations from the B.C. Interior. We have the opportunity to assist people who have hit rock bottom. We have the opportunity to change lives and provide First Nations with a second or even third chance at coming to terms with addictions.

As a First Nation, we can plan all we want for economic development and governance strategies. If our people are not well these plans are pointless. We

must plan for wellness. If addictions are an issue in our communities we must face them together. Alcohol and drug treatment centres save lives. Far too many times I have attended a wake and funeral of a young person whose life was cut short due to the stranglehold addictions had on their lives. We fully understand that we will not be able to reach everyone. Each person must hit their own rock bottom and be willing to accept the help provided.

The task to secure these funds was not easy. We had other First Nations that were vying for the funds as well. We realize to be awarded the budget is an honour and we wish to learn from past mistakes and create a future that has the clients as the priority. My task with this initiative is nearing completion. Secure the funding. The Ktunaxa Nation staff and the society will be responsible for staffing. The centre will be given an official name that will reflect the First Nations from the B.C. Interior. The centre will be accredited, and staff will have the credentials necessary to provide alcohol and drug counselling.

With that, I thank you for taking the time to read my column and wish you all the best this holiday season. May the new year bring good health and good times to you and yours. *Taxa.* ■

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

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Steamer Trunk Connections



BY TAMMY BRADFORD
 Manager - Creston & District Museum & Archives

I'm sure you've heard the expression, "A picture is worth a thousand words." Well, the same is true for artifacts. A single object has many stories to tell, from the people who donated it to the technology that made it.

Here's an example: a large steamer trunk that we rediscovered during our recent storage-collections-reorganization project.

A steamer trunk is a large piece of luggage, kind of like a portable closet and dresser combined. On one side are drawers, and on the other a hanging bar for longer garments. The whole thing is hinged in the middle, so it folds up and latches shut into a single upright rectangular box that can be easily moved (easily, that is, assuming you have several stevedores to move it for you).

This particular one was donated to us in 1988 by Mr. and Mrs. Joe Colombo — some of you might remember them as the owners of the Creston Bus Depo

restaurant, which they operated for about 20 years beginning in 1946. But the name on the shipping label is Carlo Roggiani, and I spent considerable time figuring out how Carlo Roggiani is connected to the Colombos. It's pretty straightforward: Carlo Roggiani was Joe Colombo's mother's second husband. But getting to that simple answer led me through many other, absolutely fascinating stories. Here are a few:

A complex extended family: Maria Crivelli married Peter Colombo, with whom she had one child, Joe. Joe Colombo married Enis Salvador, daughter of John and Margaret Salvador and sister of John, Oliver, and Elidio Salvador, which will be familiar names to anyone living in the Creston Valley between the mid-1940s and the early 1980s. Joe and Enis had three sons, all of whom had children, and all the Salvador brothers married and had children... You can see how quickly we go from the history of a single individual named on a shipping label to the story of an entire community.

Patterns of immigration: It is a common story in European immigration

to Canada: One family member comes over, makes a start, then sends for the rest of his family. The extended Colombo family is no exception. Maria arrived in Canada in December 1913; given that her son was born in 1914, she was probably either joining her husband or coming to Canada to marry him. Carlo Roggiani, arriving in Canada early in 1922, was joining his uncle, Marco Sartorio, who himself had married, in 1908, Eva Minunzio, who was just arrived from Italy.

Anglicization and assimilation: How many of us have a family ancestor whose name was changed, somewhere along the way? It is another very common story. Canadian officials, unfamiliar with "foreign" names, often didn't even try to get them right. Immigrants felt pressure to appear like the British-born residents who made up the community's majority. As a result, last names are frequently spelled inconsistently, even from one family member to another, and first names are often given an English equivalent. Peter Colombo's given name was Pietro; an immigration record for Joe gives his name as Giosue. Marco Sartorio was known as Mark, and Carlo became Charlie.



There is no better time to say

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and wish you a very happy

Holiday Season



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History

Far more than a mere genealogical challenge, this highlights a whole host of societal conditions. Canada's changing relationships with other nations could — and often did — make immigrants from those countries unwelcome here. Cultural stereotyping pigeonholed people of certain nationalities into specific roles, labelled them as untrustworthy or barred them from social, economic or educational opportunities. Immigrants struggling to learn English were in no position to help their English-speaking counterparts learn how to pronounce “foreign” names. There was also the expectation, on the part of both the immigrants and the established residents, that newcomers would conform to the prevailing language and customs. While I don't have any definite evidence that these factors applied to the families connected to our steamer trunk, it is probable that at least some of them did.

Interconnections between communities: Family historians follow individuals as they move from one place to another, without always paying attention to the places they pass through. Community historians focus on one locality, recognizing people who pass through but often losing sight of them before and after. When we combine those disciplines, we find a family that built businesses — and communities — everywhere they went. John Salvador, Sr., arriving in Canada at 11 with 50 cents in his pocket, owned a successful contracting business in Coleman, Alta.; his sons, daughter and son-in-law, after arriving in Creston, were everything from restaurateurs and equipment dealers to a long-serving mayor. Joe Colombo, in addition to running the Bus Depo Restaurant, had been a part of the Colombo basketball team in Trail that took the league championship from 1929-1932; he'd operated at least one bakery (in Drumheller, Alta.) with his father, and worked at the smelter in Trail, the collieries in Blairmore, Alta., and as a



Creston Museum

A steamer trunk donated to the Creston Museum in 1988 by Mr. and Mrs. Joe Colombo.

logging truck driver for his (then-future) father-in-law in Coleman.

Mobile labour force: In the early resource-based industries across southern B.C., people moved from one community to another. They followed the mining or logging booms, rarely staying in one place for more than a few years. Joe Colombo, born in Victoria, lived in Drumheller, returned with his mother to Italy for a couple of years before rejoining his father in Drumheller; he moved to Trail, then the Crowsnest Pass, before settling in Creston. Carlo Roggiano joined his uncle in Blairmore before moving to Trail and then back again to the pass; his uncle had moved from Fernie. We see similar patterns in many stories of the early residents of the Kootenays.

One wrong turn: In tracking down the various members of this extended family, I came across a death record for a Pietro

Colombo, who passed away in 1933 in a place called Essondale. As it turns out, this is a different Pietro Colombo — not Joe's father, who died in Coleman in the 1970s — but by the time I figured that out, I'd already got a little sidetracked by Essondale. It was, to use modern terms, a “mental health facility” in Coquitlam. To use less-charitable contemporary terms, it was an insane asylum — the sort of place where people were sent because they had learning or developmental disabilities and needed more help than their families could give, because they had attempted suicide, because they had become an inconvenient wife, and many other legitimate or not-so-legitimate reasons.

Isn't it amazing what one shipping label on a single large suitcase can lead to? ■

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

Lefebvre Thriving in Fourth Season

CRESTON VALLEY THUNDER CATS

Any hockey coach will tell you that **A**— at the end of the day — a team is only as good as its goaltending. So it should come as no surprise that the most successful stretch in the Creston Valley Thunder Cats franchise history has coincided with Brock Lefebvre's four-year tenure in the team's crease.

Lefebvre arrived in Creston as a 16-year old after being recruited by then-head coach Josh Hepditch from his hometown Cranbrook Minor Hockey Association. He spent his first season as the team's

backup, but was called into action at key points during the Thunder Cats' three-round playoff run against Columbia Valley, Kimberley and Beaver Valley.

For the past three seasons, Lefebvre has been entrenched as Creston's top goaltender and has proven himself as one of the Kootenay International Junior Hockey League's premier puckstoppers. With his first win of the 2016-17 season, a 1-0 shutout in Columbia Valley, he set the all-time Thunder Cats record for wins by a goaltender with 53.

"I knew that Brock was an up-and-coming talent when I took the job here, and it's been very satisfying to see his

growth and development on and off the ice," says Thunder Cats head coach Jeff Dubois. "On top of his ability level as a goalie he's also a tremendous young man and a guy who's become one of our most respected leaders and voices in the dressing room."

On more than one occasion, Lefebvre has passed up an opportunity to move up and play Junior A hockey in order to remain in the Creston Valley. That loyalty to the Thunder Cats hasn't gone unnoticed.

"When we received word that we'd be hosting the Cyclone Taylor Cup, one of the first guys I thought of was Brock," says Dubois. "He's been such a team-first guy and I'm really excited to see him have an opportunity to compete for a KIJHL title this season and play in a provincial championship."

Lefebvre says that his positive experience in Creston goes well beyond his time on the ice.

"I really like the incredible support and recognition that we get as players around the community," he says. "I've got a great billet family (Jim and Theresa Elford) who make Creston feel like a second home for me and I've made some great friends from being here in the valley. On top of that, the atmosphere at the Johnny is great. We have amazing fans and it feels great to be able to play in front of a full crowd."

So far this season, Lefebvre's 11 wins and three shutouts are both the second-most in the 20-team KIJHL. But his biggest goal for the season isn't based on statistics or individual accomplishments.

"I think we've got a great group of guys who can win a league championship together and then have a chance to win the Cyclone Taylor Cup on our home ice," he says. "That would be the perfect ending." ■

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Friday, December 16th
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Jeff Banman Photography

Creston Valley Thunder Cats goalie Brock Lefebvre makes a save in the Nov. 18 7-2 defeat of the Kimberley Dynamiters.



Jeff Banman PHOTOGRAPHY

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Corey Wells

Youth Soccer Wraps Successful Season

C.V. YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION

Season's greetings from the Creston Valley Youth Soccer Association!

It's been a great year for our organization, with a record number of players registered, up roughly 25 per cent from last year.

We have a lot of new faces on the board of directors this year with many members stepping down after years of dedicated service — thank you.

The board would also like to thank all of the dedicated people that keep our organization running solid soccer programs for our kids and teens. From coaches and referees to volunteers and involved parents to past and present board members, we are making a positive difference in our kids' development, both on and off the field.

We would also like to thank our 2016 corporate sponsors: Tim Hortons, Truscott Farms, Home Hardware Building Centre, Dairy Queen, Western Financial Group, Creston and District Credit Union and the British Columbia Gaming Commission.

This Christmas, consider purchasing a Passport to the Kootenays coupon book (\$45) from Black Bear Books, Activity Base or Creston Card and Stationery. It's an easy, useful fundraiser for the CVYSA.

We will be offering an entry level referee clinic March 31-April 2. Referees make around \$20 per game. There is also talk of a coaching clinic, with dates still to be set.

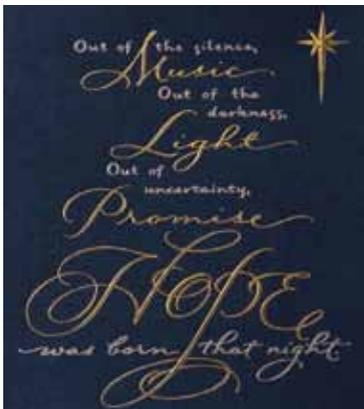
Some of our long-term plans involve resolving our field options. We would appreciate public input and assistance

on the concept of creating a soccer infrastructure capable of handling the types of tournaments that we attend in Nelson and Cranbrook. These events are not only big income sources for our organization, but contribute to the local economy and elevate Creston's stature in the heart of the Kootenays, a natural regional tournament location.

We are also feeling out interest levels for an indoor winter soccer program for next year with futsal, a fast-paced, international game that hones individual ball skills and passing.

Have a great Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year! ■

The Creston Valley Youth Soccer Association can be found on Facebook, or visit crestonvalleysoccer.com for detailed information on programs, policies, registration dates and more.



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Ag Aware

Story by: Randy Meyer,
Creston Valley Agriculture Society

Another year is coming to an end. For many in the agriculture business, it seems the time just flies by as we go about the planting to harvesting to marketing of a wide diversity of crops. The growing season is so busy that sometimes it is hard to “enjoy the moment”. Hopefully the winter season gives time to reflect on the year that was and recharge for the year ahead. Take time and make time for this reflection.

Many people in this part of the world celebrate the Christmas and New Year’s season. There are many socializing events to attend with much eating and drinking. There are many great events, and we are blessed with an abundance of nutritious local foods in our area. What apparently does not occur to many people is the issue of food waste.

Recently there was a program on television that focused on this issue. It was estimated that in Canada, approximately \$31 billion of food is wasted each year. An outstanding number! How can this be? Obviously there is waste at the farm during the growing season, then through the shipping and handling stages, then in the processing and packaging activities,

followed by the stores and restaurants, and lastly by the consumer themselves. The show focused on waste at the supermarket level. So much food was thrown out, some due to being outdated according to its best before dates. Some of the product was thrown out for obvious defects but much was thrown out for no apparent reason.

Who oversees this issue? My own personal food waste issue is all of the food waste in restaurant meals. Some establishments serve up portions of a size that many people cannot or should not be consuming. What is left is thrown out. This is just so wrong. At the very least it is a waste not only of the food but a waste of all the resources, time and effort that went into that food from start to finish in the food supply chain.

The other side of this food waste issue is the rise in the demand for and use of food banks in Canada. The use of food banks has increased dramatically in the last few years in this country. On one hand, so much food is wasted; on the other, there is not enough food to eat. This should not be in a land that has such a variety and unlimited supply of food. No one should be going hungry. I disagree with those that insist food is too expensive. In general I think it is not. There are many links in the chain, from those growing the food to the consumer of the food. Everyone in the chain wants their cost-plus, just like everything else we use or consume. Unfortunately, quite often the farmer’s share of the basic food ingredients is only a small part of the cost of food. The more processing that goes into your food product, the more expensive it becomes.

We must try to cut down on food waste. For most people, that would mean changes to their shopping and preparation habits. Where you shop for food may need to change. Perhaps do not buy large quantities of food at one time if you cannot effectively use it. Try to cut back on cooking food that will not be used or at least make the effort to use up leftovers. When ordering at restaurants, only order what you will consume.

As we enjoy the holiday season, take a moment to consider all that has gone into the food that you are eating, and all the hands that have had a part in getting it to your plate. Enjoy our locally grown food and continue to be Ag Aware. Happy new year, everyone! ■



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Wild About Whiskey Jacks



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



Outdoors

Kim Edwards

The whiskey jack, *Canadian Geographic's* final choice for our national bird.

After an extensive search spanning almost two years, *Canadian Geographic* announced its final choice for our national bird in mid-November. The gray jay, or whiskey jack, was chosen out of 450 species and won over a handful of famous finalists in the National Bird Project, including the Canada goose, common loon and snowy owl.

Now, this should be a happy and exciting announcement: Canada has a cute new national symbol! How cool is that! But, of course, like so many decisions these days, *Canadian Geographic* has received its fair share of backlash across the country and ruffled a few feathers in the days following the announcement.

First of all, I admit that I may be a bit biased toward whiskey jacks; I have fond memories of these curious feathered friends darting from tree to tree in remote areas of northern Alberta. While living in wildland firefighting camps north of Fort

McMurray, whiskey jacks were always welcomed and celebrated little visitors in the bush. Clever, curious and rather cheeky at times, they were known for swooping down and plucking snacks right from your hand (with, or sometimes without, your permission).

The majority of people opposed to our new avian ambassador consider the gray jay a rather obscure and uncommon species, especially when compared to arguably more “majestic” and well-known birds, like the snowy owl or common loon. However, gray jay habitat covers almost two-thirds of the country and they are found in every province and territory nearly coast-to-coast-to-coast. They are also extremely well adapted to our frigid northern temperatures and remain in our forests all winter long (unlike several of the finalists, including Canada geese). Amazingly, gray jays are known for nesting and laying their eggs as early as February, while many other migratory

birds are still soaking up the sun in South America.

However, whiskey jacks are usually uncommon in residential or developed areas, sadly leaving backyard birders most likely out of luck. Occasionally, gray jays can also be spotted in the Creston Valley, but a short little excursion up the mountain and into the forest is probably still your best bet.

The gray jay was chosen as our national bird largely because they exhibit the admirable traits of Canadians as a whole: friendly, resilient, clever and perhaps a bit bold when warranted. Instead of opposing something that is unfamiliar to many of us, why not take this opportunity to learn about our new national symbol? If anything, the controversy has sparked a national conversation on birding while alluding to a shared Canadian passion for wildlife, which is something I can definitely support. ■

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



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“TIME WILL TELL”



WILLIAM TELL
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LEAP into the New Year

KOOTENAY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Back in June, many attended the Local Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program (LEAP) “barnraiser” hosted at Baillie Grohman Estate Winery.

This exciting event brought together five local entrepreneurs to pitch their business ideas to a crowd of diverse local citizens in hope of providing a kickstart to their idea and possibly win one of the valuable cash awards and prizes. Demonstrations were performed, creations were displayed and speeches were delivered.

The process was not, however, one-sided. The audience was encouraged to participate through a unique voting system, which brought together the idea that business culture in the valley is different than larger centres or traditional corporate dealings. Business here is often very personal, conducted in coffee

shops or built on small-town interpersonal relationships. This event brought to light the essence of building a culture of business support where both the entrepreneur and the community have roles to play in economic development. It’s about doing business where you live.

Investment in a business requires more than just money. The community has the ability to “invest” in new businesses in many areas, including network referrals, shared assets or resources, capital or time. By working together and having a vested interest in seeing small business thriving in our community, all will share in the social and economic benefits.

This idea of developing a supportive environment for small business is continuing in the valley. With the support of Simon Fraser University, Kootenay Employment Services and the Government of Canada through the Canada-British Columbia Job Fund, a new intake of entrepreneurial training in the LEAP course is about to start in January. This accelerated social enterprise program provides expert instructors and mentors, a weekly evening class, supported drop-in time and four to eight hours of independent work. The program ends with another “barnraiser” gala event with a cash award and prizes to the top enterprise.



Warren Bruns

Aaron Carter’s On the Farm Welding earned the popular vote at the 2016 Local Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program “barnraiser”.

This is a huge educational opportunity for a new entrepreneur or for a budding social initiative, and KES is making a big investment in local enterprises by providing selected applicants with the entire training program, including all tuition and course materials, valued over \$2,000. Participants will be selected based on their dedication to learning and enthusiasm to test and grow their idea. This program is ideal for the self-starter who wants to hit the ground running, with an emphasis on action and results.

If you or someone you know wants to start a business and is a keen self-driven individual, contact Amber McGregor at KES at 250-428-5655 ext. 426 and ask about LEAP. The application deadline is Jan. 6, 2017. ■

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Changing Mood with New Colour

BY WENDY REEVES SEIFERT

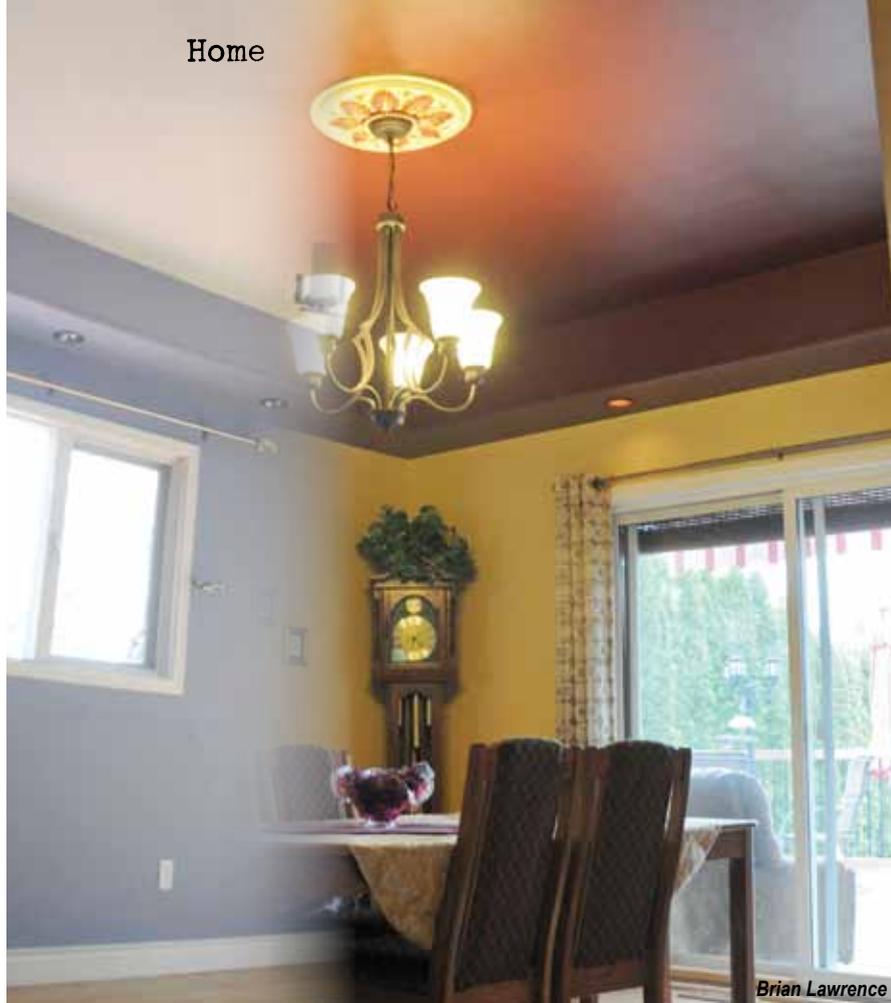
Over the Valley

Have you ever gone into a room and instantly felt warm and comfortable or cool and serene? It is the colours used in the decor. Colour can affect your mood and outlook. You can achieve that “feel good” look with a smart use of colour.

First, determine what kind of mood you want to achieve. Next, what direction is the natural light source? This will tell you how much warm or cool colour you need.

Now, what areas can you change? Is there furniture that you need to keep and work around? Some can be changed; for example, a dark wood can be refinished into a light or natural tone, or painted. Yes, it is a shame to paint good wood; however, it is a lot less expensive than replacing it and less wasteful.

Can you visualize an older kitchen in a dark oak stain changed to white, ivory or grey? Paint the cabinets and add updated hardware — update the backsplash and countertops and you go from dark and dated to bright and



Brian Lawrence

modern at a minimal expense. If the cabinet doors are in poor condition, you can replace doors only.

Introduce your new colour scheme with wall color and accessories — staying fairly neutral in the major items ensures a long lasting style. You can

change the wall colour years later and have a fresh new decor. Colour can change old dated decor and give you a fresh new look without undue expense.

With winter on the way, it is a great time to freshen up your decor and take away the winter blues. ■

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Looking Back on 2016 Accomplishments

BY TANYA WALL

As we approach the end of 2016 it is a perfect time to reflect on this year's accomplishments. What a year! We see the busyness of our main street and see how things are changing in the downtown core, but sometimes I think we do not recognize enough all of the accomplishments of our small communities that surround the Town of Creston. This year, volunteers in Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) Area B have been extremely busy.

Yahk-Kingsgate: Volunteers worked countless hours renovating their outdoor kitchen, and once they finished that, it was onto the next project. With grants from the Columbia Basin Trust and RDCK they started construction on a new multipurpose court, and multiuse it will be. From a skating rink in the winter to basketball, volleyball, pickleball and tennis, this court will enhance recreation abilities and create more great memories.

Canyon: Investments of over \$200,000 into a new kitchen and Canyon Park pavilion have been completed, enhancing this growing community and ensuring its success for years to come. On Canada Day, over 500 people visited the park and volunteers served 380 breakfasts, which grows every year. The Wall of Recognition was erected as a sign of thanks to the sponsors and volunteers that have contributed so much, and it will leave a historic reminder of what can happen when everyone comes together.

Lister: "If you build it, they will come" — or take it down, till it up, change direction and rebuild a new modern ball diamond. I have to admit this must be one of the nicest ball diamonds in all of our valley. How can you not enjoy playing ball in this beautiful setting, surrounded by the mountains, cows grazing in the field next to you and smell of the clean fresh country air? I spent many hours in Lister Park as a child and to see it revitalized like this warms my heart. The community has seen an increase in participation from some younger families, and they are working together with longtime residents to enhance and strengthen their wonderful community park.

Our local and provincial governments also work together well. This year we completed another phase of a major water line project, and next year we will continue to work on the final phase of the Arrow Creek mainline. Having the funding come through at the Union of BC Municipalities this year was a highlight of my year — coming home with the news was a moment that we can all be proud of.

Our community has seen the introduction of some wonderful new initiatives, including Fields Forward, a movement focused on strengthening our agriculture awareness. Next year will be exciting, with the purchase and implementation of the mobile fruit and vegetable press, and I can't wait to see how this engages our valley and all of the Kootenays in a new juice movement.

Another uplifting enhancement to our community was the rollout of the

sculptures on main street, just the start of the wonderful things the Creston Valley Public Art Connection Society will bring to our community. Displays of art, sculptures and galleries popping up will give tourists reasons to stop and check out what is happening in this beautiful area.

We will now be able to invest in our own community, invest in businesses in our communities and invest in new projects. The Creston and District Community Investment Co-op is rolling out, and residents will be able to put their money where they live. How exciting is this and how it is going to change our valley!

Once again it has been my pleasure to carry the message forward about all of the initiatives taking place, but I need to say thank you to all of the wonderful volunteers that give back so much. Thank you to all of our businesses for opening their doors every day and changing it up, growing with new ideas and investments into their businesses and our community. With the holiday season upon us I hope that we all shop local and support our businesses, farmers and producers, and remember everything that we have to be thankful for that comes from the lands and hands in our valley. I wish you the time to gather and create memories with your families and friends and to share the memories of the past.

As we look into 2017, remember how we have come together and how we will continue to grow together. Merry Christmas and all the best in 2017! ■

Tanya Wall is the director for Regional District of Central Kootenay Area B.

Tanya Wall

The view from the Lister Park ball diamond.

WINTER SAFETY

The winter season is the worst season for fires in Canada. That is why we must be mindful of the importance of fire prevention and safety. During the winter, we must heat our homes, most of our meals are prepared and eaten indoors, our clothing is dried indoors and people who smoke tend to do so indoors. Be prepared for the winter and remember that:

- Heating appliances such as space heaters should not have anything combustible close by and need at least one metre (three feet) of space around them. Inspect the electrical cord attached. If it overheats, you have a fire hazard. Keep young children away from them.
- Electrical and heating systems can fail and become fire hazards. Ensure they are regularly checked by a professional, especially prior to the winter season when fireplaces, heaters, appliances and other electrical equipment are in maximum use.
- Smoking while in bed, tired or under the influence of alcohol or medication is the most common cause of fires that kill.
- Most chimney fires occur with wood-burning fireplaces. Ensure chimneys are cleaned and professionally inspected regularly. Burn only small quantities of wood at a time.
- Teach children that fire is not a toy; it is a tool we use to cook food and heat our homes.
- Educate your children about the dangers of fire and make sure they know that all fires, even small ones, can spread very quickly.
- Never use a flammable liquid near a flame or source of spark. Beware of hidden sources of sparks like water heater pilot lights, electric motors or heaters. Never smoke while pouring or using flammable liquids.
- If even a small doubt exists about any appliance/equipment that you use, do not hesitate to contact a qualified technician. It may save your life, and the lives of your loved ones.

FIREPLACE SAFETY:

- A fireplace becomes dangerous when accumulated tar or creosote catches fire or from uncontrolled burning or over-fuelling. Other causes of fireplace-related fires are substandard design or installation and lack of safety precautions.
- Open the damper before lighting the fire, and keep it open until the ashes are cool enough to touch.
- Ensure the fire is completely out before going to bed or leaving the house.
- Do not store combustible materials such as paper or wood too close to the fireplace.
- Use a screen in front of the fireplace opening to protect children and to prevent embers from escaping and igniting carpets, etc.
- Never leave children alone near a fireplace.
- Use dry, well-seasoned wood in small amounts.
- Have chimneys cleaned and serviced at regular intervals by a professional.
- Never overload your fireplace.
- Never use charcoal starter fluids, gasoline or any flammable substance to start fires.
- When using artificial logs, burn only one at a time and follow instructions on the wrapping.
- Always place the ashes in a metal container and take them outside the house.

THE DANGERS OF EXTENSION CORDS:

- Extension cords are a common cause of electrical fires. That is why you must be careful to use only extension cords that are rated for the power used by the device they are powering.
- Extension cords must never be run inside walls or under rugs or furniture. They can be damaged by traffic or heavy furniture and start arcing, which can lead to a fire.
- Extension cords can get warm during use and must be able to dissipate this heat or they can start a fire.



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Staying Healthy This Winter

BY MAYA SKALINSKA
Master Herbalist, Registered Herbal Therapist

There's a stillness that comes with winter, and with that stillness, an invitation to redirect our energies to slow down, rest, reflect and nourish.

According to Ayurvedic medicine, a 5,000-year-old medical system from India, like increases like, and opposites balance each other. So to counteract the cold and wet qualities of winter, we need to stay warm and dry. This means nourishing ourselves with warming, cooked and well spiced meals to keep our digestive fire going. Instead of cold salads, choose steamed, stir-fried or baked vegetables. Warming spices and herbs such as ginger, garlic, cloves, cinnamon, turmeric,

cayenne, coriander and cumin seeds are excellent additions to your winter meals. Winter is not the time for cold smoothies, cold cereals or iced water.

Slowing down and resting will also ensure good health in the cold months of winter. According to traditional Chinese medicine, 10 hours of sleep for winter in the northern hemisphere is what's needed to ensure strong vitality. The days are short, the nights are long; it only makes sense to give ourselves some extra time to sleep and restore.

Winter is also a time to take care of and build up our immune systems. During flu season, a healthy immune

system is the most important. Try adding astragalus root, ginseng root or any of the medicinal mushrooms (dried reishi, chaga, turkey tail or shitake) into your soup broths. Ideally, leave it on the stove for 24 hours or longer. Eat high flavonoid, vitamin C-rich fruits and vegetables like yams, squashes and berries. And don't forget about the high mineral, leafy greens like steamed kale and chard. Reduce white sugar sweetened foods, as white sugar depletes the immune system.

To increase inner warmth and circulation (especially if you're suffering from cold hands and feet), and to ensure a clear respiratory passage, make a tea by boiling a half-teaspoon each of ginger, cinnamon and cloves in water for about five minutes. To ensure good digestion, which is a big part of a healthy immune system, try adding any combination of black pepper, fennel

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seed, coriander seed or cumin seed and boil with the herbs above. You may add a little non-pasteurized honey as a sweetener, but remember to never boil the honey. Only add honey to your tea after it has cooled down enough to consume. Drink this tea after meals.

If you suffer from seasonal affective disorder (SAD), make sure to get a high quality, liquid form of vitamin D3, or cod liver oil. For mild depression, a tincture of St. John's wort is very effective. Generally you need to take St. John's wort for about two weeks for the medicine to take effect. Some are lucky to feel it right away. Do not take St. John's wort if you are taking any other anti depressants.

And, make sure to move your body, and get daily fresh air, no matter how cold it gets. Winter is a wonderful time to restore the body, build up your immune and enjoy the stillness that this beautiful season brings us.

I wish you all a happy and healthy holiday and winter season. ■

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



The Facts About Scar Tissue

BY JESSE MORETON, BSc DC

On the docket for this month: Scar tissue. What is it? Why does it form? Does it ever go away? These are some of the questions a patient recently asked me. She underwent surgery for a joint replacement about a year ago and her function is still less than optimal. After consulting with doctors, she was told scar tissue is the culprit. True, there may be other variables at play but the fact remains that scar tissue limits complete recovery.

So first, what is it? Most people correctly assume, by virtue of its name, that it's a less than perfect version of the original tissue. What it's made from and what it looks like depends on the tissue itself. Just as scars form on skin, scars form on other types of underlying tissue like muscle and fascia. New scar tissue is composed primarily from fibroblasts. Fibroblasts are cells that produce collagen and connective tissues. They help lay down new collagen to repair the damaged tissues.

The problem is the new fibres are not orientated in the same way as the original fibres. Due to the alignment of the fibres, the tissue is less able to resist tensile and stretching forces. Additionally, scar tissue can adhere itself to other tissues and prevent normal range of motion from occurring. This has proven to be the case with knee replacements, for example.

Next question: Why does it form? Scar tissue forms as a result of cell damage. There are diverse ways this can occur. It may be the result of an accident like a cut or scrape. It can occur from a disease like chickenpox or from purposely damaging tissues, as in surgery. The more tissue damage, the more scar tissue.

By far, the most difficult question to answer is, does it ever go away? According to the U.S. National Institute of Health, scar tissue on the skin can take between two and three years until optimal colour and function is reached!



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Just think of the last time you scraped your knee or arm. How quickly did it heal? What does it look like now?

Healing time depends on the type of tissue, where it is and how badly it was damaged. Generally the larger and deeper the wound, the longer it will take. There are other factors like age and nutrition. Sometimes there are complications like hypertrophic or keloid scarring. Sometimes, as mentioned above, the scar tissue adheres to other underlying tissues. This can significantly reduce extensibility. Unfortunately, questions regarding how long are unlikely to be answered with definitive timelines.

There are, however, things you can do to help accelerate the healing process. Various types of scar massage may help. Cross friction massage helps to build cross fibres in the scar for better tensile strength. Myofascial release, a therapy I often use, helps release fibrous

adhesions and align fibres in a functional direction. Home stretching and exercising have their place, as well. Low impact activities like cycling and aquafit-type exercises are particularly helpful.

General factors that influence healing have more to do with lifestyle. People who smoke, drink excessively and have poor nutrition heal slower. People who are better hydrated and carry less adipose (yes, I'm trying to avoid using the word fat) are also better candidates for healing.

In stubborn cases, such as with the patient I described, referral back to the specialist for manipulation under anesthesia or further surgery may be warranted. Recently there have also been cases made for treatment with laser and shockwave modalities.

It can be a long and trying battle with scar tissue. Keeping trying and hang in there! ■



Winter Wonder

BY DIANE TOLLESON

Welcome to winter, and another year about to come to an end. Ah, the wheels of life keep turning!

Keep life simple. Yes, you may say, "Easier said than done," or you may really take this to heart. With the coming of the holiday season, a lot of people get caught up in the hustle and bustle and lose the essence of the holiday. It's meant to be a time of love, sharing, and giving and receiving. Which we could do every day if we choose!

I have been alone on Christmas Day quite a few times and find it a wonderful time to send love and energy to those who have no home or family to go to. I choose to enjoy my family all year long, not just one day of the year.

I remember the year I took care of the horses where I worked, and being in the barn with all the horses, dogs, cats and birds was magical. It was so serene. Some folks said, "In a barn?" and I said, "Yes, in a barn — some great people started there."

Choose to give to yourself and others daily, not just one day of the year or special occasions. Then the spirit of giving and receiving can be felt year-round and help change our world. Pass it on!

Come by Arts from the Heart anytime for a free hug, then pass them on too. Everyone can also come create a special one of a kind gift in our craft room. Come have fun with us and remember to keep life simple.

P.S. I have a "gifting" program going at the store, and am open to trade a product or service for my art, readings or body work. If there is something you like, then let's make a deal! ■

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