



Valemount Council talks business

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN GOAT

Your weekly source of news, views and entertainment

SD57 board to visit Robson Valley P3

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Produce farmers weigh in on regulations P9

Jasper campgrounds to open in summer P10

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Mustangs off to Provincials after silver medal win



The McBride Mustangs Senior Girls Volleyball team qualified for provincials with a second place finish at the Single A Zones Senior tournament this past weekend.

The team consists of one grade 8, two grade 9, one grade 10, two grade 11 and one grade 12 students (over half technically junior players). See more photos on P2. /SUBMITTED

Valemount Library welcomes new director

By ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

The Valemount Public Library is starting a new chapter in its 60-year history with new library director Kira Chalupa.

“I’ve been in libraries my whole life – I volunteered with them before I was legally allowed to work,” Chalupa said, recalling that she got her first paying gig at a library in her hometown of Grimshaw, Alberta when she was around 13 years old.

Chalupa studied Ancient and Medieval History at the University of Alberta before getting a Masters of Information – a type of library science degree – at Dalhousie University. Her work as a librarian has taken her to Thunder Bay, Ontario and, most recently, Vegreville, Alberta.

Having grown up in Grimshaw, which has a population of about 2,600 people, Chalupa is familiar with small-town dynamics. Still, the warm reception and tight-knit community was a pleasant surprise, she said.

“There are a few places my partner has been and he’s mentioned where we’re living or that I’m the new library director and they’re like, ‘We know, we’ve heard all about you,’” she laughed. “It’s kind of fun being in a small town again.”

Chalupa’s brother lives in Valemount, so she had visited a handful of times over the years. When she found out the library was hiring, Chalupa jumped at the chance.

While the logistics of selling her house in Vegreville and moving with her partner and their four pets – two dogs, and two cats – were complex, everything worked out.

“It was one of those opportunities that you just can’t pass up,” she said. “I’m not usually a big believer in [thinking] the universe has a path for you... but this was one of those moments where everything was perfectly lined up.”

Now that she’s in the mountains, Chalupa plans on hiking, camping and getting back into snowboarding in her free time. While the open skies of the Alberta prairies are beautiful, being nestled in between mountain ranges gives her a sense of calm, she said.

Chalupa’s smooth transition into living and working in Valemount is thanks in big part to the former library director, Wendy Cinnamon, and the rest of the library staff, she says.

CONT'D ON P2

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McBride Mustangs off to Provincials



The team, the smallest and youngest at the tournament, went into the weekend ranked eighth and played with determination and grit while smiling the whole time. After seven grueling games, the team also walked away with two first all star team awards and one second all star team award. The team will travel to Nanaimo next week to compete at the Single A Provincial Championships.
A McBride volleyball team has not been to provincials in over 30 years. / SUBMITTED



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Valemount Library...Cont'd from A1

“Wendy was here for 28 years... that’s a very significant legacy to follow up on,” Chalupa said. “She’s really great. She’s been super helpful with the transition and she’s done a lot of amazing things for the library, so hopefully I can do a good job with it too.”

Chalupa’s ambitions for the library include expanding its non-traditional collection – the part of the library’s collection that isn’t just books, such as snowshoes and birdwatching gear. Her long-term goal is to revise and implement the library expansion plan, originally conceived in 2013.

In any case, improvements to the library will be informed by community feedback, she said. That may mean surveys or circulating polls on social media in the future, but for now, she wants to listen to patrons and hear their priorities for the library.

“Libraries are very community-focused,” she said. “We can only do what the community wants – we’re not going to create a fantastic space that nobody’s ever going to use.”

In the meantime, Chalupa hopes to partner with more community organizations to create library programs. For example, the library has a partnership with the elementary school where a library assistant visits and teaches small crafts.

The library is also seeking new board members, and Chalupa invites interested Valemount residents to contact library@valemount.ca.

While she enjoys reading, what motivates Chalupa to work in libraries is their role as a community hub, she says.

“I really love how libraries create community,” Chalupa said. “Finding other people is a little less intimidating to me in the library than in other spaces.”

She added, “I’m pretty thrilled to be here and to learn about Valemount and the people who live here.”



Valemount’s new library director, Kira Chalupa, moved from Vegreville, Alberta to enjoy Valemount’s mountain scenery. “It was one of those opportunities that you just can’t pass up,” Chalupa said about the position. /ABIGAIL POPPLE

McBride Council: Fire Investigators & Inspectors, housing needs report and tire storage

By ANDREA ARNOLD

Mayor Gene Runtz called the McBride Council meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. on November 12th, 2024.

Responsibilities of Fire Investigations

Senior Manager of Public Safety Services with the Regional District of Fraser Fort George, Melanie Perrin, spoke to Council on the new provincial Fire Safety Act. This new legislation requires municipalities to appoint an individual or individuals to serve as Fire Investigator and Fire Inspector.

The previous program, which allowed Local Assistants to the Fire Commissioner functions that were part of the Fire Services Act, expired on October 28th. In many rural communities, the Fire Chief performed this role and completed investigations on behalf of the Commissioner.

Perrin said she thought they made approximately three dollars per fire investigation, but she didn't know of any chief that actually filed the paperwork for payment.

McBride has not completed the appointment process, and in the case of the fire at TGP on November 4th, the Office of the Fire Commissioner stepped in to help with the post fire investigation.

Perrin said the village will have to find the funds to cover the expenses these new positions will require. Although it is possible for one person to receive a delegation to both jobs, she recommends that they be kept separate for a variety of reasons.

She said one consideration is how much work will be required of each position. The demands of a Fire Inspector can be predicted and scheduled, but an Investigator needs to be available to meet tight deadlines following an incident.

As the community of McBride has not appointed these jobs, CAO Jeanette McDougall said that she has been in contact with other small municipalities that are in the same situation. These other communities do not seem overly worried about the past deadline either.

Councillor Tina Bennett asked if two municipalities could share one contracted Fire Investigator. Perrin said that yes, if the workload was manageable, and the individual could be available to meet the tight timelines following a fire.

At this time, McBride has been using a contractor from Kamloops for the Fire Inspector needs of the community. Mayor Runtz would like to see someone local step into these positions, complete the training and allow for the money spent on wages to remain in the valley. Councillor Joe Kolida said that he'd like to see a breakdown of how many times an investigator had to be called in. If it is a low and manageable number then he thinks that it is worth it to the community to have a contractor that they can call in when needed instead of hiring someone new and having them complete all the necessary training.

Housing Needs

Council then heard from Tyler Brown from McElhanney regarding the draft copy of the Housing Needs Report. Brown said the report was completed in such a way that it will meet the requirements of the quarterly report the province needs.

Mayor Runtz asked Brown what happens to those people who do not live within the community boundaries. He asked if the Regional District is also having a housing needs report completed. Brown did not know for sure, but he said that the lack of overlap between village boundaries and Regional District boundaries is a flaw that is less than ideal.

Mayor Runtz also expressed concern that the trend shown in the report that covers the next 20 years shows a dramatic decrease in community population. He said he hopes that decline can be avoided.

Brown said that the Council needs to look at ways to create an adaptable framework, to look into ways to attract people to the community to stay. Brown said that the Council needs to remain adaptable and flexible.

3 Peaks Tire Storage

Council approved both the Development Variance Permit and the Development Permit for 3 Peaks Mechanical Ltd. for the placement of a shipping container on the property located at 399 Main Street, McBride BC for the purpose of storing used tires for its business and for the collection of tires from the public, subject to the applicant obtaining all necessary permits.

Council Of Forest Industries Convention

Council amended the following to include a second councillor attending the conference. Council approved the Mayor and two Council members to attend the 2025 COFI Convention in Prince George on April 2nd-5th, 2025.

Housing Needs Report

Council moved to receive the Housing Needs report and to publish it on the website.

In Camera

Council proceeded to an In-Camera Council meeting for consideration of matters of the Community Charter related to Section 90 (1): (k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed revision of a municipal service that are at their preliminary stage and that in the view of the council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public.

Council recessed at 6:57 p.m. to move to in-camera.

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SD57 to hold in-person budget consultations in Robson Valley

By ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

The School District 57 board voted to hold in-person budget consultations in the Robson Valley and Mackenzie next spring during their November 12th board meeting.

The proposal to hold in-person consultations with rural areas was put forward by Rachael Weber, a trustee for the Mackenzie area. According to Weber, the board did not adequately consult rural communities during the budgeting process for the 2024/2025 school year.

As reported in The Goat at the time, the board had considered implementing cuts to rural schools – including the proposed elimination of the school counsellor position in Valemount, and the vice-principal in McBride – to resolve a roughly \$2M deficit in the 2024/2025 budget. The deficit was ultimately corrected without the elimination of these positions.

“Community consultation was not heard in these rural communities [on] the last budget,” Weber said. “The request came in loud and clear through many letters that we received, so I'd like to bring it to the board's attention that we need to listen to these communities.”

While the school district distributes an online survey about the budget as part of its consultation process, and allows for public comments at their board meetings in Prince George, these methods are not accessible enough to rural areas, Weber said.

“We know full well that community members cannot travel down from Mackenzie and Valemount/McBride,” she said. “I think we need to show that sign of respect and allow them the opportunity to voice their concerns within their local communities.”

Three trustees – Weber, Cory Antrim, and Robson Valley trustee Bob Thompson – voted in favour of Weber's amendment. Two trustees, Chair Craig Brennan and Vice-Chair Erica McLean, voted in opposition of the amendment. The remaining two trustees, Shar McCrory and Sarah Holland, abstained. The motion carried.

Brennan told The Goat he supports the amendment, but initially had misgivings that the School District could execute it.

“It's not the intention that I was against. It was just to make sure we could do what we say we're going to do. I feel that's very important,” Brennan said. “The trustees will be there... I like travelling to the outlying communities. As long as it can work for everybody else, we'll be happy.”

The Goat reached out to Thompson for comment, but did not receive a response by presstime.

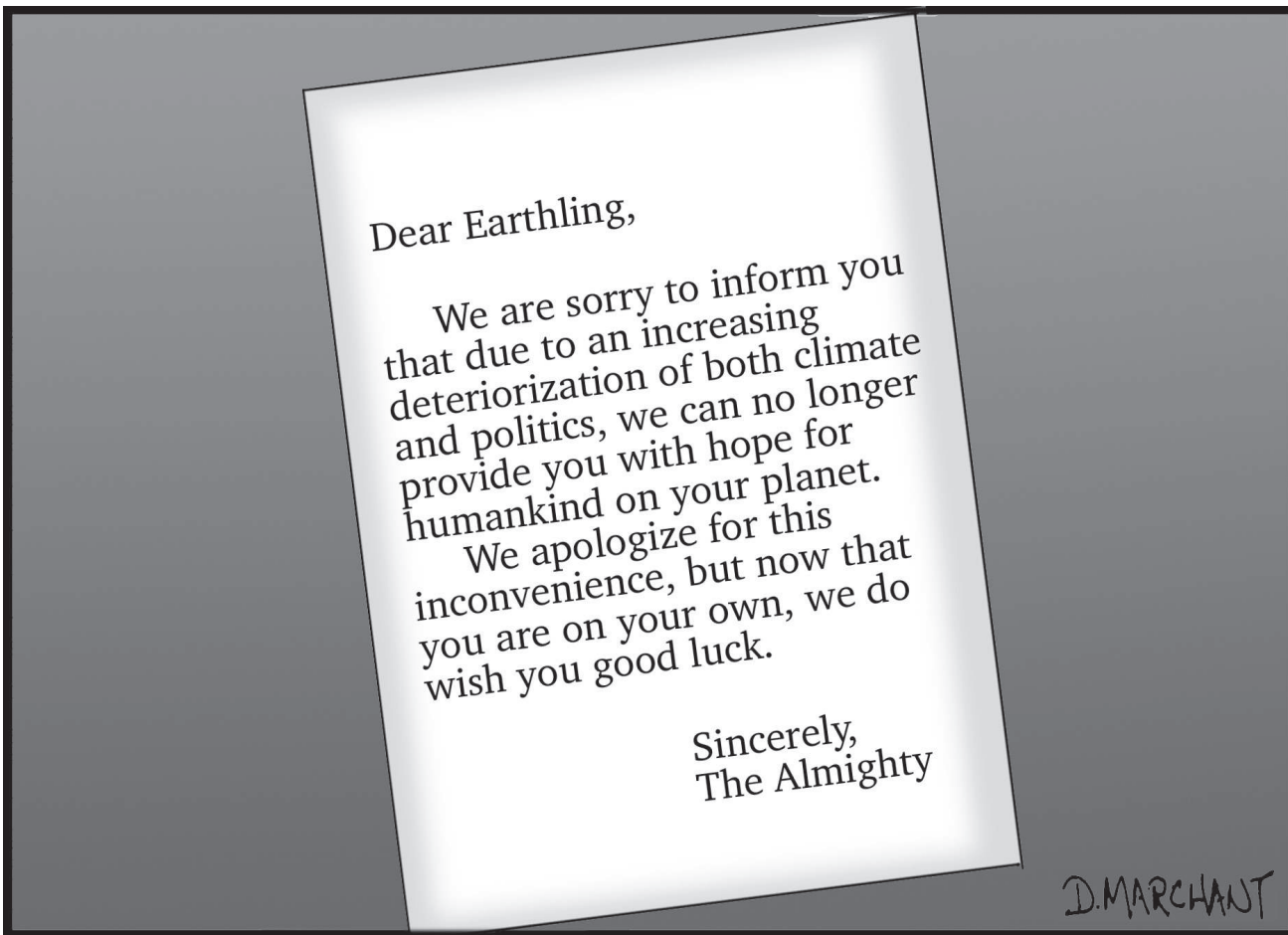
According to the budget timeline presented to the board for approval, the board will collect public feedback on the preliminary budget from April 9th through April 22nd, 2025. Brennan said it is unclear when the in-person consultations will take place, as staff still have to schedule them, but they will take place before the May 13th board meeting, when the board is expected to approve the 2025/2026 budget.

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4th Ave drainage concerns

Dear Editor,

Re drainage: Being as the Village of McBride has neglected dealing with the drainage issue on 4th Ave, I've thought of a partial solution when they get around plowing the snow.

Perhaps the snow can be plowed to the west side of the street where there is a ditch. At least then come spring the ditch can carry off the water from the snow melt as opposed to me pumping water off my lot.

Fred Vickery

Why Trump won the U.S. election

Dear Editor,

The United States election was won, because compared to Donald Trump, both Democrats and Republicans were perceived as being "weak."

There shouldn't be any doubt that many Republicans holding high positions in government would have wanted to become President of the United States, but were terrified to go against the will of Donald Trump for that position.

Donald has a way with words such as "Sleepy Joe" that tend to make his opponents appear "weak" and it doesn't matter to him whether the person is Democrat, or Republican, because his aim was and is, to win.

During his last presidency he fired every Republican that he viewed as being a threat to his power, and now that he won again, there isn't anything to stop him from going to even more lengths to dictate his own personal will on others.

Many conscientious Republicans see him as

being a threat to the Constitution and rightfully so.

He intends to release the people from prison that attacked the Capitol *at his request (after he lost in 2020) ... which means that he doesn't have one whit of respect for the court system that put those rebels in prison in the first place.

Donald believes in the death penalty ... but only for "your family and friends."

And we should keep in mind that the man who shot Donald Trump in the ear was not a Democrat. He was a disgruntled well-educated "registered" Republican.

Whether Donald will be able to make the United States over into a complete dictatorship is yet to be seen, but if he has his way, there won't "be" any other way.

June Vandermark



Global Thoughts

BY GWYNNE DYER



Gwynne Dyer is a Canadian-born independent journalist whose column is published in more than 175 papers in 45 countries.

Haiti Again

It's a sure sign that things are not going well in a country when foreign airlines get shot at on their way into or out of the main national airport.

That is what started happening in Haiti on Tuesday: three different American airliners were hit by bullets in rapid succession, and the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) halted all US flights to Haiti for at least the next month.

It's not the first time that Port-au-Prince's airport has been forced to close by criminal gangs. That's how the same gangs forced interim prime minister Ariel Henry to quit early this year. Henry had been serving in that role since the assassination of the last elected president, Jovenel Moïse, in 2021, but Jimmy Chérizier wanted him out.

Chérizier, an ex-policeman who now leads the 'G9' coalition of gangster groups, is known as 'Barbecue' because he likes to set his victims alight, but he is more than an ordinary thug. He and his backers are after political power, and their first step was to get rid of Henry.

The opportunity arose when Henry traveled to Guyana for a 'summit' meeting of Caribbean countries in February. Chérizier's gunmen just seized control of the airport and refused to let him come home.

Chérizier's street 'army' now controls 80%-85% of the capital, and 3,600 civilians have been killed by the rival gangs this year. But alongside the random murder and robbery there is real political purpose.

The rival political factions in Haiti managed to create a nine-person 'Transitional Presidential Council' (TPC) in April, and Henry officially resigned without ever setting foot back in the country. The airport re-opened, and in June the TPC appointed a new interim prime minister, Garry Cornille.

The US ambassador, Dennis Hankins, said "Each day is a new day, and this is a new day for Haiti". 'Barbecue' rejected the deal and warned the caretaker government "Brace yourselves." The war in the streets escalated.

Predictably, the transitional council is now falling apart. It has now dismissed him and appointed a new interim president, Alix Didier Fils-Aimé. He is the son of a well-known activist, but he has no following of his own.

Cornille insists that the TPC had no power to dismiss him, and 'Barbecue' has warned that he will escalate the gang violence against the interim government. As for the United States, which has been trying to build the TPC into something more coherent (despite three of its members now facing corruption charges), you can practically hear the despair between the lines.

"The United States views it as vital that (the

interim government) clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of the TPC vis-à-vis the prime minister and includes measures to hold one another accountable as appropriate while preventing further gridlock." In other words, shape up or ship out.

But the United States has not been willing to invest much faith or money into rebuilding the shattered Haitian state even under President Joe Biden, and it certainly won't do so under President Trump 2.0. The Haitians are almost entirely on their own, and their past does not inspire confidence.

It isn't the fault of anybody now alive, but they are all trapped in a low-level civil war that has been going on, sometimes open but usually submerged, since the earliest days of Haitian independence. It's between the mixed-race 'mulatto' people who had the education and the money and the black nine-tenths of the population who had neither.

When 'Barbecue' talks about leading a revolution (as he does), he is appealing for the support and loyalty of the nine-tenths. He may not mean it – he is primarily a gangster – but it is an appeal that still resonates with many people. After 200 years you mostly can't see the difference in people's faces, but you can certainly see it in people's lives.



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Valemount council: budget report, Resort Development Strategy, business recovery manager

By ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

Valemount Council reviewed the Village's quarterly budget report, discussed the Valemount Resort Development Strategy, and appointed a consultant to help with economic recovery from this summer's highway closures during their November 12th regular meeting.

Mayor Owen Torgerson called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

After adopting the minutes of the October 22nd regular council meeting, Council heard a delegation from the Valemount RCMP.

RCMP statistics

Council received a delegation from Sergeant Bob Dean and Corporal Nicholas Theoret, who presented data on how many criminal charges and traffic violations the Valemount detachment investigated from July through September.

According to Theoret, the RCMP only started sharing quarterly reports recently, after CAO Anne Yanciw was hired last December. The first two quarterly reports of the year were shared directly with Yanciw, rather than being presented to Council, Theoret said.

Yanciw was unavailable for comment on the quarterly reports.

The Goat requested a copy of quarterly reports from the past five years to contextualise the data presented at the Council meeting.

"I do not have access to quarterly reports going back to 2019 and obtaining them would require a full review of the files for each year," Theoret said.

Quarterly Report

Council moved to receive Village staff's latest quarterly report, covering July through September. The report provides an update on the Village's 2023-2027 strategic priorities: for example, staff are seeking grants to fund the construction of a groundwater well near Swift Creek. Additionally, the report includes statistics on grant management. The Village had 14 grant applications, totalling about \$565K, approved last quarter. Information about the Village's emergency management mechanisms is also in the report: the Village activated its Emergency Operations Centre twice, held two post-emergency debriefs, opened the cooling centre twice, had one emergency management working group meeting, and tested the emergency notification system, Voyent Alert!, one time during this quarter.

Council received the report without discussion.

Resort Development Strategy

Village staff are in the midst of drafting a Resort Development Strategy, a document outlining the Village's long-term vision for its tourism industry which must be submitted to the Ministry of Tourism in order to access funding from the Resort

Municipality Initiative. Staff submitted a report detailing the timeline for producing and submitting the strategy, starting with the first information report about the strategy at Council's October 8th meeting and ending with the submission date of December 15th.

The timeline includes a two-week period – October 30th to November 12th – during which the Village consulted the public about what should be included in the strategy. On October 30th, the Village held a meeting with business owners and residents to discuss the strategy. The Village also circulated a survey asking respondents to make suggestions on what could improve the current Resort Development Strategy, and which of the plan's three core values – accessibility, sustainability and Indigenous collaboration – should be prioritized.

Councillor Pete Pearson said he is worried that the time frame for drafting the strategy is tight.

"I'm hoping there's good input on the survey, because I would be hesitant to come up with a three-year strategy based on the meeting that we had. There wasn't enough meat on the bones to call it a roast," he said. "It's a tough process to put that together in such a short time frame."

Torgerson said he is also hopeful the survey yields helpful feedback. Council moved to receive the report for information.

Quarterly Budget Report

Staff provide reports on the Village's budget versus actual spending each quarter. According to the report, all revenues and expenses for the third quarter were within the budget.

There have been two changes to the budget. The cost of insurance premiums rose by about \$7,000 due to a reassessment of cybersecurity costs, a change which the third quarter report says will be reflected in the fourth quarter report. Additionally, a different line of the budget has been corrected: it read "Elections" but should have said "software for City Reporter implementation."

Recovery Manager appointment

The closures of Highway 16 and Highway 93 had a drastic impact on local businesses: in a survey of business owners distributed by the Village and Tourism Valemount, 70 per cent of respondents said their current financial supports are insufficient to tide them over until the return to normal operations. Village staff recommended Council approve of hiring a recovery manager who would collect more information about the economic impacts of the Jasper fire and identify ways to support local businesses. The \$56,500 contract will be paid for with funding from the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness.

CONT'D ON P7

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Make Sure You Receive Voyent Alert Notifications: Tips

The Village of Valemount uses the Voyent Alert app to broadcast notifications of interest to the community. During a test alert on November 1, 17% of the 672 subscribed recipients did not receive a notification. Here are a few actions you can take to make sure you are receiving notifications from the app:

1. Make sure you are registered with Voyent Alert. To confirm your registration or if you would like assistance with registration, please contact the Village Office.
2. Ensure that your app is receiving critical notifications. Find the Voyent Alert app in Settings, then go to Notifications and allow Critical Alerts.
3. If you are a voice call subscriber, make sure you add the Voyent Alert phone number (1-403-282-0818) to your contacts, and disable any robot call blocking for this number. This way you will not inadvertently block or screen the notification call.

The Village is considering what steps we can take to make this app more effective. This service is FREE, easy to use and anonymous. Please visit valemount.ca/services/emergency-management/ for more information.



Traffic Data Collection on Highway 5

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has retained the construction engineering company, McElhanney, to gather traffic data in the area sometime in November. They will be using automated cameras and radar equipment along the Highway 5 corridor.

Valemount Resort Development Strategy: Deadline for Submissions

The Village of Valemount is receiving project proposals for the 2025-2027 Resort Development Strategy (RDS). Visit website at valemount.ca for the Proponent Sheet and the Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI) Proposal Form to assist with the application process. Email proposal applications to intern@valemount.ca or bring applications to the village office.

Deadline to submit project proposals: November 24

Project proposals to be evaluated: November 28

Draft Resort Development Strategy presented to Council: December 10



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Valemount Council...cont from P6

Council approved staff to sign the contract. For more information about the recovery manager appointment, see P8.

Community Forest signatory appointment

Staff recommended that Council authorize Yanciw to act as a signatory on behalf of the Village for documents related to the Valemount Community Forest and Valemount Industrial Park. Yanciw sits on the Community Forest board as a non-voting representative of the Village.

According to the staff report, these two corporations often have to submit signed documents to the BC Corporate Registry Services, and legal counsel advised staff to appoint an authorized signatory for this reason.

Council approved the request.

2025 Council schedule

The Community Charter requires municipal councils to have a publicly-available schedule of council meetings, and give notice that the schedule is available at least once a year. As such, staff presented a schedule for Council's meetings in 2025.

In accordance with the Village's Council Procedure Bylaw, meetings are scheduled on the second and fourth Tuesday of nearly every month. Meetings have not been scheduled for the fourth Tuesday in July and August, as has been the case in previous years. There will be no meeting on the fourth Tuesday of September, when the Union of BC Municipalities conference takes place. Finally, there will be no meeting on the fourth Tuesday of December as the Village office will be closed for Christmas break.

Mulyk moved to amend the schedule to remove the May 13th meeting, as the North Central Local Government Association will hold its Annual General Meeting from May 12th through May 15th.

Council approved the amended schedule.

Clean Air Task Force appointment

The Clean Air Task Force, a committee made up of Village staff, Councillors, and community representatives to improve Valemount's air quality, recommended that Council appoint Joseph Nusse for a one-year term on the committee starting January 1st, 2025.

Additionally, the committee recommended amending its Terms of Reference to meet every other month, rather than on a quarterly basis, starting in January 2025.

Council approved both recommendations.

Fees and Charges Bylaw amendments

Council gave third reading to the Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw, which increases licensing fees for short-term vacation rentals from \$100 to \$150, and home business licensing fees from \$25 to \$50. The amendment also adds a clause allowing the Village to provide facilities and equipment for free during emergencies.

Request for Dogwood Street upgrades

Council received a letter from local Junior Osadchuk, who wrote to suggest considering upgrades to Dogwood Street during the budgeting process for 2025. Osadchuk asked that the Village consider sealcoating or paving the street to reduce the amount of dust caused by traffic, and installing street lighting to improve visibility.

Councillor Donnie MacLean said she was unable to access a digital agenda during the meeting, so she could not see Osadchuk's letter and asked for details on what the letter included.

"I think we'll bring that up during our budget discussions when we're considering the 2025 budget," Torgerson said. "And Mr. Osadchuk, thank you for including your letter in this agenda."

MacLean moved to discuss the requested upgrades during the budgeting process. Council approved MacLean's motion.

BC Hydro vegetation

BC Hydro's Community Relations Manager for the Southern Interior, Dag Sharman, wrote a letter to Council about the company's Community ReGreening Program. The program provides up to \$10,000 in funding to municipal governments and First Nations for the planting of trees and other vegetation.

"Thank you to Mr. Sharman for forwarding that opportunity," Torgerson said. "Personally, I think we need to be doing more vegetation management on Whiskeyfill Road, on that main distribution line coming into Valemount, versus offering us trees to take care of in our own budget."

Torgerson suggested directing staff to produce a report on Village-managed properties with coniferous and low-lying shrubs, to see if they could benefit from the ReGreening Program.

Mulyk moved to recommend the report. Council approved his motion.

Regional District director appointments

The Village of Valemount may appoint one director to the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George board, along with one alternate director who can attend in the director's absence. The next term for directors begins on November 21st, so the Regional District requested for municipalities to confirm their directors and alternate directors by November 14th.

Council moved to appoint Torgerson as the director, and Mulyk as the alternate director.

Community Consultation Committee appointments

The Regional District has two Community Consultation Committees in which the Village of Valemount can participate: the Canoe Valley Recreation Centre committee and the Valemount and District Fire and Rescue committee. These committees provide a way for residents to give feedback on local services administered by the Regional District.

In order to have committees appointed before budget consultations begin on January 25th, the Regional District requested that Council appoint Village representatives to these committees.

Council appointed Pearson to the Canoe Valley Recreation Centre committee, and Blanchette to the Valemount and District Fire and Rescue committee. Pearson and Blanchette were both previously appointed to these roles last year.

VARDA appointment

The Valemount and Area Recreation Development Association (VARDA) board of directors requires one representative from the Village. Torgerson was the representative for the 2023/2024 season.

Council moved to appoint Torgerson as a Village representative to the VARDA board for the 2024/2025 season.

Public Comments

Osadchuk, the author of the letter requesting upgrades to Dogwood Street, asked if every councillor received the letter. Torgerson said the letter was included in their reading file, attached to the meeting agenda.

Osadchuk asked what the Strategies North consultant's responsibilities are. "They'll measure the need required for recovery, develop a recovery plan, implement the recovery plan, they'll measure afterwards, and then they'll report out," Yanciw said.

Osadchuk asked if the consultant will advocate for local businesses to receive financial support from the government. Yanciw said that may be one of their recommendations.

"As I mentioned before, there is not a current program in either B.C. or Alberta that we check a box for," Torgerson said. "What Strategies North is going to assist us with, and assist Valemount businesses [with]... is to get a real concrete assessment of what that looks like for recovery, and make recommendations to us, the province of Alberta, the province of B.C., and to the federal government."

Torgerson thanked Osadchuk for his comments.

In-Camera

Torgerson adjourned the open session of Council at 7:56 p.m. Council moved to an in-camera meeting for the consideration of one item that falls under Section 90 (1)(b) and (k) of the Community Charter to discuss matters related to:

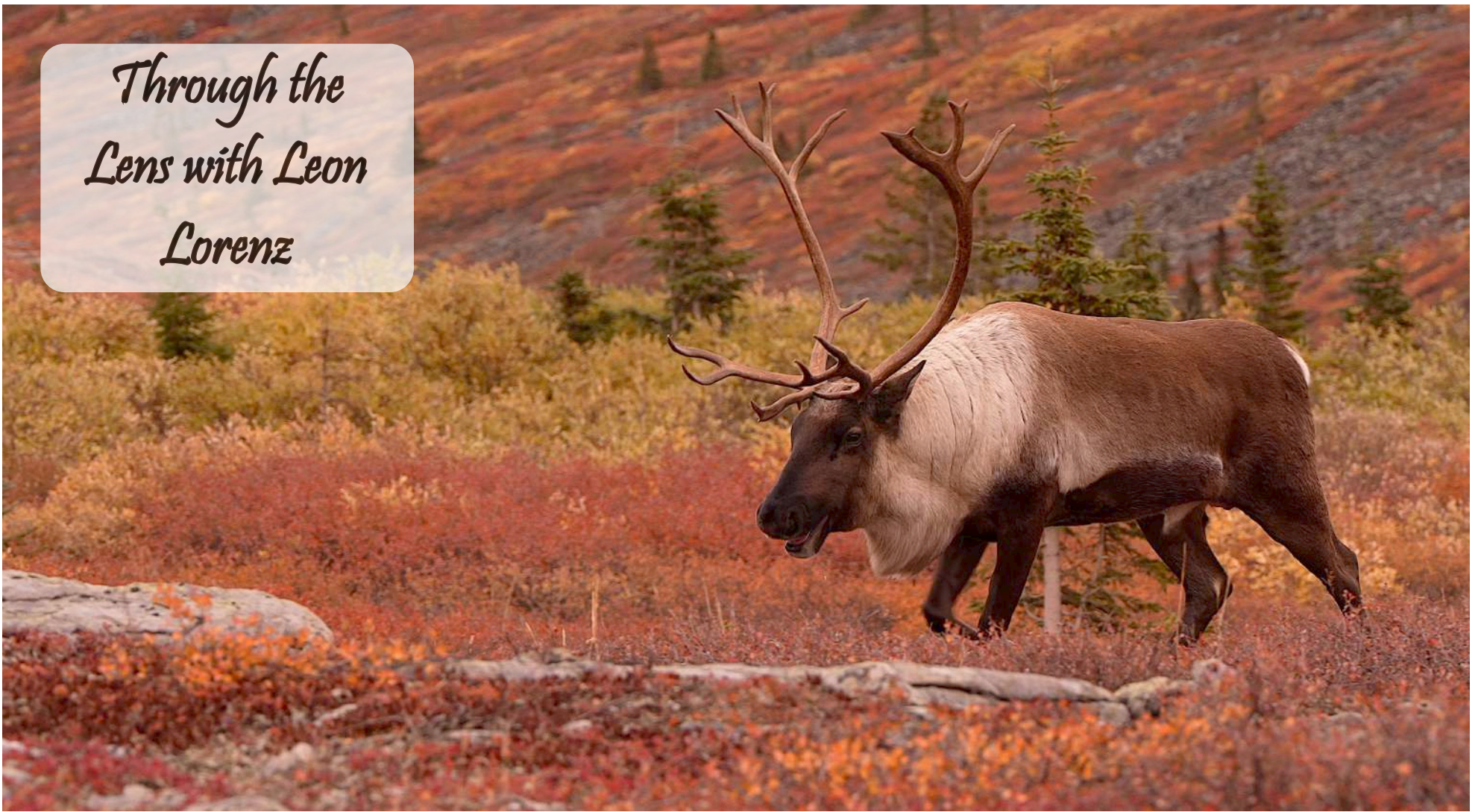
(b) personal information about an identifiable individual who is being considered for a municipal award or honour, or who has offered to provide a gift to the municipality on condition of anonymity; and,

(k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of a municipal service that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public.



Valemount Council will be discussing the possibility of funding upgrades to Dogwood Street during the 2025 budget process after resident Junior Osadchuk, pictured above, wrote a letter outlining his concerns on visibility issues and dust in the road. /ABIGAIL POPPLE

Through the Lens with Leon Lorenz



This young woodland caribou still has a number of years to go before it will become a serious contender to battle against 2 much larger bulls during the rutting season where I was filming in the Muskwa-Kechika area. I was positioned comfortably in front of a large boulder to get out of the strong wind and to glass the surrounding countryside for signs of life when I spotted a distant caribou coming my way. Fortunately it didn't see or smell me and passed by within 35 yards which enabled me to capture some unique close footage and the wind blowing its mane made it extra special. /LEON LORENZ

Valemount awards \$56,500 contract for recovery management

BY ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

Valemount Council approved a \$56,500 contract with Kamloops-based consultancy firm Strategies North at their November 12th meeting. The firm will provide a consultant for the next six months to develop a business recovery plan in the wake of the three-week-long closures of Highway 16 and Highway 93 during the Jasper wildfire.

The position is being funded with money from the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, according to the staff report presented to Council last week. CAO Anne Yanciw was not available to comment on how or when this funding was acquired by presstime.

Village staff contacted four companies which could provide these services. Strategies North was the only company that submitted a proposal. Yanciw told Council the other three companies had too much work to take on Valemount as a client.

The contract with Strategies North would cost \$56,500 for six months of services, said Yanciw.

Pearson said he's glad the position is funded by money from the Province, rather than the Village budget.

"A lot of businesses could use a share of that \$56,000, versus having someone come in and tell them how to get [support]," he added.

Torgerson said it has been difficult to determine how to access funding from provincial governments, since the highway closure was caused by a disaster in Alberta.

"We'd never qualify for any current programming, and businesses don't qualify for any current programming,"

he said, adding that it is unclear whether the Alberta or B.C. government would fund Valemount recovery efforts. "Hopefully through Strategies North, we can find some good out-of-the-box thoughts to work with the feds, the province of Alberta, and the province of B.C."

Yanciw said one senior consultant at Strategies North is a registered federal lobbyist, which made the company an attractive option for a contract.

"They have experience in being able to get some results out of other levels of government, and that experience is what we're looking for, as opposed to advice to our local businesses," she said.

According to the federal registry of lobbyists, Strategies North has lobbied for clients such as the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council and Takla Nation.

Councillor Hollie Blanchette asked if there is a set timeline for when the recovery manager would begin their position.

"If all the stars align, we may be able to have a contract in place by the end of this week," Yanciw said. "At this point in time, we've been approved for six months... if we can get it in place by the end of this week, that would take us to the middle of May."

Councillor Hugo Mulyk says he thinks the recovery manager will be useful.

"I can't wait to get this rolling and see what kind of outcomes they can come up with for us," he said.

Council moved to approve the \$56,500 contract.



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The Tourism Valemount Society's Annual General Meeting will be held at the VARDA office located at **1020 Commercial Drive** at 10:00 a.m. on **November 26th, 2024.**

Those interested in attending please RSVP Executive Director, Marcie Down by **November 22nd** at execdirector@visitvalemount.ca.

If you are interested in joining our board of directors for November 2024 - November 2025, or if you have any questions please contact Marcie Down at **250-566-3335** or email execdirector@visitvalemount.ca.

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BC Vegetable Marketing Commission consulting with northern producers

By ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

The BC Vegetable Marketing Commission (BCVMC) is in the midst of modifying its general orders – the legal framework which ensures food safety, market regulation, and safe transportation in the vegetable production industry – after consulting with northern producers over the summer.

The consultations follow an attempt in early 2024 to expand the general orders to apply to the northern half of the province, which has historically been exempt from the Commission's regulations. The orders require producers who sell over 1,000 pounds of regulated produce, such as cabbage, cucumbers and beans, to obtain licences for an annual fee ranging from \$250 to \$50K depending on the amount of produce they sell.

The expansion sparked controversy among northern producers, who told The Goat they were not consulted before the expansion and were concerned that the licensing fees may pose a significant financial burden on small producers. In May, the Commission announced it would delay the implementation of the expanded orders until January 1st, 2026.

"This will give the Commission time to consult with vegetable producers, producer organizations, and other industry partners regarding the nature and extent of vegetable production in the north and develop a common-sense approach to the Commission's involvement," reads the announcement about the delay.

Shortly afterwards, the Commission hired Jerome Lengkeek as its new Senior Policy and Market Analyst. In an interview with The Goat, Lengkeek said he spent the month of August touring the north, speaking to producers, farmers' market associations, and representatives of the Fraser-Fort George and Bulkley-Nechako regional districts.

The information he gathered will inform the Commission's new implementation plan for the expanded general orders.

"I have a much better feel now for what the concerns are," Lengkeek said. "The next step on this would be to have an additional round of engagement with farmers in the north to present an implementation plan that has been modified based on their concerns, and get their feedback on that before we finalize an [implementation] approach."

The modified plan for implementing the general orders will likely be released around mid-2025, according to Lengkeek. It will be posted on the Commission's website, bcveg.com, and Lengkeek says he will contact regional districts, farmers' institutes, and farmers' market associations to inform them once the plan is ready for public feedback.

Commission addressing concerns over fees, market regulation

While the plan is far from being set in stone, Lengkeek has identified four major concerns that he hopes to resolve: the lack of consultation during the first attempt to expand the general orders, the cost of licensing fees and levies, misgivings that being regulated by the Commission will not provide any benefits to producers, and a lack of input into the Commission's decision making processes.

The Commission has been making an effort to consult with producers since deciding to delay the expansion of the general orders in May, according to Lengkeek. To make sure northern producers are included in future decision making, the Commission may create an advisory panel of northern producers and local government representatives. The Commission already has similar advisory groups for storage crop producers and greenhouse producers, Lengkeek added.

As for concerns about licensing fees, Lengkeek says the Commission may implement lower fees for smaller producers. The Commission also collects levies ranging from a few cents to several dollars per tonne of produce, which Lengkeek says may be reduced or eliminated for small producers. Finally, while larger producers are required to sell their product through a marketing agency – groups of licensed producers that allows the Commission to coordinate the marketing of vegetables – the Commission may not require small producers in the north to join a marketing agency.

"We hope to have a simplified process for applying for a producer licence for smaller producers so there's less of a burden with reporting information," Lengkeek added.

Concerns about fees are top of mind for local farmers. Prince George-based vegetable farmer Dean Dingwall said he was alarmed by the expansion of the general orders, since fees would apply to anyone who produces over a tonne of vegetables – a threshold he feels is too low. Dingwall joined the Prince George-McBride Farmers' Institute task force on the Commission's general orders to advocate for fee exemptions for smaller farmers.

"It was a bit of a pleasant surprise," Dingwall said about his discussion with Lengkeek. "Everything that we had tried to do prior to that fell on deaf ears."

Now, Dingwall is cautiously optimistic that the Commission will take northern producers' feedback into account. He hopes the Commission will continue consulting with producers before the general orders are expanded in 2026.

"They did give us hope that we could have some input, revisit the threshold, and have a say in helping them form policy that affects us," Dingwall said. "The general consensus among task force members was that it was a good start, and at least gives us hope on the possibility of changing the way they're going to push this through."

However, some producers worry being regulated by the Commission will create a logistical headache with no benefit to northern producers. Field crop producer Philip Myatovic expressed concern that the Commission may neglect to regulate northern markets, allowing large southern producers to out-compete smaller local operations at farmers' markets and in stores.

"I can't see any benefit right off the bat, but it will cost us more to produce because of their licensing and distribution system," Myatovic said.

Lengkeek said he has heard concerns from northern producers that the Commission does not adequately regulate northern markets – some producers claimed that a southern producer violated Commission regulations by selling excess product at a Prince George farmers' market earlier this year. According to Lengkeek, the Commission investigated the claims and did not find any activity that violated

marketing regulations, but he hopes the Commission will have less difficulty regulating northern markets after expanding the general orders.

"By extending the area of applicability of our regulations to the northern half of the province, we would hopefully be able to prevent this from happening already for the next growing season," Lengkeek said.

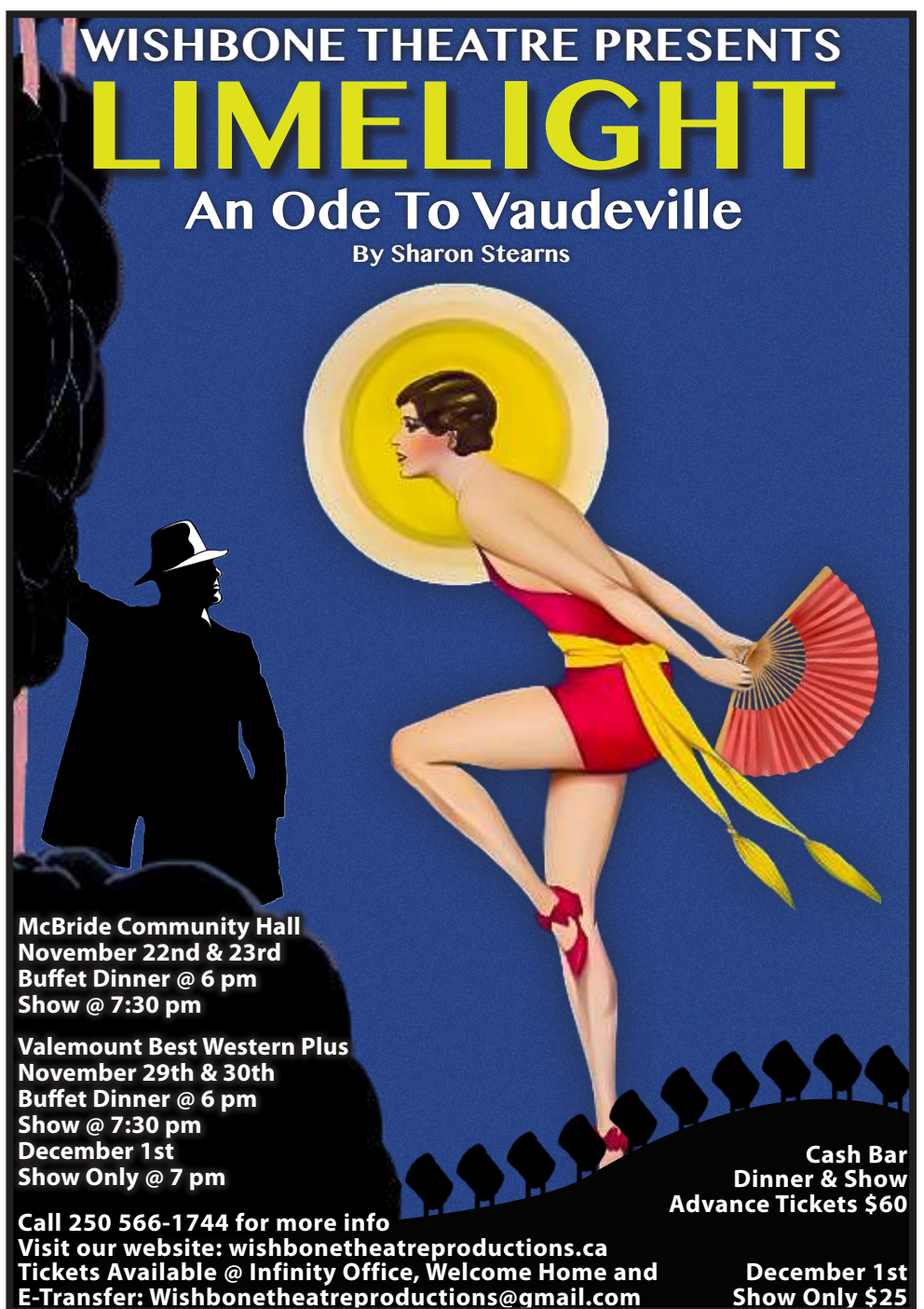
Additionally, Lengkeek stressed that the vast majority of northern producers will not be subject to the general orders even after they are expanded – only 20 crops, including storage crops like beets, greenhouse crops like tomatoes, and processing crops like broccoli, are regulated by the Commission, most of which are not produced in the north.

"That's not to say that there isn't a significant agriculture industry in the north, it's just that it's focused in areas that are not under our regulation," Lengkeek said. "I can say with certainty that less than a dozen farms would fall fully under our regulations, and probably far less than a dozen."

Nearly every farmer Lengkeek spoke to this summer does not produce more than a tonne of regulated crops, meaning they would not be subject to regulations, he added.

Lengkeek says he will continue to engage with northern producers over the next year.

"The purpose of the meetings with farmers and members of local government who had concerns about the regulations was to hear more from them directly and in-person what their concerns were, and reassure them that we wanted to respond to those concerns and look at whether we might be able to make some amendments to the regulations," Lengkeek said. "And I felt like we succeeded in that."



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A great Grey Owl, presiding nonchalantly over Cranberry Marsh on a cloudy afternoon, graciously posed for his portrait on a perch above the boardwalk. / RACHEL FRASER

Parks Canada preparing Jasper campgrounds for next summer

BY PETER SHOKEIR, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Jasper National Park is planning to have camping availability next summer as Parks Canada works to restore the wildfire-damaged sites.

Employment Minister Randy Boissonnault, who is also ministerial lead to Jasper, announced at a Thursday (Nov. 15) event most Jasper frontcountry campsites and all backcountry campsites will be open in 2025.

“These grounds host thousands of people, and that will bring much-needed income into the town and, quite frankly, activity to the town again,” Boissonnault said. “And just like we’re prepared to work with Parks Canada and the town to fight forest fires, we’re just as prepared, committed and ready to rebuild and reopen.”

Major frontcountry campgrounds reopening include Whistlers, Miette and several self-registration sites. Wapiti Campground will operate at reduced capacity, while Wabasso and Whirlpool group campgrounds will remain closed for ongoing restoration.

Backcountry camping will be available for booking via the Parks Canada reservation system. Some trailheads, such as Astoria and Wabasso Lake, remain under review for safety assessments.

Jasper National Park is Canada’s second most visited national park, receiving more than 2.4 million visitors annually.

Since last summer’s wildfire, Parks Canada has been steadily reopening areas of the park and will continue to open more when safe to do so. An interactive map is available for real-time updates on open facilities and sites.

Dylan Verbruggen, acting asset manager for Jasper National Park, said a lot of FireSmart work had been done at Whistlers Campground, which helped the site avoid more serious wildfire damage.

“It’s gonna be a little different,” Verbruggen said. “We won’t have that infrastructure of the trees around anymore. In some cases, we are going to try to leave as much as we can and still give some privacy to what people look for when they come.”

For Whistlers alone, Parks Canada will need to replace damaged or destroyed oTENTiks, which are a cross between a tent and an A-frame cabin. It will also remove thousands of damaged trees and replace six garbage cans, 400 picnic tables, 250 campground signs and 84 highway signs.

Although work will slow down in the winter, Verbruggen noted the snow would provide coverage that would limit the damage to the ground.

“The amount of effort that’s been put in is unreal,” he said. “We have teams reaching out across Parks Canada and other groups to help us out. We’ve beefed up our internal trails team and maintenance teams almost to two times what they are.”

Reservations will be available starting in January. Visitors are asked to reserve their campsite ahead of time and plan their trip in advance.

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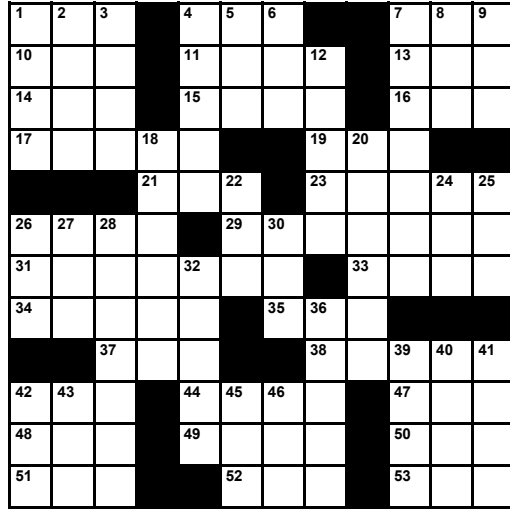
PUZZLES



CROSSWORD

Answers on P13

- Across**
- "Awesome!"
 - Owns
 - Weep
 - Time to prepare
 - Like some cappuccino drinks
 - Cast
 - Miles __ gallon
 - Close by
 - Family-run lodge, perhaps
 - Radial pattern
 - Slippery one
 - Pay for
 - Buffet dish
 - Computer programs, for short
 - New York's time zone
 - Folks
 - Brain flash
 - Flat surface
 - Ms Leghorn
 - "__ show time!"
 - Getting on
 - Raises
 - Spinning toys
 - Standard
 - Go to, as a doctor
- Down**
- "You betcha!"
 - Ace's value, at times
 - Stopping point
 - Symbol of discipline
 - Square on a calendar
 - Cried
 - In excess of
 - "__ number one!"
 - Believer in Vishnu
 - Royal flush high card
 - The deep blue __
 - How gazpacho is served
 - Try to get a seat
 - Japanese money
 - Evening gown
 - Roll-book notation
 - Enjoying a steak
 - The end is not __
 - Continue
 - Genetic code
 - Google Play purchase
 - Confidant
 - Exalted
 - Contents of a BBQ pit, often



- Birds' homes
- Became more relaxed
- Tune player
- Beloved family member
- Western author Zane
- Operate
- Ballpoint, e.g.
- We've got it
- Country club figure



BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

Opening the Door to Sagittarius Season

What makes the world beautiful to you? It's all about what you let in and what you keep out. Sagittarius season comes a'knocking, offering a fresh array of adventures, delights, friendships and opportunities. It's unwise to throw the door open wide, but not as dangerous as leaving it locked. How about we go slow -- just open it a crack? The crack will be enough to let in some fresh light and air. The slightest space gives you a view of your options.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Sailing into adventure is a little scary, but you do it anyway because it makes your life bigger. In a big life, there's plenty of room to dance. This week, you'll make room for the fear and push forward because the end goal is for your life to feel spacious enough that you can stretch, leap and run the distance.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Sometimes it feels like the odds are stacked against you, and it's too much of a stretch to believe this is the best of all possible worlds, created to support you. What happens if you see the external factors as impartial? What if reality is your blank page and you can take it in any direction? Thought experiments invite magic to your scene.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). There is no shame in having feelings, as they can't be helped. You need tenderness, especially in your self-regard. Take the pressure off yourself in any way you can. The process of justifying or sorting through emotions may be unnecessary. They often sort themselves. Back off and prepare to be delighted by what happens.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You'll move around a problem to get new perspective. Be proud of your flexibility of mind. Trying on different points of view is an advanced-level course in detachment. You don't identify with every aspect of yourself as though it were a fixed trait. You've lived on the planet awhile, but you can still be anyone you want to be.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). It doesn't always go to plan, especially when there is no plan, but you don't always need one. You've grown beautifully through many cycles just like this one, so instead of a plan, it's enough to have an intention to hope, move and trust yourself. You're kind, you're smart, and you care. Much is blossoming just ahead.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Service is your invitation to connect. You don't mind giving freely because it grants you the opportunity to learn about people, and in return, you gain trust -- an invaluable currency. This week, you'll come to understand the uniqueness of your contributions and how your efforts lift and help others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Your heart carries a question. The week unfolds with every intention of answering it, though you should

be warned that answers can come in many forms, including but not limited to: subtlety, poetry, abstraction and the endlessly unsatisfying form of more questions. Even so, you will be made richer for the asking.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). This week, you'll play many roles. Sometimes you're the critic, and sometimes you're the cheerleader. Go soft as the critic and hard as the cheerleader. Most days, you'll be both, seeing the ways things need to change for the goal to be possible. Ultimately, you're the problem-solver who will make this happen.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Maybe stop judging yourself, only because it's a needless step in your process you can afford to drop. Then you'll see what others do when they observe your imperfect, heartfelt and ultimately effective efforts: You're resilient, you have a sense of humor, and you'll turn anything that happens into an opportunity.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You are nothing if not aware, and vividly so. There are things on your radar that you simply can't miss -- people you want to show up for, firsts, big steps, chunks of hard work, small events that feel momentous. It's a little like a broadcast that goes live. Only those who stop and tune in will get the show, and you'll be among them.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You wrote the chapter, and you can bring it to a close any time you're ready. Whether anyone helps you wrap it up doesn't matter. Many chapters don't, and that's OK, too. You've the fortitude for a cliff-hanger. Note that closure is an individual decision, not a group effort. It's finished for you when you say it's finished.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). When it comes to meeting your own needs, knowing yourself well is half the battle. And if your guesses are wrong or your fixes don't fix it, that's part of the process. Your intention is true and your heart is open to possibility, so you can't go wrong. Also, the best inventions are accidents that happen on the way to some other aim entirely.

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS: Welcome to your elevator year. You'll push the buttons that lift all, including your moods, career, social life and beyond. With equal parts charm, hard work and the demonstration of loyalty, you attract fascinating, generous people who give you rare opportunities. Other highlights: premium education, a profitable property deal, and the means to fix something for your loved ones they couldn't solve without you. This is healed karma. Also, there will be a party celebrating the love in your life.

		5			7			
	1		5		4			8
3			2	8		5	7	9
						2	8	4
4								6
2	8	3						
1	7	4		5	9			3
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SUDOKU

Answers on P13

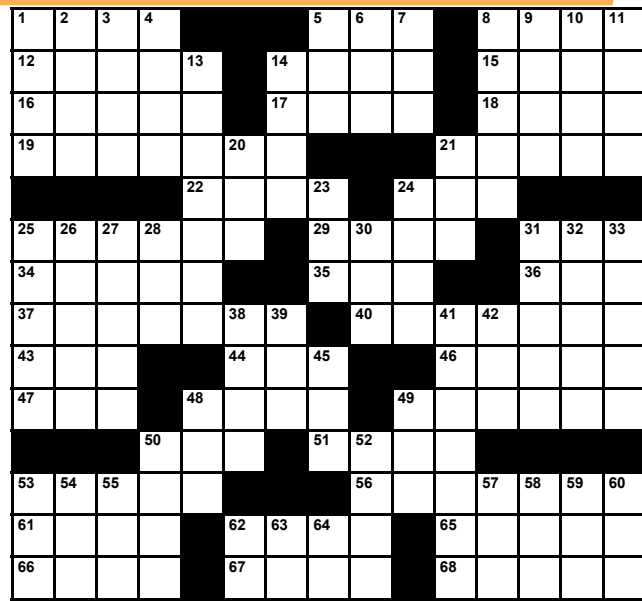
HOW TO PLAY
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

Each 3x3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. Remember. You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column or 3x3 box.

The Toughie

Answers on P13

- Across**
- Cinderella's soiree
 - Handheld
 - Concerning
 - Clamorous
 - Volcanic flow
 - Insulting innuendo
 - Salsa singer Cruz
 - Time __ half
 - Speck
 - Tulip-exporting city
 - Afghanistan capital
 - Sorority letters
 - Short time, for short
 - Lovely Loren
 - One logging in
 - "Cool" dude
 - Like some vbs.
 - Kook
 - Japanese sash
 - FedEx's headquarters
 - Italian city
 - Blue grass
 - Remain unused
 - Swelter
 - ID theft data, perhaps
 - African antelope
 - Bryologists' study
 - Hit on the head
 - TV actor, Scott
 - Port on the Gulf of Guinea
 - City near Buenos Aires
 - "All I wanna do" singer
 - Single component
 - Coins used in Paris and Madrid
 - Radio feature
- Down**
- Fruit weight in EU
 - Olympic logo shapes
 - Goes down
 - Creature on Michigan's state flag
 - Penn name
 - Mozart predecessor
 - Field of study
 - "Copacabana" showgirl
 - Lion's den
 - Cooking vessel
 - Commonly rented item
 - Car club
 - From China or India
 - Neatnik's opposite
 - 1984 Peace Nobel
 - Talk-based
 - N. Carolina capital
 - Priest
 - Expected time to be here
 - White wine aperitif
 - Poet's orb
 - Physical prefix
 - Fools
 - Sugary cookie snacks



- Press handler
- Cool, once
- Santa Fe or Tucson, in brief
- Stimulant ingredients
- Bring down
- Hair colorings
- "The rest __ to you"
- Rock singer Vicious
- State ranger
- One of the Cyclades
- It has a certain ring to it
- Flattens
- Italian for mine
- January 1 events
- Choir part
- Screens for bulletin boards
- Singer India.
- Bearded animal
- Hall of Fame shortstop Aparicio
- "Rule, Britannia" conductor
- Roman robe
- Org.
- Arthur Godfrey played it
- Zip
- Breed

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Community Events

Send us your event to ads@goatnewsmedia.com or call 250-566-4606. Use 40 WORDS or less and we will publish it FREE up to a month before

Family & Youth Ongoing family & youth

Family Place Drop In Program - Valemount & McBride

If you have questions, are looking for parenting resources, or just need to chat, you can join us in person 9am-noon every Monday in McBride or Friday in Valemount. Our weekly targeted programming is a great way for kids ages 0-6 (with their caregivers) to play, connect, explore, and learn!

McBride on Mondays

November 25 – Cooking with Tots-Stone Soup! (Lipton Chicken Noodle)

Valemount on Fridays

November 22 – Paint the Town Purple Activities for 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence at 1444 5th Avenue
November 29 – Baking and Decorating Fall Cookies at 1444 5th Avenue.

Dungeons & Dragons - McBride Library

For ages 12-18, the classic fantasy storytelling game. Join us on Tuesdays from 3.30-5.00pm at the McBride Library. Bring D&D dice if you have them!

Sunshine Stories - McBride Library

10:30-11am. An early literacy program for children ages 0-5 and caregivers. Songs, rhymes, stories and fun! In partnership with Decoda Literacy. Runs each Thursday until September 5th!

Board Teens - McBride Library

Board Teens is a new program aimed at teens (ages 12-18), who are invited to come play some of the library's many board games every Thursday from 3-5pm. Have a favourite game you like to play? Bring it with you!

Pancake Breakfast - Valemount

Pancake breakfast at the Valemount Legion Sundays 8 to 10:30 am. By donation!.

Senior/Adult

Personal Tech Help - Valemount

Hosted by the Learning Centre Need help with your ipad, tablet, phone or computer? Schedule your one-on-one appointment 250-566-4601 or email learn@valemountlearningcentre.org

Crash course: astronomy - Valemount

Wednesday evenings at 7pm. Starts October 16th Our big telescope will be used when conditions allow. Register by calling 250-566-4367, drop by the Valemount Public Library, or email library@valemount.ca

Valemount Seed Library

Mon- Thurs is available in our lobby during business hours at RVCS Valemount (99 Gorse St). Office hours: Monday 10am-6pm and Tuesday to Thursday 8am-4pm. Come take free seeds to grow in your garden this summer. By saving seeds, we can maintain genetic diversity, adapt to changing environmental conditions, and save money by not having to purchase new seeds every year. For more information call 1-844-324-2004 or email: events@rvcsbc.org.

Free Food Pantry - McBride

Mon-Thurs McBride RVCS (942 3rd Ave) has a FREE FOOD PANTRY that's available to all! Emergency top-up food is accessible to our clients, and anyone who walks through the door. We share and accept donated foods that are safe and fresh for use, this project is made possible thanks to grant funding from United Way of BC, and the residents of the Robson Valley! Contact RVCS at 1-844-324-2004 or email foodsecurity@rvcsbc.org. The local Food Bank is also available: 250-569-3186.

Free Food Farm Stand and Pantry -Valemount

Open Mon- Fri, available for anyone who would like some free, fresh produce. We accept donations of unprocessed fruits and veggies also. The stand is accessible in the front lobby at RVCS Valemount (99 Gorse St) and is available to everyone- just help yourself! Emergency top-up food is accessible to our clients and anyone who walks through the door. This initiative is supported by one-time grant funding through United Way BC. For more information call 1-844-324-2004 or email: events@rvcsbc.org.

Ongoing adult/all-age

Old time Music & Dancing -Valemount

WED Oldtimers band and music night at the Golden Years Lodge in Valemount 7pm. All welcome! Play music, listen or dance.

Coffee House - Valemount

Free Drop-In/Coffee House at the Golden Years Lodge the 1st & 3rd Thursdays of the month 10 am -2 pm. It's open to everyone regardless of your age. If you currently have mobility issues, call CARE-A-VAN 778-915-8550 for a ride in the accessibility bus.

ASL Sign Language Club - McBride

Tuesday's 3:00-3:30 Basics & 3:30-4:30 Beyond Basics @ the McBride E-Free Church. Great for families, friends and cognitive brain stimulation. Contact Lonnie 250-569-7657

Fibre Artists - McBride

On Wednesdays the McBride Library host the Fibre Artists' group 10am-12pm: come knit, sew or crochet with us! Beginners welcome. Online option available for anyone who would

like to join us that way – call the library for info on 250 569 2411.

Book Clubs for Adults - McBride

The McBride Library holds two monthly book discussion clubs for adults, on Thursday afternoons at 1.30pm. Call for details: 250 569 2411.

Crafty Stitchers - Valemount

Sundays 1-3 pm Crafty Stitchers meet downstairs at the Valemount Public Library, all welcome! Call 250-566-4367.

Tuesday Night Jam - McBride

Now playing in the CN Station Lobby, 6:15-8:30pm. It is an open jam; musicians, singers, and onlookers welcome. For more information call David at (250) 569-2569.

German Conversation Club - McBride

Join us on Wednesday 11:30 - 1:00 at the McBride Library for a fun German language conversational class with Lilly. All levels and abilities welcome, from beginners to advanced. For further details, call the library on 250 569 2411.

McBride Library Writing Group

Our Writing Group for adults meets every Friday afternoon 1:30-3pm. We tend to chat for the first 30 minutes about what we are working on, then we sit silently for an hour to write. Our writers are working on a range of things – novels, memoirs, poems, short stories, dissertations. Writing something? Come join us!

This Month

Mustang Girls Volleyball Fundraiser

Fri Nov 22, Help send the girls Volleyball team to Provincials. Come meet the team and enjoy treats during the Bung Bung show & shine and areal event. Food service begins at 5:00 p.m. By donation.

Annual Bung Bung Vintage Ride- McBride

Nov 22 & 23
Friday - Mixer @ The Elks Hall 6pm-1am \$20 per person
Friday - Show & Shine in front of the Elks starts at 6pm
Friday - Freestyle X-Games Snowmobile Aerial Show 7pm
Sat - Bung Bung ride to Lucille Cabin starts @ 10am

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

Nov 25-Dec 10th Our Anti-Violence Team will be acknowledging the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. An annual international campaign that begins on November 25th, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women,

and goes until December 10th, Human Rights Day. Please watch our social media platforms Facebook, Instagram and posters in community starting November 25th for ways you too can participate!

Table Talk - McBride

THUR Nov 28th from 1pm-3:30pm Join us for Table Talk to journal about a given topic and then share if you desire and discuss at the RVCS office in McBride, 942 3rd Ave. No registration required, for more information call 250-569-2266 or email: events@rvcsbc.org. This program is brought to you by the McBride Adult Literacy Program

Christmas Craft Fair - Valemount Legion

Nov 30 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. @ the Legion, 970 Main St. Santa will be there 11-1.

Next Month(s)

Winter Craft Fair - McBride

Sunday Dec 1, 2024 at the Robson Valley Community Centre 12 - 4. Hosted by McBride Secondary PAC, girls volleyball and boys basketball.

Financial Empowerment and Banking Basics - Valemount

TUE Dec 3rd join RVCS and Kristine Bricker from CIBC for a workshop, taking place at 11am-12pm at 1444 5th Avenue. This event is being held in recognition of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Financial empowerment is an important tool in breaking cycles of abuse as it enables individuals to gain independence and make informed decisions. This workshop will cover essential banking skills and budgeting, as well as give participants a chance to ask any questions. Empower yourself or support someone you know on the journey to financial freedom.

Ladies Christmas Tea - McBride

Thur Dec 5, 2024 @ the McBride Evangelical Free Church, Doors open @ 6 for light appetizers (sweet & savory) and socializing. Short Christmas program to follow.

Christmas Market - Dunster

Sat Dec 7, 2024 2-5p.m. @ the Dunster Schoolhouse.

Breakfast with Santa - McBride

Sun Dec 8, 2024 @ the Elks Hall. FREE event 9-11 a.m. Pancake Sundae Bar, Toonie Raffle and the chance to sit with Santa for breakfast.

Auxiliary Extravaganza - McBride

Sat Dec 14, 2024 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. More details to come

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Federal grants to assist Jasper small businesses with wildfire recovery



Federal Employment Minister Randy Boissonnault announces funding for Jasper small businesses in Jasper, Alta. on Thursday, Nov. 14th. /PETER SHOKEIR, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

PETER SHOKEIR, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The federal government is funding a \$3.9 million program to help Jasper’s small businesses rebound from last summer’s wildfire.

This includes \$3.45 million toward the Jasper Business Recovery Program, which will provide non-repayable funding for Jasper businesses.

“This is going to offset lost revenues during the summer season when many businesses were at their busiest,” said Employment Minister Randy Boissonnault, who is also the ministerial lead for Jasper, at a Thursday (Nov. 14) event. “We said we were serious about getting this right and supporting the small businesses, and that’s exactly what we’re here to do today.”

Eligible businesses must have 50 or fewer employees and be licenced in either the Municipality of Jasper or Jasper National Park. Sole proprietors in the construction, tourism or events industries will be eligible for up to \$5,000, and incorporated businesses can receive up to \$10,000.

“This new funding will help businesses get back on their feet, support jobs and reinvigorate our local economy ensuring that Jasper remains a great place to live, to work and to visit,” said Jasper Mayor Richard Ireland.

The program will also include coaching and business development services and will be administered by Community Futures West Yellowhead.

“Today’s announcement is a big step in helping our small businesses get back on their feet, especially for businesses that depend on the busy summer season,” said Ralph Melnyk, board member for Community Futures West Yellowhead and a Jasper councillor.

The program is expected to assist 325 small businesses, support over 500 jobs and provide business services to 275 clients.

Tourism Jasper will get an additional \$500,000 to encourage visitors to return to Jasper through marketing and programming such as light installations, ice sculptures, artistic performances, nature-based tours, culinary sampling and activities that highlight Indigenous culture.

These funds will also go toward expanding the 2025 Dark Sky Festival to attract more overnight visitors outside of the peak season.

Mike Day with Tourism Jasper said these initiatives would “raise the tide for all boats” and praised the \$3.45 million in funding for small businesses.

“A lot of our small businesses had not yet recovered from COVID and still have some of the debt on the books, so to have a grant in this situation, as opposed to taking on more debt, is very, very meaningful,” Day said.

Paul Butler, executive director of the Jasper Park Chamber of Commerce, described the effects of the wildfire on businesses as “uneven and unpredictable” with some already recovering, others struggling and many destroyed.

“Every business needs help of a different sort and a different way to support their recovery plan,” Butler said. “Many will need support even to build their recovery plan. This financial relief will help immensely. Hearing this today will itself be relief to many businesses.”



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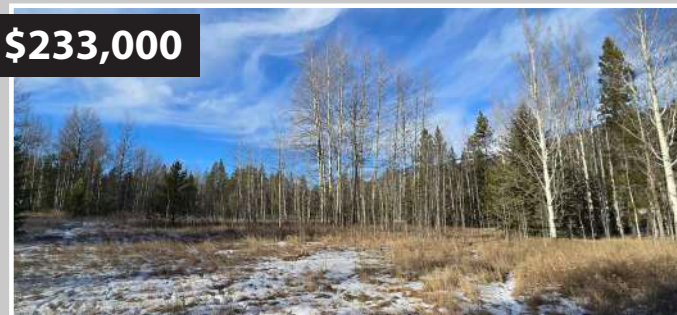
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\$233,000



Ready for you to develop, this 3.21-acre property already has a drilled well and percolation report in place, along with power at the lot line. Steps from the local boardwalk trail, or a short distance to schools, shopping and recreation, this property gives you privacy and community all at the same time.



11328 Hwy 16

CROYDEN

\$365,000

This 32-acre parcel presents good opportunities for that rural lifestyle you've been looking for. Dissected by the highway, the southwestern portion has been logged and the northeastern portion is in mostly natural state. Tindill Creek runs year-round and is a potential water source while the forest is lush and backs onto Crown Land.



3260 Mountain View Rd

MCBRIDE

\$399,000

This hillside property has the initial infrastructure in place, with a primary driveway and cleared building site, a secondary drive to a cleared upper bench, and a utility access road. Hydro and a water system is onsite. Backing onto Crown Land and the McBride trail system, the 25+ acres offers you a place to create your dreams with views like no other.

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