

The Valley Voice

The Voices of the Columbia Valley

TheVoiceCV.ca

#104 Issue

Columbia Valley, BC

INSIDE THIS EDITION

DRY GULCH CHRISTMAS LIGHT DISPLAYS

Some beautiful photos taken by a local photographer of some of the light displays in Dry Gulch.

WHAT WOULD TOM CRUISE DO?

Lessons in Action. The Gospel of Grit, Fearlessness, Charm, and Controlled Chaos. Run Toward Your Dreams, and Go Full Throttle at Life!

HANDMADE HOLIDAYS: SUSTAINABLE WAYS TO PREPARE FOR THE GIFT-GIVING

There is a special magic in gifts and decorations made by hand—each one carrying the warmth of personal effort, the charm of imperfection, and the spirit of the season.

WHAT'S AN IDIOM, ANYWAY? PT 5

The Weird, Wild World of Everyday Expression



PHOTO CREDIT: JUSTIN SPILLY

➤ SUBMIT CONTENT

This only works if we all do. Your content is what DRIVES this publication. We need it all because we need you.

NEXT EDITION January 7th, 2025

SUBMISSION DEADLINE January 6th, 2025

EVENTS

Any and all businesses, organizations and entrepreneurs and members of the public are welcome to submit an ad of any size to promote local events. We WANT to promote your event, seriously, send it in.

LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Any and all are welcome and encouraged to submit their photos. Credit given when requested. Great way to get your art out to more eyes.

BUSINESS ADS

Any and all businesses, organizations and entrepreneurs are welcome to submit a business ad for free. *Ads must be refreshed periodically. Once an ad is out of date or stale, we will remove it.*

PERSONAL INTEREST

Got something to say? Expert in something? Know how to handle a season with skill? Send it in! We'll edit it only if requested. We'd LOVE to publish your brilliant works.

NEWS

Did you hear about it or see it? We could use your help! Snap a photo and send a blurb/article and we'll make sure it get included.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER!

We are always looking for content curators, liaisons, photographers, and promoters.

Want to get involved?

Email us at news@thevoicecv.ca

VISIT US ONLINE

thevoicecv.ca

VISIT US ON SOCIAL

[@Thevoicecv_official](https://www.instagram.com/Thevoicecv_official)

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HOW ARE WE DOING?

The Volunteers of the Columbia Valley Voices Online Magazine are dedicated to providing content that is generated and supported by our valley residents.

We welcome and encourage all communication - we want to know how we're doing!

Send us a note on Facebook or Instagram [@thevoicecv_official](#)

OR

by email to news@thevoiceca.ca

Join us in THE SPIRIT OF GIVING this Christmas!

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS GIFT GIVEAWAY



DEC 6 SAT

10AM - 2PM
#201 14TH AVE N
CONNECT BUILDING
**across from Kinsman Arena*



Contribute gently-used or good-as-new children's items:

- 🎁 Toys & Books & Games
- 🎁 Stuffedies & Blankets
- 🎁 Outdoor Wear (hats, mitts, boots, etc).
- 🎁 Gift Wrapping Bags & Ribbon

HOW TO GIVE:



You are warmly welcome to the Christmas Gift Giveaway, where ANY family can **FREELY CHOOSE GIFTS** for children who need a little extra this Christmas. Enjoy free gift-wrapping and a hot drink to celebrate the joy of giving together.

Drop off at Caliper Machine or Connect Offices by Dec 4.

🌟 THANK YOU FOR GIVING! 🌟



LETTER FROM THE VOLUNTEERS

As winter settles over the Columbia Valley, Kimberley, and Cranbrook, and the magic of Christmas draws near, we want to take a moment to reflect on the year and extend a heartfelt thank you to every one of you—our readers, contributors, and supporters.

This season always brings a special sense of togetherness to our valley, even as the snow piles up and the days grow short. Here at The Valley Voice, we feel that warmth in every story submitted, every photo shared, and every encouraging word sent our way. We are especially grateful this December, as our core volunteer team has grown smaller over the past year. Your submissions, ideas, and support truly keep us going. Every little bit helps, and we can't thank you enough for stepping up when we need it most.

Looking ahead to the coming year, we have big hopes for The Valley Voice. We want to reach more readers than ever before and feature even more community content—

stories, artwork, reflections, and news from across the Columbia Valley. If you enjoy what we do, please consider sharing The Valley Voice with a friend or neighbor. We've been part of this amazing region for four years now, and with your help, we can continue to grow and serve the community we all call home.

This Christmas and winter season, we wish each of you warmth, health, and joy. Thank you for making The Valley Voice possible. Your participation and encouragement are what make this project special. Together, we can keep our valley connected, informed, and inspired—one story at a time.

With gratitude and holiday cheer,

—The Valley Voice Volunteers (VVV) 🍁



Radium Hot Springs Public Library

Wholesome Hobbies Projects & Activities for Adults

Every Third Friday of the Month
2:00pm-3:30pm

Join us on the third Friday of each month to try out a new project!
Intended for adults 50+ but all adults welcome. Foster your creativity and make connections!
Supplies will be provided.



***Registration is required for every session & space is limited to 10 participants per session.**
To register call 250-347-2434



Radium Hot Springs Public Library

4863 Stanley St | Radium Hot Springs, British Columbia V0A 1M0 | 250-347-2434 | <https://radium.bc.libraries.coop/>



IMAGE CREDIT: Justin Spilly



IMAGE CREDIT: Justin Spilly





IMAGE CREDIT: Justin Spilly

Dry Gulch Xmas Light Displays



IMAGE CREDIT: Justin Spilly

IMAGE CREDIT: Justin Spilly



IMAGE CREDIT: Justin Spilly

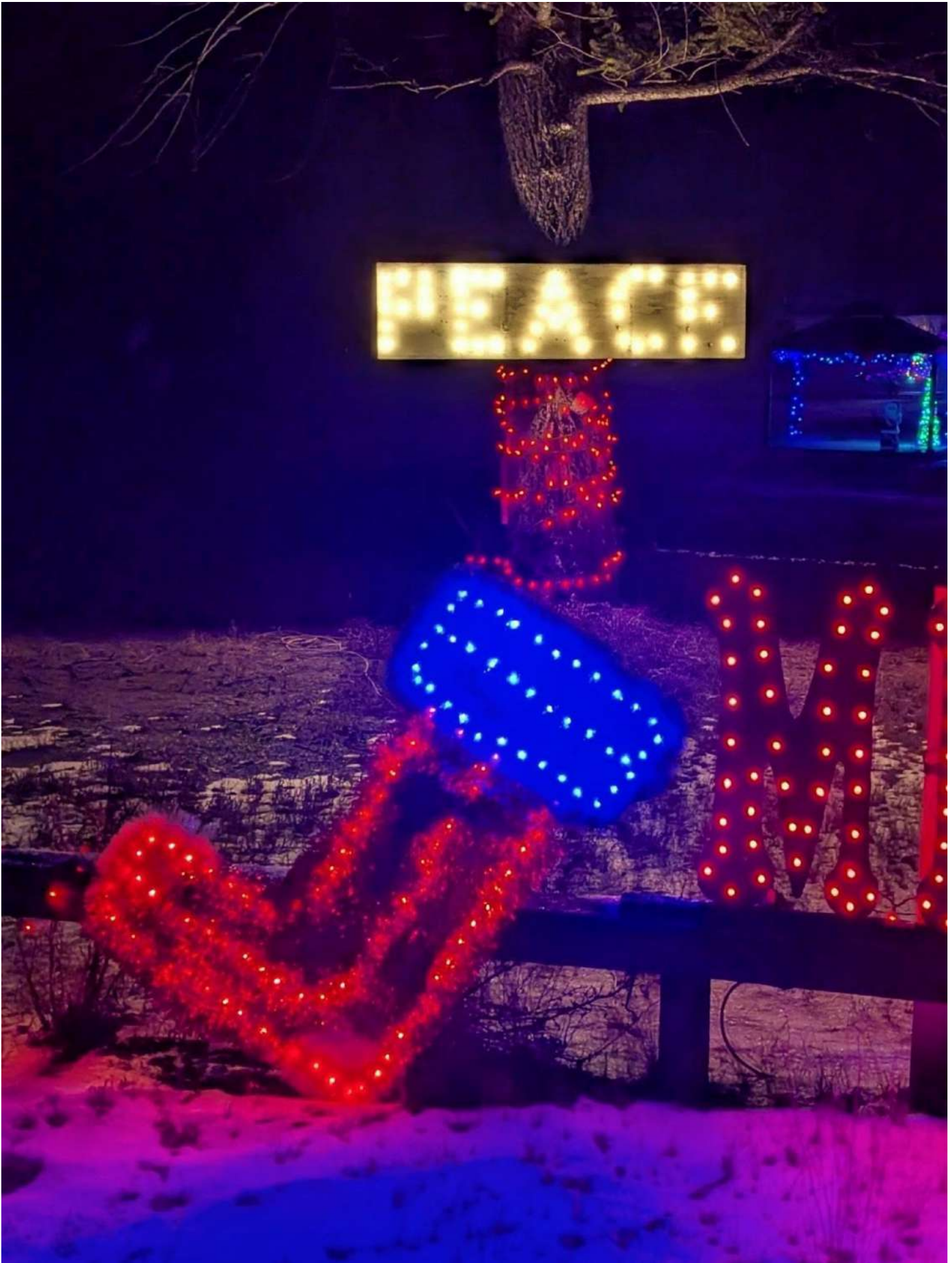


IMAGE CREDIT: Justin Spilly





IMAGE CREDIT: Justin Spilly



Fireman's Children's Christmas Party

**Radium Fire Department - 4878 Radium Blvd.
Saturday December 6th, 2025 • 4:00 pm**

gingerbread decorating • singalong



Visit from Santa Claus

Suitable for children up to 10 years old.



Friday, December 12 • 4 pm-8 pm

Legion Turkey Shoot • Members and Guests Welcome

CATEGORIES

ADULTS - Women - Men - Mixed

JUNIORS - under 10 - 10 to 16

SENIORS 65+

3 Flights per category

10 shooters per flight

Top score will win \$30 Turkey Bucks

A dozen eggs to lowest score

\$5 per flight (5 shoots)

You can buy 3 flights





The East Kootenay Veterinary Group was formed with the mission to improve access to emergency veterinary services in our region. By providing dedicated after-hours and urgent care, we help ensure local pets receive the medical attention they need when they need it most.

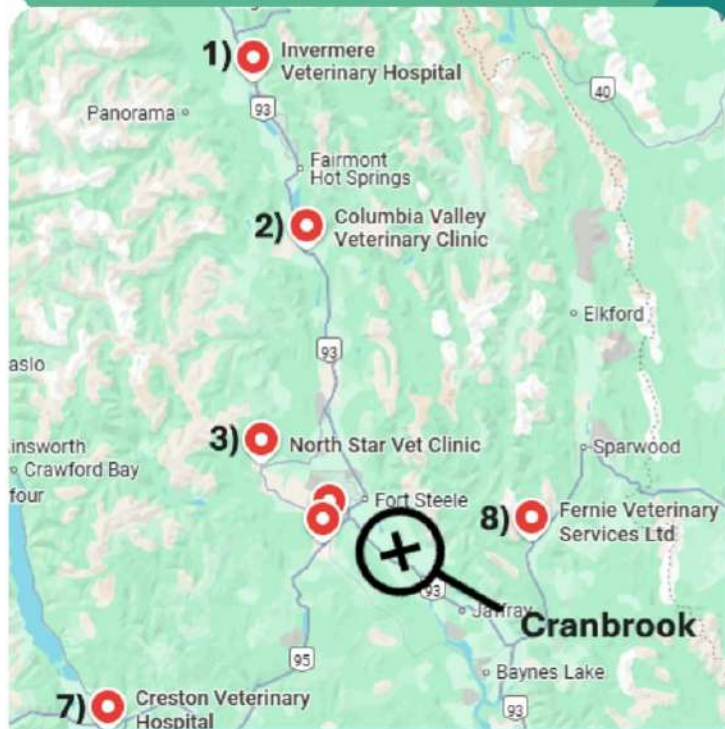
Our goal is to support veterinary professionals by reducing burnout and improving work-life balance, allowing more veterinarians to remain in our community. This means better access to care for all pets now and in the future.

Together we are making emergency care more accessible for the Kootenays.

East Kootenay Veterinary Group Emergency Services

Our Locations

- 1) **Invermere Veterinary Hospital**
250-342-7007
4854 Athalmer Rd, Invermere, BC V0A 1K3
- 2) **Columbia Valley Veterinary Clinic**
250-349-0514
9039 Thunderhill Rd, Canal Flats, BC V0B 1B0
- 3) **North Star Vet Clinic**
778-481-5288
550 Mark St, Kimberley, BC V1A 2B8
- 4) **Steeple's Veterinary Clinic**
250-489-3451
3410 Victor Rd, Cranbrook, BC V1C 7B7
- 5) **Tanglefoot Veterinary Services**
250-489-1655
315 Industrial Road F, Cranbrook, BC V1C 6N4
- 6) **Cranbrook Veterinary Hospital**
250-426-8517
106 5 Ave S, Cranbrook, BC V1C 2G2
- 7) **Creston Veterinary Hospital**
250-428-9494
1605 Dogwood St, Creston, BC V0B 1G0
- 8) **Fernie Veterinary Services**
250-423-2620
1161 7 Ave, Fernie, BC V0B 1M0



All emergent calls will be triaged by an experienced, registered veterinary technician who will help clients determine whether emergency service is required and, if so, direct them appropriately. Clients will be given clear direction on where emergency after hours service will be offered based on the day and nature of the emergency.



250-342-7007
All calls to our regular line after hours will automatically connect to triage.



CANAL FLATS COMMUNITY

Christmas Fair

December 20th 11:00AM - 3:00PM



Vendors

- Kristal's Krafty Creations
- Aimee's Blind Date Books
- Cheri's Creations
- Chantal's Soaps
- Katrins's Crochet
- Carole's stocking Stuffers
- Amanda and Candace baking and Crafts
- Austin and Brooklyn 3d printing with kids crafts.



Come meet Brooklyn and her award winning dogs!

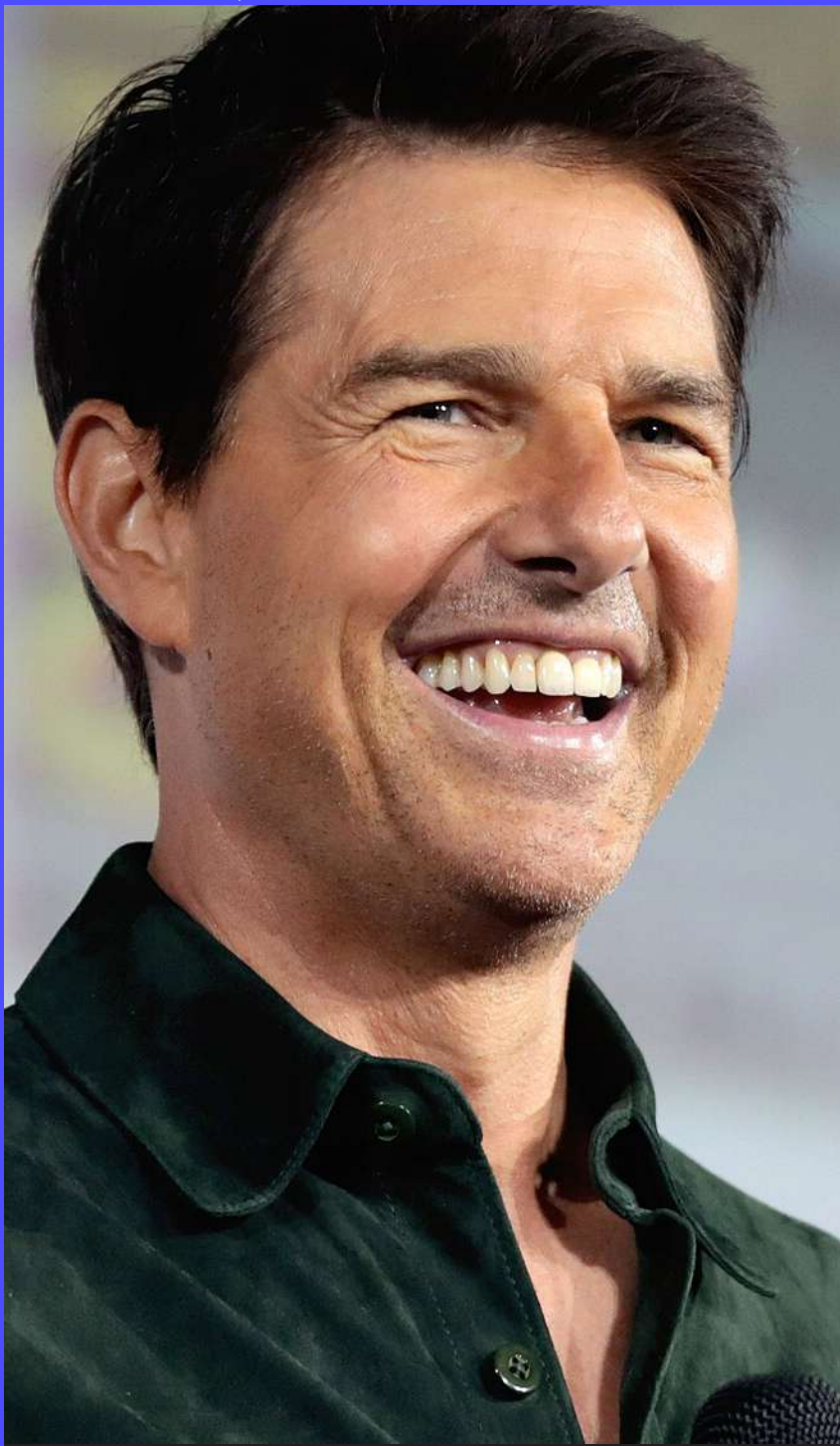


Noon

Entertainment

Jeremy will sing a couple songs.



IMAGE CREDIT: [Wikipedia](#)

WHAT WOULD TOM CRUISE DO?

Lessons in Action. The Gospel of Grit, Fearlessness, Charm, and Controlled Chaos. Run Toward Your Dreams, and Go Full Throttle at Life!

There are plenty of moments in my day when I have no idea what to do next. When facing a tough decision or a fork in the road, I can be spectacularly indecisive—unsure of what to choose, how to act, or which version of "right" is right. That's when I pause, close my eyes, take a deep breath, and let the chaos settle just long enough to ask myself the only question that really matters: What would Tom Cruise do?

Tom Cruise is the living embodiment of cinematic adrenaline—part man, part myth, all action. From *Risky Business* to *Top Gun* to *Mission: Impossible*, he's defied gravity, logic, and sometimes common sense, sprinting full-tilt through every explosion and impossible action scene with a grin that says, "I've got this!" He doesn't just act—he launches himself into each role like a human jet, turning danger into art and intensity into legend. Whether he's hanging off airplanes, racing the clock, or just plain old saving the world, Tom Cruise reminds us that courage isn't about being fearless—it's about running straight at fear, full speed ahead! Tom says, "In this life, it's not what you hope for, it's not what you deserve—it's what you take!" That's Tom tough talk, but he's right, you can hope, dream, or feel deserving all day long—but nothing changes until you take action.

When Tom faces a challenging situation, he runs—not away, but straight toward the chaos, wind in his hair, face tense, and teeth bared in that impossible grin. He jumps, climbs, crashes, and soars—because hesitation isn't in his DNA. Tom doesn't wait for perfect conditions; he creates them midair. His world is one long take of motion, madness, and meaning—a reminder that courage isn't calm, it's action with intent, and

the mission, impossible or not, is always worth it. Tom also says, "I'm an all-or-nothing kind of guy, and when I become interested in something, I give it my all."

Of course, not every day calls for hanging off a plane at 14,000 feet or sprinting across rooftops, being chased by bad guys. Sometimes the real risks aren't dramatic. Real bravery is hitting 'send' on the message you've rewritten ten times, saying yes to the door you're afraid to open, confessing the thing you got wrong, or telling the truth you've been swallowing. But the spirit of Tom—that fearless, slightly unhinged commitment—is something we can all borrow. Because maybe the secret isn't being fearless. Maybe it's just moving forward despite the fear and doubt—saying yes before you've figured out all the details, trusting that you'll land safely (probably).

Tom said, "I've learned that life is a very tricky business: Each person needs to find what they want to do in life and not be dissuaded when people question them." That's not just movie talk—that is life. Endings sting, change rattles us, but somewhere in the rubble is a brand-new take waiting to roll. And when the loneliness creeps in—as it does for everyone, even Tom, and Tom admits, "I feel lonely at times, but I don't want to get used to it. That's not how I want to live." There's courage in that kind of honesty, too—the courage to stay open, to still care, to not grow numb.

At the heart of it all is his simple truth: Tom says, "I love what I do. I take great pride in what I do. And I can't do something halfway, three-quarters, nine-tenths. If I'm going to do something, I go all the way." That's the real challenge—to keep showing up, curious and

alive, ready for the next impossible mission.

So the next time you're stuck, overthinking, or trying to talk yourself out of trying, channel your inner Tom. Picture yourself pushing off the ledge, committing before you're ready, the soundtrack firing up, the world narrowing to a single, cinematic moment of choice. And then act—imperfectly, maybe even recklessly, but definitely forward. Because...that's what Tom Cruise would do.



IMAGE CREDIT: [NY Times](#)



**"There is Life in every breath."
Tom Cruise.**



ADULT ONLY
CHRISTMAS
DINNER PARTY!

Edgewater Legion Branch #199

SATURDAY DEC. 20TH/25

COCKTAILS: 5PM DINNER 6PM

**HAM, TURKEY, & ALL
THE TRIMMINGS!**

**PIRATE GIFT
EXCHANGE!**



**BRING A GIFT FOR THE TREE AND TAKE
HOME A GIFT VALUE OF \$20**

COST FOR DINNER: suggested DONATION \$15
EVERYONE WELCOME!

Parents Night Out

BRING THE KIDS TO JOIN US FOR SOME FUN GAMES, CRAFTS, MOVIES AND MORE!

WHEN December 20th 5:30PM-10PM

WHERE Mount Baker school 1410 Baker st

MBSS SR.
GIRLS
BASKETBALL
FUNDRAISER



Merry Christmas

The Valley's

Hidden Winter Gems: Off-the-Beaten-Path Locations

In the heart of winter, the Columbia Valley, Kimberley, and Cranbrook transform into a wonderland of snowy scenes and quiet beauty.

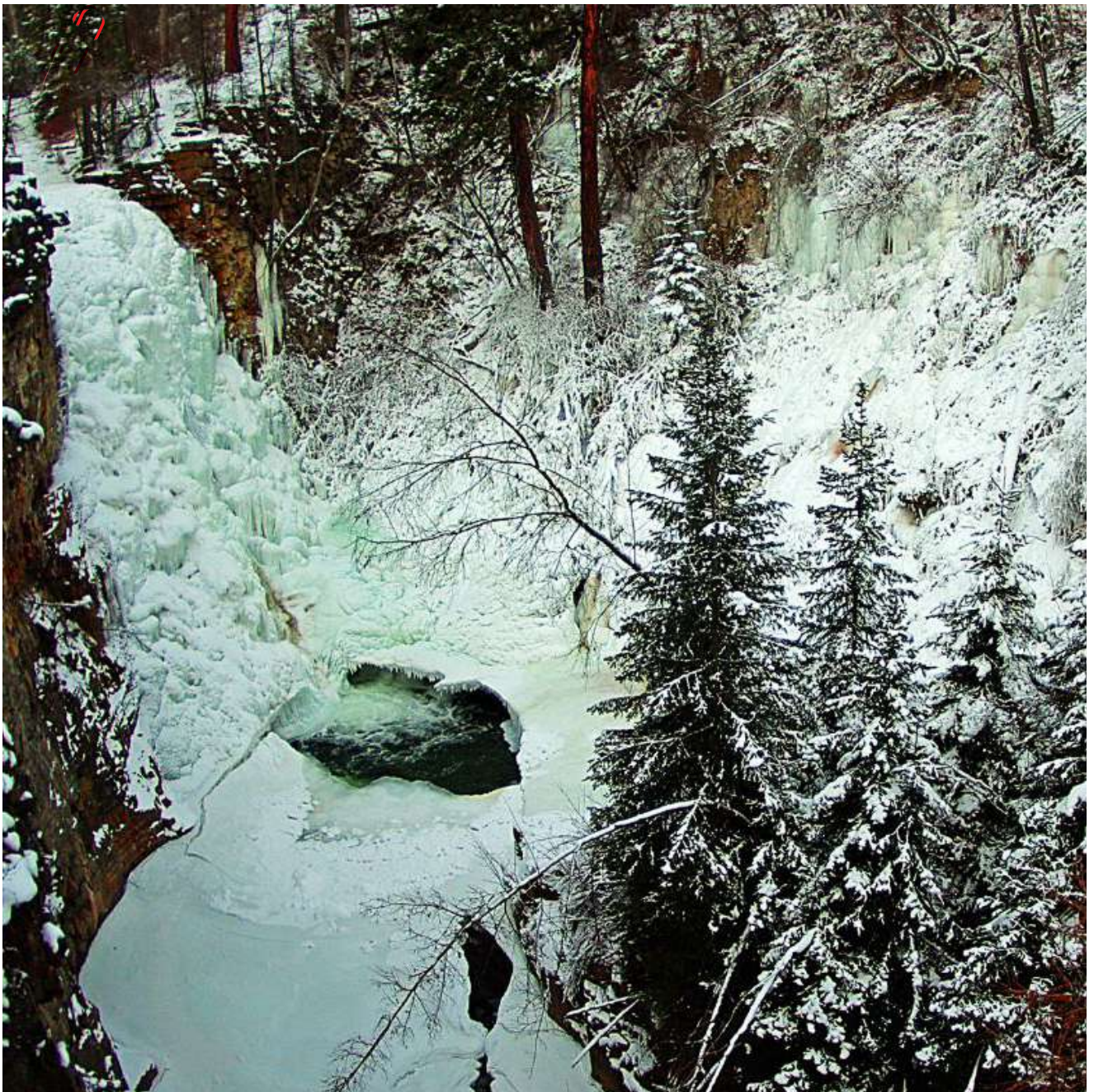


IMAGE CREDIT: [Steve Tersmette via Cranbrook Tourism](#)

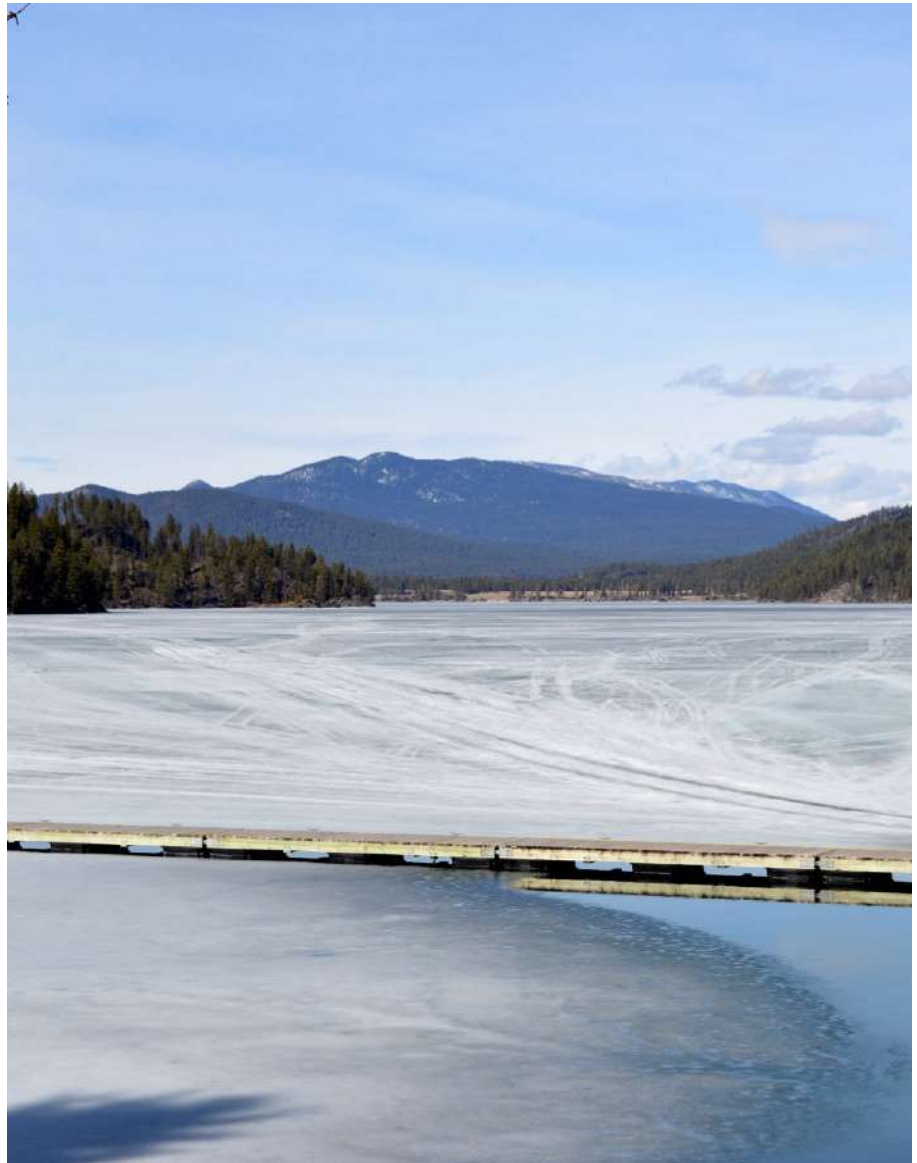


While well-known spots like ski hills and skating rinks draw the crowds, there's a special magic to be found in the Valley's lesser-known winter gems—places where tranquility reigns and adventure awaits just off the beaten path.

One such treasure is Premier Lake Provincial Park. Tucked away north of Skookumchuck, the park's winding trails take on a serene quality in December. Snowshoeing here feels like moving through a silent storybook, with frozen lake views and towering evergreens. Wildlife tracks and the occasional glimpse of a deer or fox add to the sense of discovery.

Another local secret is the North Star Rails to Trails stretch between Kimberley and Cranbrook. While popular in summer, this pathway is a hidden delight for winter walks and fat biking. The gentle grades and wide-open vistas make it accessible for all ages, and fresh snowfall paints the landscape in sparkling white.

For those seeking solitude and reflection, try the Wilmer Wetlands just outside Invermere. The wetlands' icy expanses attract winter birds and offer peaceful views of the Purcell Mountains. Bundle up and bring your binoculars—the quiet here is perfect for birdwatching or simply soaking in the



Valley's natural stillness.

Marysville Falls near Kimberley is another gem worth visiting in winter. The short walk to the falls is transformed as icicles and frozen cascades create a scene worthy of a postcard. Early mornings are especially magical, with frost crystals sparkling in the soft light.

The Valley Voice encourages you to explore these hidden gems this winter. Take a thermos of tea, pull on warm boots, and invite a

friend or loved one to join you. As you wander these quieter corners of the Valley, you'll find not only breathtaking views but also a deeper connection to the land we call home. Share your favorite off-the-beaten-path spots with us—together, let's celebrate the Valley's winter magic, one hidden gem at a time.



COLUMBIA VALLEY FOOD BANK

Buy a Food Basket For A Household



Two Person
Food Basket



Five Person
Food Basket



Eight Person
Food Basket

Households of all sizes benefit from our food baskets.

Choose a donation option here from \$74.00 to \$335.00.

Tax receipts provided.



Households of 1, 3, 5 and 7 people



Households of 2, 4, 6 and 8 people

Help Relieve Hunger in the Columbia Valley

We provide one week of food per household. When more support is needed an emergency food basket is a solution.



Emergency Food Baskets (\$39.00)



Emergency Food Basket



Please **join us** for our annual

CHRISTMAS

Bake Sale!

A fundraiser for ANGEL
FLIGHT East Kootenay



11th December 2025
8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Western Financial Group | 907 Baker Street - Cranbrook



Western
FINANCIAL GROUP
Communities Foundation

Winter Wildlife Watch

Animals of the Valley in December



As December blankets the Columbia Valley, Kimberley, and Cranbrook in crisp snow and quiet, the wilderness comes alive in subtle, wondrous ways. While much of the Valley's wildlife adapts to colder temperatures and shorter days, December offers unique opportunities to witness the resilience and beauty of local animals—if you know where and how to look.



One of the joys of living in our region is sharing space with a diverse range of creatures, each with its own winter survival strategy. Mule deer and white-tailed deer become more visible as they forage in lower elevations, their tracks winding through snowy meadows and forest edges. Bundled in their thick winter coats, these graceful animals remind us of adaptability and resourcefulness.

Elk, too, are on the move. Herds can often be spotted in open fields or near rivers, searching for accessible food beneath the snow. Their majestic silhouettes against frosted landscapes are a true symbol of the Valley's wild spirit.

Birdwatchers will find plenty to admire—even in the coldest months. Chickadees, nuthatches, and woodpeckers remain active, flitting between tree trunks and feeder stations. The valley's eagles and hawks soar above open areas, hunting for small mammals. If you're lucky, you might glimpse a great horned owl perched silently on a branch, surveying its snowy kingdom.

For the patient observer, the

signs of more elusive residents—like foxes, coyotes, and even the occasional bobcat—are written in paw prints crisscrossing fresh snow. These nocturnal wanderers leave clues to their nightly journeys, inviting us to imagine the secret life of the forest after dark.

As we embrace December's stillness, The Valley Voice encourages everyone to step outside, slow down, and notice the living world around us. Every track, feather, and flash of fur is a reminder that the Valley's wildlife is adapting, thriving, and sharing the season with us. Bundle up, bring your binoculars, and let winter's quiet wonders unfold before you.



IMAGE CREDIT: Syd Danis

PRICE LIST

Want to advertise your business or services?

All designs come with 2 rounds of revisions. Any additional rounds will be estimated on a case-by-case basis. Please note that services do not include any printing or stock photography costs. Final files will be formatted to fit your desired needs.

VECTOR LOGO DESIGN	VECTOR SIGN DESIGN
Single Concept _____ \$62	Single Concept _____ \$44
2 Concepts _____ \$107	Price based on existing Logo, Logo Design sold separately.
3 Concepts _____ \$125	
LETTERHEAD DESIGN _____ \$26	LABEL DESIGN
Price based on existing Logo, Logo Design sold separately. First round includes 2 layouts.	Single Concept _____ \$35
	2 Concepts _____ \$44
	Price based on existing Logo, Logo Design sold separately.
FLYER DESIGN	BROCHURE DESIGN
Single Layout Concept _____ \$35	Tri-Fold _____ \$44
MENU DESIGN	
Priced Per Page _____ \$26	
KIDS COLOURING MENU	
8.5" X 11" _____ \$35	
11" X 17" _____ \$44	
MAGAZINE DESIGN	3D PRINTING AVAILABLE!!
Starting at _____ \$314	PRICES VARY BASED ON COMPLEXITY AND SIZE.
Prices vary based on the amount of pages.	
BOOK COVER DESIGN	3D CUSTOM DESIGN
Single Sided _____ \$53	Starting at _____ \$82
Double Sided _____ \$71	Prices vary depending on complexity.
CUSTOM COLOURING PAGE	
Priced Per Page _____ \$17	
TAROT/ORACLE CARD CUSTOM ART	BRISCO HERMIT
40-Cards _____ \$1,108	250-549-0247
78-Cards _____ \$2,105	BRISCOHERMIT@GMAIL.COM
Additional Cards +\$35 per card	@ f @BRISCOHERMIT
Price includes one back card design.	

Sierra Says

HYPNOTIST ENTERTAINMENT

90 MINUTES OF FAMILY FRIENDLY FUN!

- WEDDINGS
- BACHELORETTE
- STAFF EVENT
- BARS
- ETC.

Sierra Franklin

EMAIL TO BOOK
MovingMountainsHypnotherapy@gmail.com

Lasting Memories & Big Laughs!

PET and people PORTRAITS

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- Realistic • Reasonable
- Professional
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LOCATED IN FAIRMONT HOT SPRINGS



BCVDC

HIGH VOLTAGE ROCK N' ROLL

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19TH, 2025

SHOTTIES NIGHTCLUB - CRANBROOK, BC

**12 - 10TH AVENUE SOUTH, CRANBROOK BC * AGES 19+
ADV. TICKETS \$30 - AT SHOTTIESNIGHTCLUB.COM AND BCDC.CA**

Toy Drive
December 2 to December 15
Wrapped Toys, All Ages
WesternGives.ca

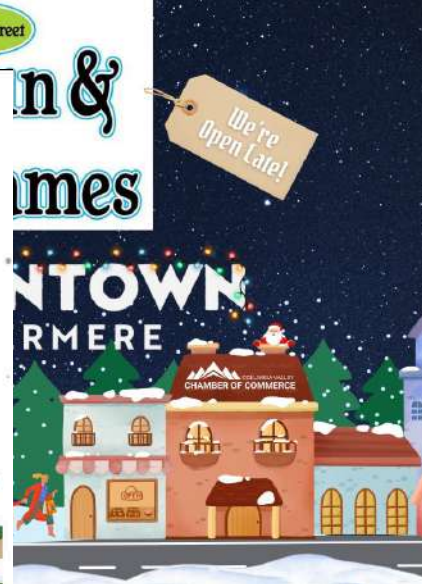
Shopping

! Dec 5, 12, & 19 Until 8pm

TRAVEL COLUMBIA VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
FAIRMONT HOT SPRINGS
Friday Shopping
DECEMBER 12, 2025
11:00 AM - 7:00 PM
Lions Club Bake Sale 11 - 7PM | Store Discounts |
Winter Market 4 - 7PM | Sleigh Rides 2 - 6PM

Participating Businesses!
COY'S #3, La Galeria II, FAIRMONT CREEK, MOUNTAINSIDE MARKET, Fairmont Village Mall, Purple Cow, SUSHI SAWA, FAIRMONT

Thanks to our prize donations sponsors!
Timbers Resort, MOUNTAIN VIEW, FAIRMONT, CYCZ, FAIRMONT CREEK





As the snow settles gently on the mountains and the daylight hours grow shorter, winter in the Columbia Valley brings both beauty and challenge.



WINTER WELLNESS

Home Remedies and Self-Care Tips for the Columbia Valley

The season invites cozy evenings, snowy adventures, and warm gatherings, but it can also usher in colds, dry skin, fatigue, and the winter blues. Amid these changes, caring for our well-being becomes more important than ever.

At The Valley Voice, we believe that wellness is holistic—nourishing the body, mind, and spirit. This winter, we invite you to explore simple, time-tested home remedies and self-care tips inspired by our region's traditions, local health experts, and the wisdom of nature. Whether you're looking to boost immunity, lift your mood, or simply find comfort in the cold, these suggestions offer practical ways to thrive all season long.

1. Warm Up from the Inside Out: Immune-Boosting Tonics and Teas

The Valley's long winters are the perfect time to rediscover the healing power of hot drinks. Herbal teas and tonics not only warm you up but can also help fend off winter colds.

Classic Ginger-Honey-Lemon Tea:

Slice fresh ginger root and simmer in water for 10 minutes. Add a squeeze of lemon and a spoonful of local honey. Ginger is known for its anti-inflammatory properties, lemon provides vitamin C, and honey soothes sore throats and coughs.

Elderberry Syrup:

Elderberries are a traditional remedy for colds and flu. Simmer dried elderberries with water, cinnamon, and cloves. Strain and mix with honey. Take a spoonful daily as a preventative or add to hot water for a tasty tea.

Fire Cider:

This tangy tonic is made by infusing apple cider vinegar with garlic, onion, ginger, horseradish, hot peppers, and herbs. After several weeks, strain and sweeten with honey. Take a tablespoon straight or mix with warm water to boost immunity.

2. Soothe Winter Skin Naturally

Cold air and indoor heating can leave skin dry, itchy, and sensitive. Natural, local remedies can help restore your skin's balance.

Oatmeal Baths:

Grind plain oats into a fine powder and add to your bathwater. Oats soothe irritation and moisturize the skin—perfect for dry hands or winter rashes.

Coconut Oil Moisturizer:

After bathing, apply coconut oil or locally made beeswax salve to lock in moisture. These

natural emollients are gentle, effective, and safe for sensitive skin.

Herbal Steam Facials:

Add dried chamomile, rosemary, or lavender to a bowl of hot water. Drape a towel over your head and breathe deeply for 5-10 minutes. Steam opens pores and allows the herbs' benefits to absorb into your skin.

3. Keep Moving, Even When It's Cold

Staying active is vital for both physical and mental health, especially when winter limits outdoor time.

Indoor Movement Routines:

Try gentle yoga, stretching, or tai chi to keep your body limber and your mind calm. Short, daily routines can combat stiffness and boost energy.

Bundle Up and Go Outside:

On milder days, embrace the Valley's winter beauty by walking, snowshoeing, or cross-country skiing. Even 20 minutes in the fresh air can lift your mood and improve circulation.

Dance Breaks:

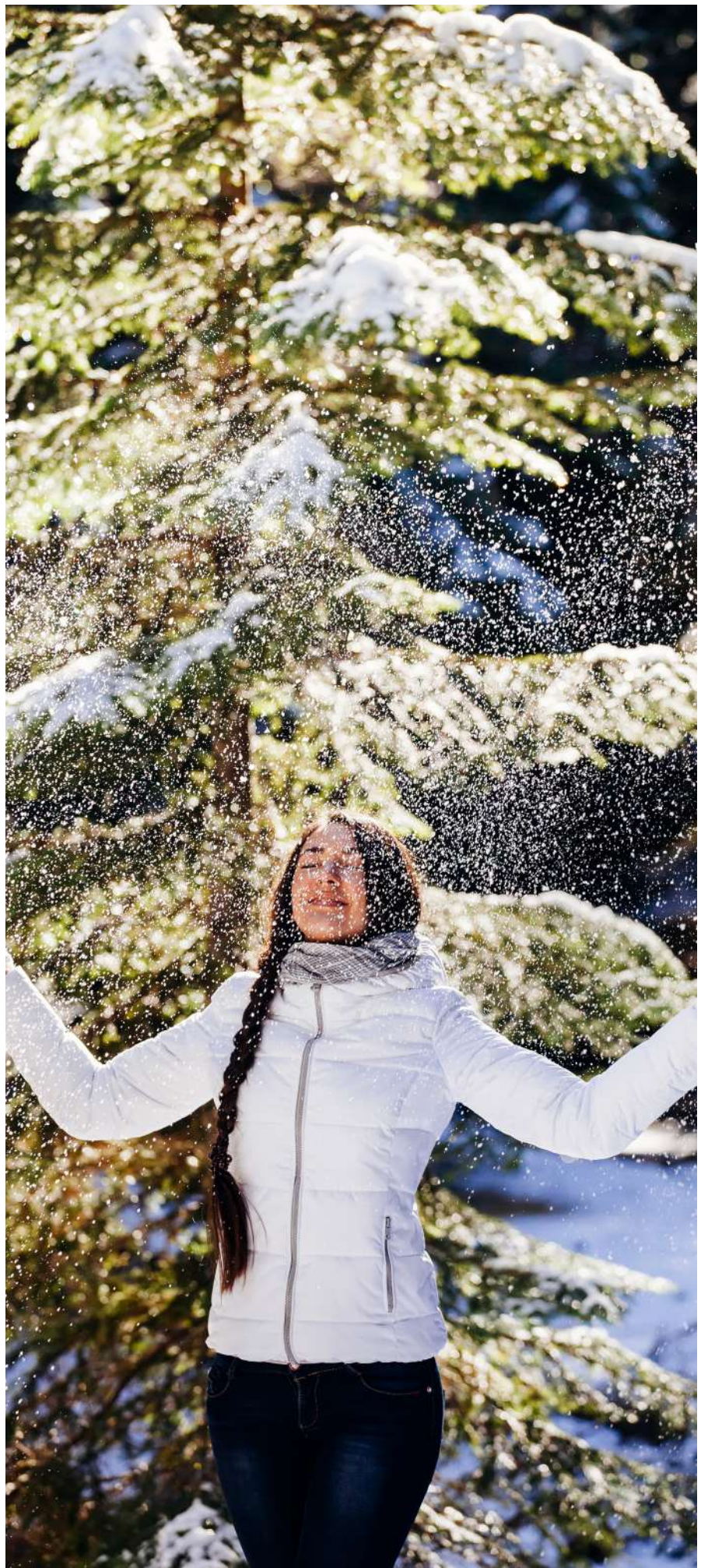
Play your favorite music and dance around your living room—solo or with family. Movement and laughter are natural mood boosters!

4. Nourish with Seasonal Foods

Eating well supports your immune system and energy levels.

Root Vegetables and Hearty Soups:

Cook with local potatoes, carrots, beets, and squash. Roasted or simmered in soup,





these vegetables provide comfort and nutrients. Add beans, lentils, or barley for extra staying power.

Fermented Foods: Sauerkraut, kimchi, and yogurt are packed with probiotics that support gut health and immunity. Try making your own or shop local producers.

Stay Hydrated: It's easy to forget to drink water in winter. Keep a thermos of herbal tea nearby or infuse water with citrus and herbs for a refreshing twist.

5. Mindful Self-Care for Seasonal Wellness

Winter can strain mental health, with less sunlight and more time indoors.

Mindful self-care can help you stay balanced.

Light Therapy: If you struggle with low energy or mood, consider a light therapy lamp. Sitting near bright light for 20-30 minutes each morning can help regulate sleep and improve mood.

Journaling and Reflection: Take a few moments each day to write down your thoughts, gratitudes, or winter goals. Journaling fosters clarity and self-awareness.

Connect with Community: Reach out to friends, family, or neighbors—even a phone call or virtual chat can ease feelings of isolation. Join a local club,

community group, or take an online class to stay engaged.

Practice Rest and Kindness: Allow yourself to slow down and rest without guilt. Enjoy a good book, take a nap, or listen to music. Self-compassion is a powerful wellness tool.

6. Herbal Helpers from the Valley

If you enjoy foraging or gardening, consider growing or harvesting herbs for winter remedies.

Spruce or Pine Needle Tea: Rich in vitamin C and antioxidants, fresh, young needles from spruce or pine trees can be



steeped in hot water for a refreshing tea. Be sure to properly identify the tree and avoid yew, which is toxic.

Dried Mint and Lemon Balm:

Both herbs can be grown in summer and dried for winter use. Add to tea blends for a calming, digestive-soothing effect.

Local Honey and Beeswax: Support Valley beekeepers by using local honey for sweetening teas, making cough syrups, or as a base for homemade lip balm and hand salves.

7. Creating a Winter Wellness Sanctuary at Home

Transform your space into a cozy retreat to nurture relaxation and joy.

Warm Lighting and Candles:

Use soft lamps, beeswax candles, or strings of fairy lights to create a soothing atmosphere.

Comfort Corners:

Designate a cozy nook with blankets, pillows, and your favorite books or crafts.

Scents of the Season:

Simmer orange slices, cinnamon sticks, and cloves on the stove or diffuse essential oils like pine, cedar, or lavender to evoke comfort and calm.

Wellness as a Community Practice

Winter wellness is not just

an individual journey—it's a community effort. Share your favorite remedies, recipes, or self-care routines with neighbors. Support local growers, herbalists, and wellness practitioners. Offer a listening ear or a warm meal to someone in need.

The Valley Voice invites readers to send in their own winter wellness stories, tips, and traditions. Together, we can cultivate a season of resilience, warmth, and well-being, embracing the gifts of winter in the Columbia Valley.

Stay healthy, stay hopeful, and nurture yourself and those around you this winter.

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WHAT'S AN IDIOM, ANYWAYS? PT. 5

The Weird, Wild World of Everyday Expression

An idiom is a phrase or expression that has a meaning different from the literal definitions of the individual words. In other words, if you take it literally, it won't make much sense—like "pulling my leg" or "dime a dozen."



PULLING MY LEG

To joke, tease, or trick someone in a light-hearted way.

The exact origin is unclear, but some say it may come from 19th-century London street thieves who tripped victims (literally pulling their legs) to rob them. Eventually, the phrase took on a lighter, more humorous meaning.

I was just pulling his leg—turns out it was a mannequin. Long story.



GO COLD TURKEY

To quit something abruptly and completely, especially an addiction.

Possibly from the goosebump-like skin reactions people get when withdrawing from drugs, resembling cold, raw turkey skin. The phrase gained popularity in the early 1900s.

I went cold turkey on caffeine. Now I dream of coffee beans whispering apologies.

Idioms are frequently used in everyday language to convey ideas more vividly or creatively. They often originate from old stories, cultural traditions, or historical events, and many have been passed down for centuries. Let's take a look at a few of them and "play devil's advocate."



A DIME A DOZEN

Something very common or easily available.

From the early 1800s in America, where merchants would advertise bulk goods like apples or eggs as "a dime a dozen" to show how cheap and plentiful they were.

Good ideas are a dime a dozen. Great ones come after coffee.



DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

Someone who takes an opposing view, often just to provoke thought or explore all sides of an argument.

In the Catholic Church, a "Devil's Advocate" was an official role during sainthood investigations—someone tasked with arguing against canonizing a person, to ensure a fair evaluation.

I played devil's advocate at dinner. Now I'm banned from family holidays until 2027.

WHAT'S AN IDIOM, ANYWAYS? PT. 5

CONTINUED

Idioms are linguistic fireworks—light one up, and your sentence suddenly crackles with colour.



BITE OFF MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW

To take on a task or responsibility that's too big to handle.

This idiom dates back to the 1800s and likely refers to chewing tobacco—if you bit off too much, you couldn't manage it, and you'd look foolish.

Took on three projects, two favours, and a DIY patio. Send snacks and a therapist.



THROW YOUR HAT INTO THE RING

To announce your candidacy or decide to compete for something—like a job, election, or opportunity.

Comes from boxing matches in the 1800s, where challengers would literally toss their hats into the ring to signal they wanted to fight.

I threw my hat in the ring—
But it was a fedora, so they rejected me on style grounds.



SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET

A hidden secret from someone's past, usually shameful or scandalous.

First used in the 1800s, likely referring to the horror of discovering a literal skeleton in a home's storage space. It metaphorically refers to dark secrets we hide away. I checked my closet for skeletons.

Found five unmatched socks, three exes' hoodies, and my 1980s haircut. Close enough.



THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS

The saying probably came from an older version, "God is in the details," credited to German art historian Aby Warburg back in the late 1800s. That version meant that paying close attention to the little things could turn something good into something great.

Over time, though, people gave it a darker spin—"the devil is in the details"—sometime around the mid-1900s. The new version flips the idea, warning that if you ignore the small stuff, it can all go wrong. Less about divine perfection, more about potential chaos!

So remember: Tiny details, huge disasters—ask anyone who's ever built IKEA furniture.

WHAT'S AN IDIOM, ANYWAYS? PT. 5

CONTINUED



LIGHTS ARE ON BUT NO ONE IS HOME

The phrase started popping up in English around the mid-20th century, as a humorous way to describe someone who seemed vacant or clueless.

It's easy to imagine: a house (the person) looks occupied because the lights are on, but if you knock... nobody answers. Think: eyes open, brain on vacation. Over time, it's become a favourite for describing times of daydreaming, mental fog, or pure "what was I just doing again?"

All systems powered, zero users detected.



NOT WORTH CRYING OVER SPILLED MILK

This idiom was first recorded in the 1600s. A version appeared in James Howell's Proverbs in English, Italian, French, and Spanish (1659): "No weeping for shed milk."

It likely came from the simple, everyday frustration of knocking over a precious jug of milk (a real loss back then!). Over time, it evolved into a metaphor for regret and letting go. Don't waste time being upset over something that's already happened and can't be changed.

Too late to cry—just grab a mop and move on. Hmm, a new idiom...

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HAPPY HOLIDAY DRINKS

Here are four festive, winter-inspired shots and cocktails perfect for December gatherings in the Columbia Valley. Each recipe is crafted to evoke seasonal flavors and holiday cheer.



✔ Peppermint Patty Shot

1 oz crème de cacao (white or dark)
1 oz peppermint schnapps
Whipped cream

Instructions: Pour crème de cacao into a shot glass. Layer peppermint schnapps on top by pouring slowly over the back of a spoon. Top with a dollop of whipped cream. Garnish with a candy cane for flair!



✔ Winter Cranberry Mule

2 oz vodka
1 oz cranberry juice
1/2 oz lime juice
Ginger beer

Instructions: Fill a copper mug or glass with ice. Add vodka, cranberry juice, and lime juice. Top with ginger beer and gently stir.



✔ Gingerbread Cookie Shot

1 oz Irish cream liqueur
1 oz coffee liqueur (e.g., Kahlúa)
1 oz gingerbread syrup (or substitute with a mix of molasses and ground ginger)

Instructions: In a shaker filled with ice, combine Irish cream, coffee liqueur, and gingerbread syrup. Shake well and strain into the prepared shot glass.



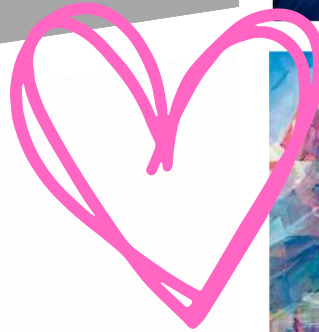
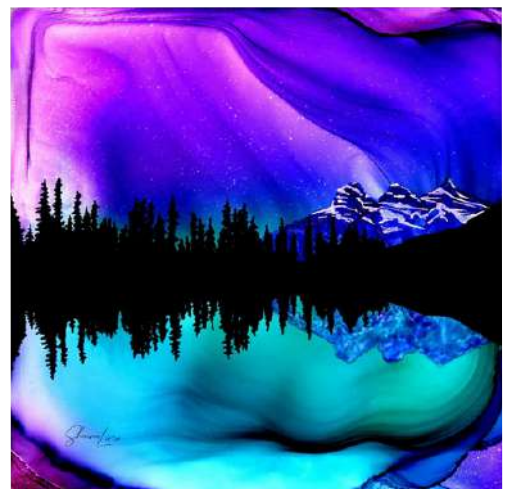
✔ Spiced Maple Bourbon Old Fashioned

2 oz bourbon
1/2 oz pure maple syrup
2 dashes Angostura bitters

Instructions: In a mixing glass, combine bourbon, maple syrup, and bitters with ice. Stir until well chilled and strain into a rocks glass over fresh ice.

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WHY MAKE THEM YOURSELF?

Personal Touch: Handmade gifts show your thoughtfulness and care, making each present unique and meaningful.

Eco-Friendly: Crafting your own gifts can reduce packaging waste and often uses sustainable or recycled materials.

Supports Creativity: Making gifts is a fun way to express your creativity and share your talents with loved ones.

Saves Money: DIY presents can be budget-friendly, helping you avoid the high cost of store-bought items.

Builds Connections: Creating gifts often involves collaboration and shared experiences, strengthening bonds with friends and family.



HANDMADE HOLIDAYS

Sustainable Ways to Prepare for the Gift-Giving Season

There is a special magic in gifts and decorations made by hand—each one carrying the warmth of personal effort, the charm of imperfection, and the spirit of the season. Across the Columbia Valley, Kimberley, and Cranbrook, many families are rediscovering the joy of homemade

holidays. Whether you're crafting with children, gathering with friends, or simply seeking a meaningful way to celebrate, DIY projects invite us to slow down, connect, and create lasting memories.

At The Valley Voice, we believe handmade holidays

④ A HANDMADE HOLIDAY FOR ALL



In a season often marked by excess and hurry, handmade holidays offer a chance to slow down, savor the process, and connect with the people and places that matter most. Whether you're crafting for loved ones, decorating your home, or simply seeking a new tradition, DIY projects bring warmth, creativity, and sustainability to the festivities.

This December, let's fill our homes and hearts with the joy of making. From nature-inspired décor to personalized gifts, every handmade touch is a celebration of the Columbia Valley's creative spirit. Share your projects with The Valley Voice, and inspire others to embrace the beauty of a handmade holiday.



are about more than saving money or reducing waste. They are a celebration of creativity and community, of turning simple materials into something beautiful and heartfelt. This December, let's embrace the art of making—here are some festive DIY decor and gift ideas to inspire your holiday season.



NATURE INSPIRED DECORATIONS

The Columbia Valley is a treasure trove of natural materials, and winter brings a wealth of inspiration. Pinecones, branches, berries, and evergreens can be transformed into stunning décor for your home or gifts for loved ones.

Pinecone Garlands:

Gather pinecones while out for a walk, and string them together using jute twine or cotton string. For a frosty effect, dip the edges in white paint or eco-friendly glitter. Hang your garland over a mantel, window, or doorway for rustic charm.

Evergreen Centerpieces:

Arrange sprigs of cedar, pine, and juniper in a mason jar or recycled tin can. Add dried berries, cinnamon sticks, or a few small ornaments. These centerpieces make lovely table decorations or hostess gifts.

Branch Stars:

Collect sturdy branches and cut them into equal lengths. Arrange into a star shape and bind the ends with twine. Hang on your wall or door, or add fairy lights for a magical touch.



UPCYCLED ORNAMENTS

Ornaments don't need to be store-bought to be special. Upcycling household items not only reduces waste but also adds a story to each piece.

Salt Dough Keepsakes:

Mix 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, and 1 cup water to form dough. Roll out and cut into shapes with cookie cutters. Use a straw to make a hole for hanging. Bake at 250°F for 2 hours, cool, then paint and decorate. Personalize with names, dates, or thumbprints for a truly memorable ornament.

Jar Lid Frames:

Save metal lids from jars. Paint them or cover with festive fabric and glue a favorite photo inside. Add a ribbon for hanging—these make lovely keepsakes for relatives or friends.

Paper Roll Characters:

Use empty toilet paper rolls to craft mini snowmen, reindeer, or elves. Paint and decorate with scraps of fabric, buttons, and googly eyes. These whimsical creations are perfect for kids' projects and add playfulness to any tree or mantel.



HOMEMADE GIFT IDEAS

Handmade gifts are a heartfelt way to show you care, and they don't have to be complicated. Here are a few ideas that suit all skill levels and ages.

Beeswax Wraps:

Eco-friendly and practical, beeswax wraps are easy to make and use for wrapping food. Cut cotton fabric into squares, place on a baking sheet, sprinkle with beeswax pellets, and melt in the oven at 200°F for 5 minutes. Brush evenly and let cool. Tie a set with twine and include instructions for use.

Layered Cookie Mix Jars:

Fill a glass jar with layers of cookie ingredients: flour, sugar, brown sugar, oats, chocolate chips, baking powder, and spices. Attach a tag with baking instructions. Decorate the jar with a ribbon or fabric cap for a cheerful, ready-to-bake present.

Handmade Bath Bombs:

Mix 1 cup baking soda, 1/2 cup citric acid, 1/2 cup Epsom salts, 1/2 cup cornstarch, 3/4 tsp water, 2 tsp essential oil, 2 tbsp coconut oil, and natural food coloring. Mold into balls or pack into silicone molds. Package in a recycled box or jar for a spa-inspired gift.



BAKED GOODS AND SWEETS

No handmade holiday is complete without the comforting aroma of fresh baking wafting through the house. Whip up classic cookies, spiced loaves, or homemade fudge to share with friends, neighbors, or coworkers.

Package your treats in reusable tins, glass jars, or wrap them in festive fabric for an eco-friendly touch. Not only are baked goods a delicious and heartfelt gift, but baking together is also a cherished holiday tradition that fills homes with laughter and warmth.

Whether you're making gingerbread men, shortbread, or your grandmother's secret recipe, edible gifts are sure to bring smiles and sweet memories to those you love.



PERSONALIZED CARDS AND GIFT TAGS

Skip the glittery, plastic-coated cards for something more personal and sustainable.

Pressed Leaf Cards:

Collect leaves or small branches and press them between heavy books. Glue onto recycled cardstock and write your holiday message inside. Simple, elegant, and compostable.

Seed Paper Tags:

Blend scraps of paper with water in a blender, strain, and mix in wildflower seeds. Flatten to dry, then cut into tag shapes. Recipients can plant their tag in the spring for a lasting memory.

Photo Collage Cards:

Gather favorite family photos and arrange into a collage on recycled paper. Add handwritten notes, drawings, or stickers for a card that's as unique as your family.



TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL DIY HOLIDAYS

Get the family involved:

Set aside time for crafting together. Young children can help with simple tasks like painting, gluing, or collecting natural materials. Older kids might enjoy designing, baking, or sewing.

Source locally and sustainably:

Use what you have at home or explore local thrift stores, markets, and craft shops for supplies. Choose natural, biodegradable, or reusable materials whenever possible.

Embrace imperfection:

Handmade items don't have to look store-bought. Celebrate quirks and mistakes—they're part of what makes your creations special.

Share your ideas:

Post photos, tips, or tutorials on social media, or swap projects with neighbors and friends. The Valley Voice welcomes reader submissions—show us your handmade holiday creations!



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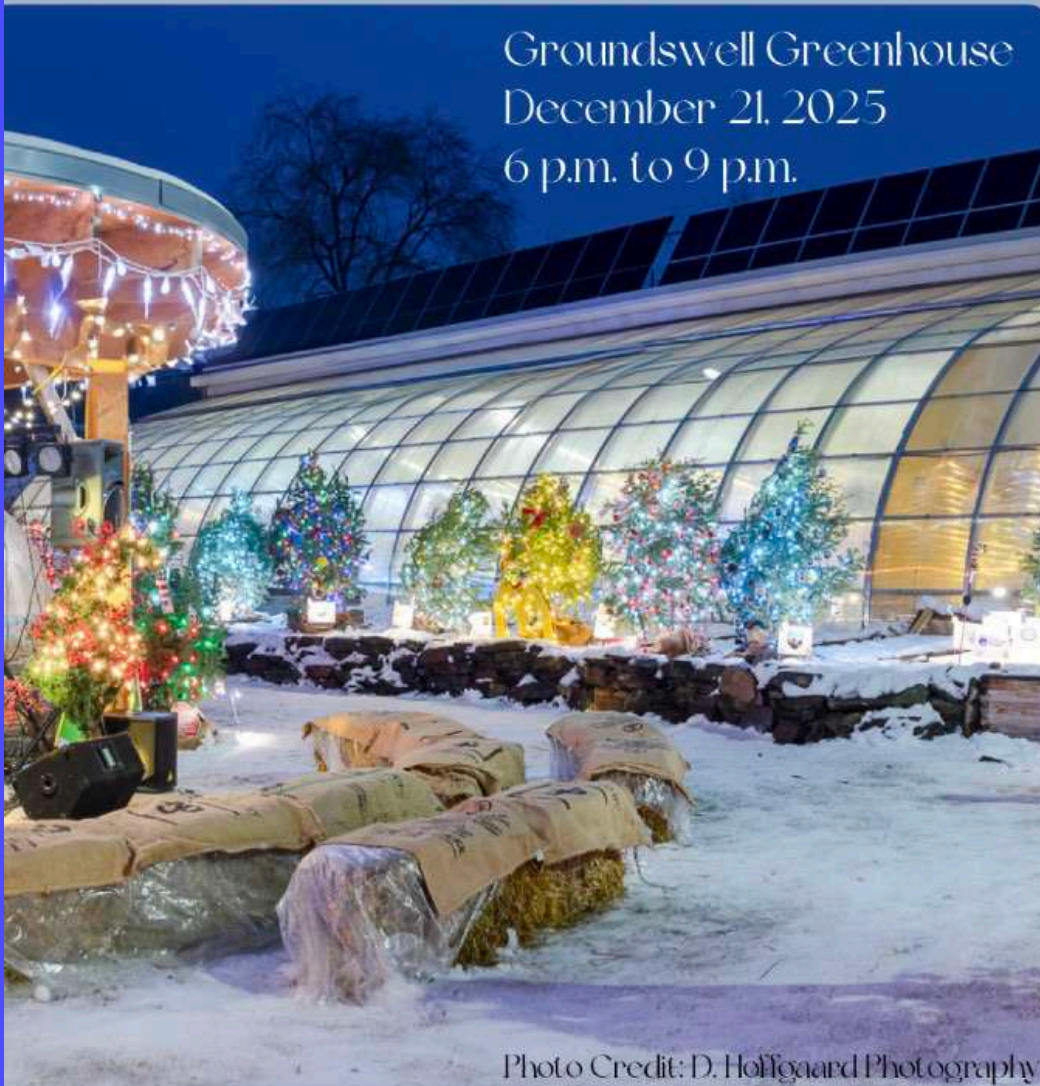


Photo Credit: D. Hoffgaard Photography

Santa's Workshop
4 Kids

Rudolph Led
Lantern Parade

Santa's After Party
4 Teens

Live Music &
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Drum Circle

And lights...
did we mention
the lights!

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RENTAL FAMILY (2025)

Movie Review

RENTAL FAMILY



IMAGE CREDIT: [TV Insider](#)

Rental Family is a poignant and quietly powerful drama that delves into the peculiar world of “family rental” services in modern Japan, weaving together themes of loneliness, identity, and the meaning of connection. Directed by Kenji Iwaisawa, the film follows Yuji, a stoic and emotionally adrift man who finds purpose—and unexpected complication—posing as loved ones for strangers in need.

Story & Themes:

The film’s premise is both unique and deeply resonant. Yuji, played with subtlety by Masataka Kubota, is hired to be everything from a missing son to a doting husband, slipping seamlessly into roles for clients longing to fill emotional voids. What begins as a transactional service gradually peels back layers of isolation and longing, for both Yuji and the people he serves. The film quietly asks:

What defines family, and can a staged relationship offer real comfort?

Performances:

Kubota’s performance is understated but magnetic, expressing a world of emotion with the smallest gestures. The supporting cast delivers equally nuanced portrayals, particularly in the moments when boundaries between hired affection and genuine connection begin to blur.

Direction & Cinematography:

Iwaisawa's direction is restrained and artful, allowing scenes to breathe and emotions to simmer. The muted color palette and lingering shots reflect the emotional chill at the film's heart, yet moments of warmth flicker through—often unexpectedly—reminding viewers of the resilience of the human spirit.

Overall Impression:

Rental Family isn't a fast-paced or flashy film, but it is deeply affecting. Its gentle, empathetic gaze on Japan's social realities feels universal, inviting audiences to question what truly connects us. Some viewers may wish for a bit more narrative momentum, but the film's contemplative pace is part of its quiet power.

Final Verdict:

With layered performances, thoughtful direction, and a premise that lingers long after the credits, Rental Family is a moving meditation on loneliness and longing

★ Rating: 4 out of 5

IMAGE CREDIT: [Gateway Film Center](#)



Fundraiser!

The Christmas Bureau of the Columbia Valley,
The Windermere Whitehouse Pub and Local Band



are hosting a fund raiser to benefit The Christmas Bureau!

December 13, 2025

Doors open 7 pm • Music at 8 pm

Tickets \$20 each, available at The Whitehouse, or at the door.

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WITH
DONATIONS
ACCEPTED**



**CASH
CONCESSION
BY BRIGHT
NEW MINDS**



SHE'S LEAVING

Game Review

✓
IMAGE CREDIT: [IGN](#)

Platform: Microsoft Windows
Genres: Action game, Adventure
Developer: Blue Hat Studio
Publisher: Blue Hat Studio





IMAGE CREDIT: [Playstation Lifestyle](#)

She's Leaving plunges players into a nerve-racking first-person survival horror experience that masterfully blurs the line between hunter and hunted. In this forensic thriller, you step into the shoes of an investigator trapped in a chilling, abandoned estate, piecing together a disturbing mystery while evading the presence that lurks in the shadows.

Gameplay & Mechanics: From the moment the game begins, tension is dialed to the max. Armed with only your wits, a flashlight, and scarce forensic tools, you must scour every room for clues—blood spatters, cryptic notes, fingerprints—while managing limited resources and keeping one step ahead of a relentless, unpredictable entity. The game's use of sound and lighting is superb, with creaking floorboards and distant whispers amplifying the sense of dread.

The investigation mechanics are thoughtful and engaging. Instead of simply collecting items, you must analyze evidence, connect threads, and make choices that impact the narrative. This adds a rewarding layer of depth and replayability, as different paths and outcomes await those who dig deeper.

Atmosphere & Visuals: She's Leaving thrives on atmosphere. The setting is oppressively claustro-

phobic, with every corridor and corner shrouded in darkness. Visuals are detailed and immersive, with environmental storytelling that rewards careful observation. The enemy AI is unpredictable, ensuring that no two encounters feel the same—sometimes you're the pursuer, other times, you're desperately hiding or fleeing.

Story & Theme: The narrative is a stand-out, blending psychological horror with a tragic backstory. As you uncover the truth behind the estate's cursed history, you'll find yourself second-guessing every decision and questioning who, or what, you can trust. The line between investigator and victim is razor thin, and the final act delivers a haunting payoff.

Overall Impression: She's Leaving is a tense, atmospheric horror experience that rewards careful thought as much as quick reflexes. While some puzzles verge on obscure, and occasional pacing lulls can break immersion, the game's chilling ambiance, smart design, and gripping story make it a must-play for horror fans.

★ Rating: 4/5 - A spine-tingling thriller that keeps you guessing until the end—She's Leaving earns a solid four out of five stars.



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Blacktop

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Music starts at 7:00

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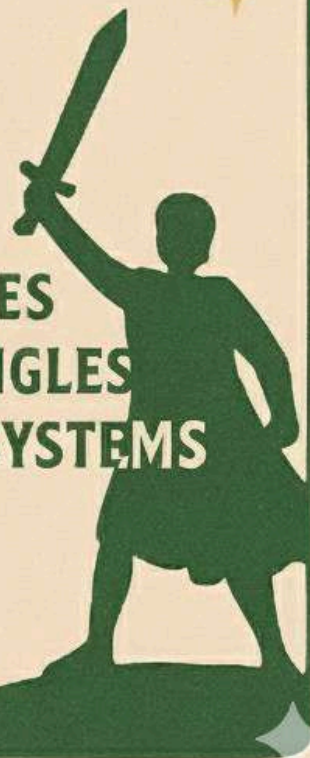


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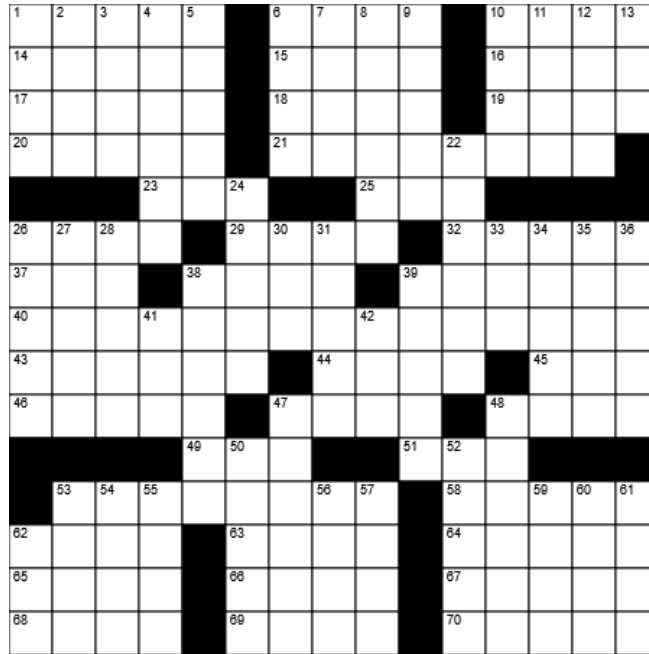
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A LITTLE FUN

Across

1- Recorded, in a way; 6- Unspecified in number; 10- Sneaky guy?; 14- Crop up; 15- Sills solo; 16- Civil disturbance; 17- Thick; 18- Cpls.' superiors; 19- No ifs, ___ or buts!; 20- ___ Is Born; 21- Highly regarded; 23- Affirmative reply; 25- Golfer Ernie; 26- General ___ chicken; 29- ___ even keel; 32- Mouthlike opening; 37- Guido's high note; 38- Skills; 39- Sailor; 40- In spite of; 43- 1998 Masters winner Mark; 44- Otherwise; 45- ___ the season...; 46- Martini's partner; 47- Draw with acid; 48- Jr.'s exam; 49- Chat room chuckle; 51- The Greatest; 53- Companion of a child; 58- Muse of love poetry; 62- Antelope's playmate; 63- Catchall abbr.; 64- Brother of Moses; 65- Gaelic tongue; 66- Microbe; 67- Gawk; 68- Legendary singer James; 69- Summer coolers; 70- French beans?;



Down

1- I did it!; 2- Counterpart of Mars; 3- Liquid measure; 4- Compositions; 5- Tractor pioneer John; 6- Freelancer's encl.; 7- Assns.; 8- Fingerless hand cover; 9- Stand used by painters; 10- Bristol baby carriage; 11- ___ kleine Nachtmusik; 12- Mary ___ Lincoln; 13- UFO crew; 22- Dead Sea Scrolls preserver; 24- Somewhat, colloquially; 26- Andrea Bocelli, for one; 27- Replay feature; 28- Novelist Joyce Carol ___; 30- To the ___ degree; 31- Personal quality of material belonging; 33- Wee bit; 34- Leaves out; 35- Craze; 36- Emo anxiety; 38- In a gay manner; 39- Figure skater Cohen; 41- Used to be; 42- Pampering, briefly; 47- Overjoyed; 48- Buccaneer; 50- Last Greek letter; 52- Minimal; 53- Chipper; 54- ___ we forget...; 55- District; 56- Shipping deduction; 57- Shade trees; 59- I smell ___!; 60- Got ripped; 61- Individuals; 62- Poor grade;

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