Columbia Valley, BC #46 Issue

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The Voices of the Columbia Valley



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Health Canada believes so, though hospital admissions continue to rise.

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SAVING THE BIGHORNS

Four bighorn sheep were killed last week in a five-day span spurring fundraising for a solution.

LOCALS NOMINATED FOR OLYMPICS

Eight local residents have been nominated for the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games

Columbia Valley Pet-Friendly Local Businesses Map Locations shown below are pet-friendly business locations. What that means is that your furry friend is welcome to join you inside the establishment. Submit Location Add your location to the PetFriendly map! Submit Location Add your location to the PetFriendly map! Submit Location Figure State Residue Residue Residue Residue Residue Residue Residue Residue Figure Hall Kitchen & Home Hardware Canadian Tire

LETTER FROM THE VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to all the businesses who submitted themselves for our Pet Friendly Business map. If you haven't seen it yet, head on over to our website and under the "COMMUNITY" tab you'll find the link for the map.

Collective

These businesses allow pets to accompany their owners while they shop. This is a great and unique way to advertise your business and show your support for fur babies. If you're a business that accepts pets along with their human companions, send us an e-mail to news@thevoicecv.ca with your business name and address. We will include you on our Pet Friendly Business Map!

As always, show positivity, kindness, and love to others. We believe the only way to invoke change is to be the change.

VISIT THE ONLINE MAP HERE



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How are we doing?

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

DR

by email to news@thevoiceca.ca



Health Canada believes so, though hospital admissions continue to rise.

Hospitalizations and intensive care numbers are rising not only in the province but across the globe. Omicron has proven to be a very transmissible variant, yet Chief Public Health Office Dr. Theresa Tam believes there are "early signs" Omicron may have peaked, as reported by myeastkootenaynow.com.

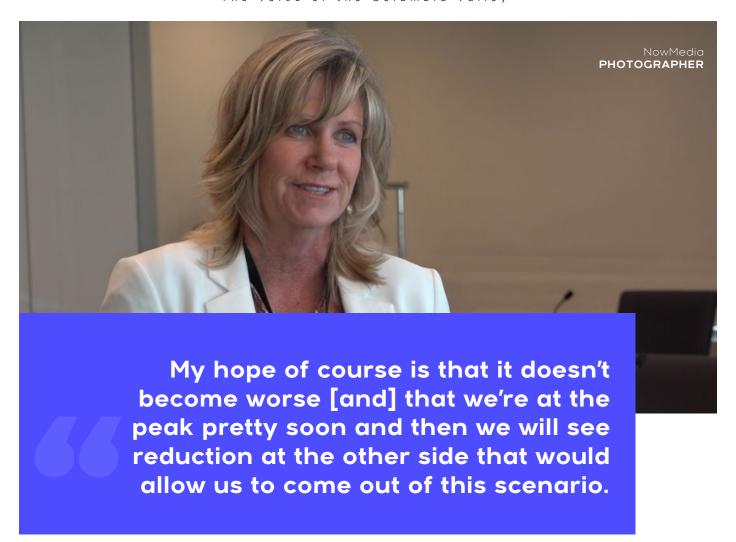
In a statement taken by the same report, Dr. Theresa Tam comments on the number of hospitalizations in COVID-19's fifth wave.

"Over the past week an average of over 10,000 people with COVID-19 were being treated in hospitals each day, surpassing peak daily numbers for all previous waves of the pandemic," she said. This includes over 1,100 people in intensive care units which Tam says is higher than all but the third wave's peak.

Based on data from Health Canada's recent

modeling, daily case counts, positive tests, and wastewater surveillance trends are showing stagnancy. The debate continues on whether the definition of "fully vaccinated" needs to be adjusted to incorporate those who have also received booster shots. Recent data from a CDC study shows a significantly lower hospitalization rate for areas where the majority of people have received a booster shot.

The challenge with amending the term to include those who have received booster shots is defining what a booster dose is. A series of vaccinations can be 2-3 shots depending on the person for full protection. Which means a booster should could be a fourth dose given six months or more after the primary series of vaccinations. This can cause challenges and be very tricky should the government make the adjustment.



Inpatient Services in Invermere

Interior Health announced on January 18th that they will be temporarily closing inpatient services in the District of Invermere. The announcement comes as the strain of Omicron is felt on the healthcare system between staffing challenges and the speed of transmission of the variant.

Though, these plans are no longer as Interior Health rescinded their plans on January 20th. There will be service adjustments to handle the staffing challenges presented by the Omicron variant. 911 and emergency services will still be provided from Invermere and District Hospital. Interior Health will notify the public once services have resumed to normal.

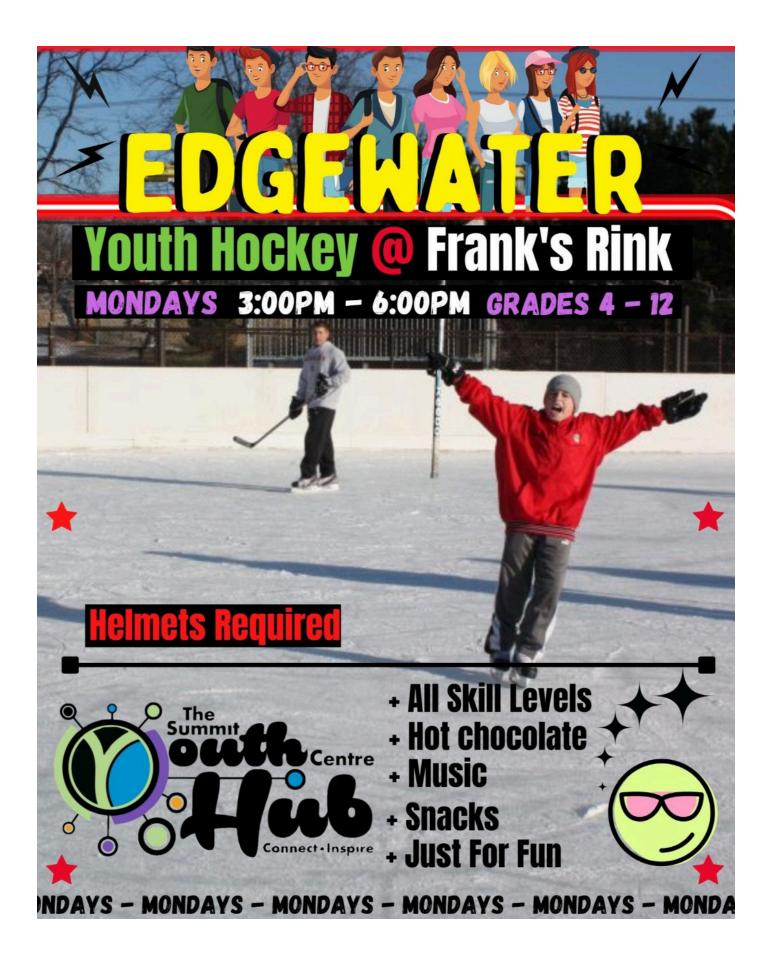
Elective Surgeries Suspended

Elective surgeries at 15 hospitals will be postponed for at least four weeks due to staffing challenges faced by Interior Health. In a statement reported by myeastkootenaynow.com, CEO of Interior

Health, Susan Brown, comments on the tough decision this was to make.

"We'll be assessing that daily and weekly. So if we can [end that] before that four week period, we will do that. Although we're talking about elective non-urgent surgeries, these are medically necessary procedures and we do realize the impact to families and patients. I can only assume we're in the thick of what we're going to see from this wave of the pandemic. My hope of course is that it doesn't become worse [and] that we're at the peak pretty soon and then we will see reduction at the other side that would allow us to come out of this scenario."

Interior Health has announced other measures to meet the demand and challenges they face with the Omicron Variant. Inpatient services have been temporarily closed in Clearwater and Lillooet. The Barriere health centre has been temporarily closed entirely to support deployment of staff to neighboring communities.



Eight local residents have been nominated for the Beijing 2022 Olympic **Winter Games**

Eight athletes will be making their Olympic debut this year which include four athletes and four coaches for Canada's alpine skiing and ski cross teams. The local nominees are Invermere's Cassidy and Amelia Gray Smart, Windermere's Courtney Hoffos, and Zoe Chore from Cranbrook listed as The alternate. coaches nominated are Nick Cooper from Kimberley, Elias Jonsson and Dave Ellis from Fernie, and Stanley Hayer of Kimberley.

Team Canada is no stranger to bringing home the gold with 11 Olympic medals in alpine skiing. Team Canada also captured the men's and women's gold medals for ski cross at PyeongChang 2018 and will defend those titles in Beijing this year.

To be nominated, these athletes needed to meet the rigorous requirements of Alpine Canada's Olympic team selection. A total of 13 alpine skiers across Canada have been nominated to compete at the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games. The alpine skiing events take place February 6th - February 19th at the Yanqing Alpine Skiing Centre. Ski cross events take place on February 17th and 18th at the Genting Snow Park in Zhangjiakou.





BC GYMS PERMITTED TO RE-OPEN

INVERMERE TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

Fitness centres across the province will be opening their doors on January 27th after being shut down due to provincial restrictions. While gyms are being re-opened, the protocols announced in December still remain. Fitness centres will need to be open at a reduced capacity and implementing the vaccine passport system. Bars and social gatherings are still banned until at least February 16th.

A survey has been launched by the District of Invermere to gain public feedback on the future of transportation in the community. Officials with the district have various strategies and projects to improve the transportation network and would like to gauge community feedback. The survey ends on January 31st and can be found HERE.





COVID-19 OUTBREAK DECLARED

On January 17th another COVID-19 outbreak has been experienced in Cranbrook. The Joseph Creek Care Village declared an outbreak in the Assisted Living/Independent Living unit. Interior Health is recommending no visits to the care facility until the outbreak is declared over.

McKIM MIDDLE SCHOOL RECEIVING

FUNDING

McKim Middle School will receive up to \$10,000 for exercise and fresh air projects at the school. The funds are provided as part of the second year of the Active School Travel Pilot Program which aims to increase the number of students using active transportation. Staying active is a key component of mental health and one that the program shares with students.







The Valley, what a wonderful place to be To look around and see mountains covered in trees The rivers that cut through the rock, carving a path for future life The trails mapped by hundreds of feet, that lead to the tallest of peaks The bird sanctuary where life has sprouted.

Everybody is getting ready for the summer crowd to arrive Our streets are overrun with tourists The laughter that rings through the air at an outdoor movie Rolling down hill in Pothole Park We gather in town centre to watch one of the many parades

The joy on every face exploring the Saturday market
The sounds of small children squealing in delight as they plunge into the water
The revving of the boats as skis glide through the stillness of the lake
Coming together for someone in need, its fundraiser time
The quiet lull as fall falls

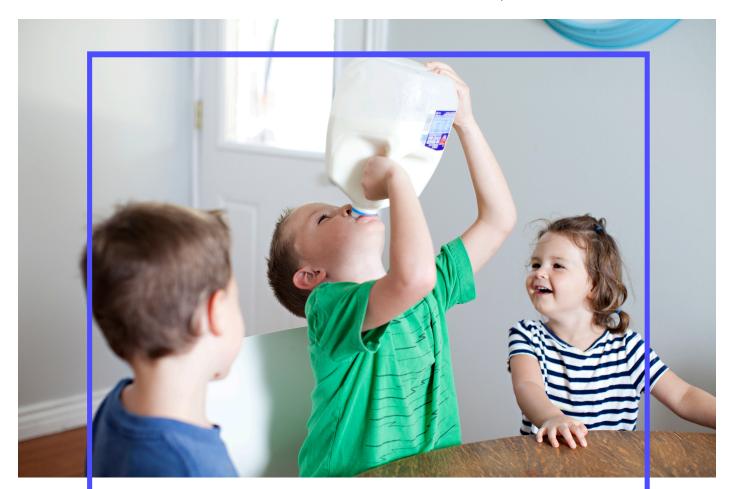
The bell that silences the children as they settle down for school

My kid, Sam Robichaud, is 15 and a student at DTSS. They had an assignment to write a SNAPSHOT for Creative Writing 10. I enjoyed their piece so much, I thought I would share it with you.

Kind regards,

Shona Robichaud





Milk Carton Refunds

Milk cartons will be accepted for refunds.

Starting on February 1st, residents in B.C. can receive a 10 cent refund for containers of milk and milk substitutes. The shift comes in efforts to divert usable materials towards recycling instead of waste. While these items are accepted for recycling in other areas of the country. British Columbia did not include milk or milk substitute containers for eligible recycling refunds.

For any purchases of milk or milk substitute products, a 10 cent deposit will now be charged on these items which will be refunded when returned. The containers will need to be cleaned and rinsed and will only be accepted if purchased on or after February 1st. These containers should not be placed into residential recycling bins.

It is recommended by the provincial government to continue recycling containers that are not eligible for a deposit-refund system. These items include infant formula, meal replacement, coffee cream, whipping cream, butter milk, and drinkable yogurt.

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VALLEY PROMOTIONS

Saving
the Bighorns

Four bighorn sheep were killed last week in a five-day span spurring fundraising for solution.

Fundraising is underway for overpass in the Village of Radium Hot Springs to help save the lives of bighorn sheep in the village. The death toll of bighorn sheep in Radium is increasing and the numbers are devastating. Development of an overpass is meant to provide bighorn sheep with access to safely cross the highway.

As reported by CTV, Mayor of the Village of Radium Hot Springs Clara Reinhardt shared that funding is accessible for a project to protect bighorn sheep. Money had been allocated to create an underpass to provide safe crossing for bighorn sheep. Though recommendations from scientists are to build an overpass instead which requires additional funding. It is estimated the project will cost between \$4 and \$5 million to complete.

In a statement reported by CTV, Reinhardt shares comments on how the community can help support development of the overpass.

"The Village of Radium is working on a plan, where if people want to donate money and get tax receipts, we'll be updating our website in the next few weeks to allow people that opportunity. They can go to our website --RadiumHotsprings.ca -- and get the information they need to make donations toward the overpass to make it happen faster."



CTV reached out to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure for comment on the issue before noon Friday. At 6:07 p.m. Monday, a spokesperson emailed the following statement:

"All of Highway 95 between Golden and Radium Hot Springs is considered a wildlife corridor and has oversized wildlife warning signage at regular intervals.

"There are more than 20 watch-for-wildlife signs in each direction on Highway 95 between Golden and Radium Hot Springs, including oversized wildlife warning signage. There are also flashing LED Bighorn Sheep warning signs and oversized sheep-specific signs.

"One of the three overhead message signs is leaving Kootenay National Park on Highway 93. The other two are located for northbound traffic on Highway 95 south and north of Radium Hot Springs. These provide wildlife messaging to motorists in rotation with other important safety messages.

"Last December, the ministry installed intercept salt feeding stations to draw Bighorn Sheep away from Highway 93 and Highway 95 near Radium Hot Springs, and is preparing to install more of these feeding stations in the future.

"Additionally, ministry is investigating the use of pre-fabricated bridges to retro-fit wildlife overpasses along Highway 93 and Highway 95 near Radium Hot Springs.

"The ministry does not have fencing for this herd on Highway 95.

"The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure tracks wildlife collisions on highways and roads under ministry jurisdiction.

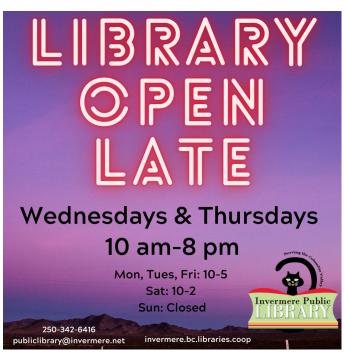


"We recognize the importance of reducing conflict for both motorist safety and conservation of the sheep, and are actively working with partners, including the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, Parks Canada and the Village of Radium Hot Springs, to evaluate further mitigation strategies."

In the same article, CBC mentions reasons as to why the deaths are increasing such as the tough winter we've experienced along with exposed grass and salt. Though, from a local perspective, there needs to be more done by the Village of Radium Hot Springs to protect the bighorn sheep. There also needs to be a call for more speed traps and policing of the highway. Many drivers speed through Radium on the highway which is a major cause of the bighorn sheep loss. While there is signage and notices warning drivers, there needs to be more done to ensure drivers are being cautious around wildlife.









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VALLEY PROMOTIONS



Non-Profit Purchases B&B

The B&B will be utilized as a rest home for those with diverse abilities.

NEXUS Community Support Society, formerly Cranbrook Society for Community Living, purchased the Baker Hill B&B in November of last year and is working on zoning amendments to allow the property to be used as a rest home for people with diverse abilities.

In a statement <u>reported by the Cranbrook</u> <u>Townsman</u>, NEXUS Community Support Society released the following comments,

"This rest home will support adults with intellectual disabilities to ensure they have equal opportunities to access, and live within, their community. This home will have professional support staff 24 hours per day, seven days per week; ensuring the needs of those living in the home are met and, ultimately, the home is maintained to a high standard."

The first reading of the zoning amendment took place yesterday for a first reading. The amendment includes two parcels of land which are zoned for commercial and residential respectively. The amendment would remove the commercial zoning aspect and leave the residential.









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VALLEY PROMOTIONS



Cost of Illness

Paid parking is being reinstated at B.C. hospitals.

B.C. health authority sites will be reinstituting paid parking at all sites effective on March 4th. This reinstatement is to ensure available parking for patients, staff, volunteers, and visitors, while free parking can be extended to those who regularly receive treatments.

For patients who are undergoing dialysis or cancer treatment in acute-care programs and their parents or caregivers of children staying the night in the hospital will be provided free parking at provincial healthcare facilities. Volunteers will also be permitted to park for free and provisions for those experiencing financial hardship will be managed on a case-by-case basis by health authorities.

As reported by e-know.ca, there has been \$78 million in parking fees waived since April 1st, 2020. A rate freeze on parking rates has been in place for over four years and will remain.

Program for Indigenous Cannabis Products

A new program to highlight Indigenous produces is announced by the B.C. government.

On January 18th, the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General and BC Liquor Distribution Branch announced the B.C. Indigenous Cannabis Product (BCICP) program. Indigenous cannabis producers based in B.C. will have their products highlighted in private retail stores as well as online so consumers can easily identify Indigenous products.

In a <u>statement</u> released by the Government of British Columbia, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General Mike Farnworth had the following comments,

"The launch of this new program demonstrates the Province's commitment to supporting Indigenous participation in B.C.'s cannabis sector. With program registration opening, we look forward to seeing eligible products showcased in stores and online soon."

The program was developed in collaboration between the provincial government and the First Nations Leadership Council. Federally licensed cannabis producers and processors who are based in British Columbia and meet Indigenous ownership requirements are eligible to take part in the program. Those interested in more information can visit the BC Liquor Distribution Branch website here.





Tech Time Thursdays: Starting Nov 18th

Invermere Public Library 10:15am-1:00 pm

Radium Public Library 1:30-4:00 pm

Are you an adult or senior, needing some help with your computer, phone, or tablet?

We have one-on-one help available for you!

Pre- registration is required.

To register contact:

Invermere Public Library 250-342-6416

Radium Public Library 250-347-2434





wvcoordinator@cbal.org 🐧 or text 250-409-4251





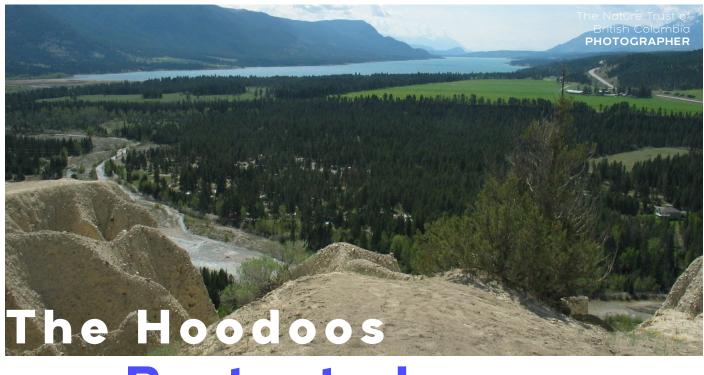








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are Protected

The Hoodoos - Columbia Wetlands is now protected from development.

The Hoodoos has been added to conservation efforts and is protected from development by the Nature Trust of BC. The ecological importance of the 143-acre piece of land contains open, native grassland, and provides habitats for over 30% of at-risk species in the province while covering less than 1% of the land base in the province.

Nature Trust of BC had the following comments regarding The Hoodoos, as reported by myeastkootenaynow.com.

"Wetlands, considered one of the most productive ecosystems in the world, are a natural and effective tool in combating climate change through their ability to act as a sponge, and reduce flooding during heavy rainfall. Additionally, they provide food and habitat for many species, including insects, reptiles, fish, birds and mammals. Grasslands support more threatened and endangered plants and animals than any other habitat type in the province. With the East Kootenay irreversibly losing native grasslands due to urbanization and agriculture, it is crucial we protect the undisturbed grasslands that remain."

This addition will provide a continuous area of over 11,000 acres of wetlands, riparian, and grassland habitat which are relatively undisturbed. The land is under conservation

and will be protected from development, there will still be people in the area. As most of the habitat is intact, no restoration work will be needed on the site.

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Video Messages Cards of Love

Spread cheer & love by sending a video message or homemade Valentine's Day card to Invermere's local Seniors!

Videos clips (30 secs or less) and cards are due by February 7th! Drop off box is located in the lobby of the Columbia Valley Centre - 646 4th St.

Email videos to Cortney Pitts at events@invermere.net



More Business Support

Business who were forced to close are receiving more support.

The provincial government is providing additional grant relief to businesses who were forced to close on December 22nd. Businesses are eligible to receive up to \$20,000 in funding depending on the amount of staff employed when the business was closed.

The funds come from the COVID-19 closure relief grant and the province hopes the funds provided will help keep businesses open once the shutdown comes to an end.

Businesses eligible to receive the funding include nightclubs, bars, lounges, and venues that had to cancel events due to the closure. With fitness centres set to re-open on Thursday, businesses in this industry will only be eligible for the first four-week grant provided by the provincial government.

If you have already applied for the grant, there is no need to reapply to take advantage of the increased funding.

If you have not applied, you can do so HERE.





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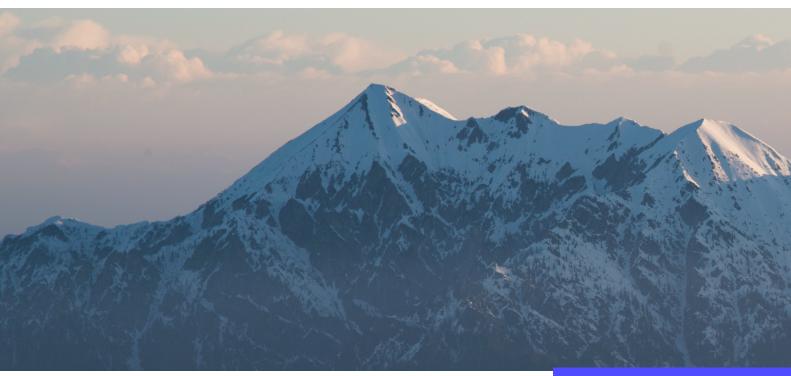


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VALLEY PROMOTIONS



VALLEY SHARES

BIGHORN SHEEP TAKE OVER RADIUM

HILL

On the morning of January 25th, a herd of Bighorn Sheep commandeered Radium Hill. Traffic was being brought to a slow pace as drivers maneuvered around the herd and avoid them. Drivers were slowing to a crawl and flashing hazards.

Pictures courtesy of <u>Help the Radium Bighorn</u> <u>Herd Facebook Page</u>







SKATING ON THE WHITEWAY

Local community members banded together to make a community tradition happen. Members of the community got in their quads and sweepers, grabbed their shovels and brooms to clear the snow and allow for skating on the Whiteway.

Reported from the Toby Creek Nordic Ski Club, there is the odd rough patch so skate with caution though it is mostly smooth sailing.

Images from <u>Toby Creek Nordic Ski Club</u> <u>Facebook Page</u>.







SWOOP, There It Is

Microsoft recently acquired Activision/Blizzard which means massive changes in the gaming world.

The biggest acquisition in the history of gaming took place last week and left the gaming world in shock. Microsoft will soon own the IP's under Activision/Blizzard which include Diablo, Overwatch, Call of Duty, Spyro, Crash Bandicoot, and what may be the most shocking of all, World of Warcraft.

The possibilities of how these franchises can be expanded is now endless. If you had said to a gamer 2 years ago that playing World of Warcraft could be possible on an Xbox console, you would be laughed out of the arcade. Now, it is not only a possibility but very probable we could see many PC-exclusive franchises making their way onto console.

Though, there's the saying "just because you can, doesn't mean you should". Specifically referencing World of Warcraft, bringing it to the console world could mean the end of the game as we know it. Though many fans will contest the game died with the release of the Cataclysm expansion and would welcome a reboot of the beloved franchise. There's also the aspect of whether Xbox will look at making many of these popular franchises exclusive to their software. The implications would ripple through the gaming industry, imagine Call of Duty could only be played on an Xbox? While it could mean massive dollars for Microsoft, it could also lead to a complete nightmare for multiplayer gaming.



Cross-platform play has become a staple in multiplayer games since 2020. Many games are developed to be played on PC, Playstation, Xbox, or Switch. Cross-platform play allows users to play games online with other people, regardless of the device they're using. This allows for more users in multiplayer lobbies and continued growth of the game as more and more people turn it on. Making it an Xbox exclusive will alienate a huge portion of the gaming community sand could effectively kill a franchise.

Thankfully, this doesn't appear to be the case as there are contracts in place with Sony to bring those franchises to their software for the foreseeable future. Though the future of gaming sure is interesting as Microsoft continues to acquire as many gaming developers and IP's as they can.

JOSH GRIEVE

Gamer and Author







Columbia Valley Interact Club



David Thompson Secondary School

Merritt K – 7 Elementary School Disaster Relief Project

MERRITT CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

It came to the attention of the Sunrise Rotary Club of Radium through the Columbia Valley Interact Club and the David Thompson Secondary School student council that they would like to get involved in helping this school get back on their feet and try to salvage the school year for these young learners.

The school library was severely damaged and the school is in urgent need of books, toys, pens, paper, pencils, storage bins and other learning aids. The organizing students would like to be able to present the items with a trip to Merritt to personally drop off the items to the school.

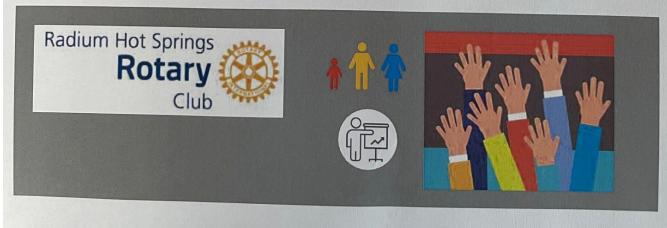
Deadline To Drop Off Items: Feb 15th

Radium Drop-Off Location: Canfor Mill Main Office - 4685

Forsters Landing Road

Radium Drop-Off Times: 1:00 - 4:00 PM (Mon- Fri)

The students will also be reaching out through other social media to provide information as to drop off locations in Invermere.



30

A LITTLE FUN

Across

1- Delhi wrap; 5- Orenburg's river; 9- Makes lace; 13- Under way; 15- Emperor of Rome 54-68; 16- Gen. Robert ____; 17- Basic monetary unit of Denmark; 18- Bridle part; 19-Spanish snack; 20- Drunkard; 21- Made do. with "out"; 23- Attic; 25- Capital city of Western Samoa; 26- Blazing; 27- Hindmost part; 30- Philosopher ___-tzu; 31- Say "y'all," say; 32- Accepted; 37- Designer Gucci; 38-Actress Taylor; 40- Author Morrison; 41-Unmatched; 43- Ulan ___; 44- Horned viper; 45- Least original; 47- Capital of New South Wales; 50- Askew; 51- Aries; 52- Frequently; 53- Code-cracking org.; 56- PlayStation maker; 57- Aromatic fragrance; 59- Construct; 61- Organization to promote theater, 62-Trademark; 63- Radiolocation; 64- Went through, as the paper; 65- Dash; 66- This, in Tijuana;

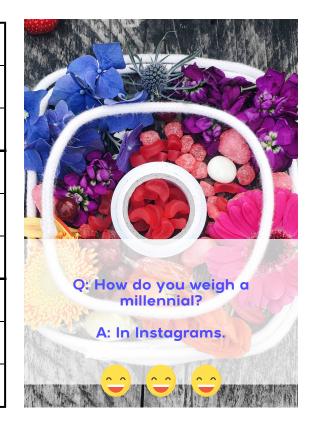
13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 23 24 27 28 29 31 32 33 34 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 50 50 50 51 52 53 54 55 59 60 61 62 63

Down

1- Fifth Avenue store; 2- Bushy hairstyle; 3-Underground part of a plant; 4- Euripides drama; 5- Like much spam; 6- Oboe, e.g.; 7-Uris hero; 8- Gloomy expression; 9- Aquarium

fish; 10- Warning; 11- Native American tent; 12- Chair; 14- Home on the range; 22- Relatives; 24- Tropical plant; 25- Passion; 26- Sheltered, nautically; 27- Harvest; 28- Fashion mag; 29- Assistant; 32- Hosp. workers; 33- San Marino surrounder; 34- Cast a ballot; 35- Seth begat him; 36- Gossip; 38- To be similar to; 39- Catch a view of; 42- Actress Turner; 43- Trade; 45- Falls-jumping fish; 46- Tango need; 47- Excelled; 48- Gossipmonger; 49- Wood nymph; 51- Nicholas II was the last Russian one; 52- Pond organism; 53- Beatty and Rorem; 54- Beat it!; 55- Gillette brand; 58- "You've got mail" co.; 60- Actress Charlotte;

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GET INVOLVED

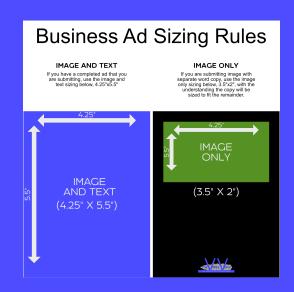
There are MANY ways you can get involved with this awesome online publication! We hope to hear from you.

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

FOR A FULL-PAGE PLACEMENT

Donate a product or service for giveaway through the Valley Voice. Help us give back to the readers and we will help place you. Though, we will likely reserve this to one per issue. Businesses can choose to host more than one giveaway through Valley Voices to obtain additional feature pages.



FOR A FULL-PAGE FOOD WRITE UP

We will ask you to provide the meal set you want tasted, at no charge, to our public food writer. (One of the front facing volunteer positions through the Valley Voice where anonymity is not always possible.) You will be notified when to expect the critic and they will introduce themselves. Once the meal has been completed, you can expect a fullpage review, complete with photography of your food, to appear in a future issue.

TO GET ON THE COVER

This one is really easy... take the best photo. If the best photo has been submitted by a business, it's the business who will be credited on the front page.

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