



McBride Mustangs take Nanaimo

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# ROCKY MOUNTAIN GOAT

Your weekly source of news, views and entertainment

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## Into the Limelight

Limelight: An Ode to Vaudeville, finished its two-week run in the Robson Valley on Sunday, December 1st. The production, which chronicles the last show of a vaudeville troupe and the shady investor trying to buy their theatre, will be shown at Pavilion Theatre in Kamloops this February.

From left to right: Bridget Uhl, Bob Thompson, Shara Gustafson, Ian Griffiths, Amy Braun, Miwa Hiroe, Seth Macdonald, Sharon Stearns, and Monica Zieper. /ABIGAIL POPPLE

## Rosalyn Bird talks tourism, power outages and healthcare with Valemount Council

By ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

MLA-elect for the Prince George-Valemount riding Rosalyn Bird had an informal meeting with Valemount Council last Wednesday, November 28th. In an interview with The Goat, Bird said she and Council discussed opportunities to collaborate with other rural communities in the riding, ways to promote tourism

to the Robson Valley, and the economic impacts of this summer's highway closures.

The issues that Valemount Council raised are shared by many rural communities in the PG-Valemount riding, Bird said. For example, Bird hopes to promote energy redundancy in Valemount, McBride and Blue River, to reduce the chance of having unplanned power outages.

Tackling shared issues may be a way to build collaboration between different communities, Bird

added.

"We talked about building out relationships between communities ... having more collaboration with Avola, Blue River, Valemount, McBride and Dunster," she said, adding that she will encourage collaboration with Simpcw First Nation and Lheidli T'enneh First Nation as well.

One opportunity for collaboration may come

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# Valemount Council: Simpcw collaboration, Lheidli T'enneh forum, committee appointments

By ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

Valemount Council discussed a potential Memorandum of Understanding with Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, appointed councillors to represent Valemount on various committees, and adopted an updated workplace harassment policy at their November 26th meeting.

Mayor Owen Torgerson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. After adopting the meeting's agenda and the minutes of the previous meeting, Council heard from a delegation.

## Delegation: wind energy initiative

Calgary-based wind energy production company Ventori Energy Inc. is hoping to install wind turbines in Valemount. Vice President Sarah Scott and Sales Director Teaken Blair gave a presentation to Council outlining their model of turbine – vertical axis wind turbines – which they say are more compact, bird-friendly, and less noisy than traditional wind turbines.

The project would not require the Village to invest any money in the company, just to give land where the turbines could be installed, said Scott and Blair. Valemount would receive a 25 per cent share in revenue from the turbines in exchange for providing land. According to Scott and Blair, if the Village installed 50 turbines, they would generate nearly \$24M in residual income annually. In a follow-up interview with The Goat, Scott said the company estimates each turbine would bring in \$2M annually – so, the revenue from 50 turbines would amount to about \$24M for each of the four investors.

Council moved to receive the delegation. To learn more about the Ventori Energy Inc. proposal, turn to page \_\_\_.

## Resort Development Strategy Schedule

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 schedule outlining each phase of drafting the strategy to Council at the November 12th Council meeting.

According to the report attached to the revised schedule, staff changed two items on the original schedule to provide more time to review documents. Now, proposals for projects that could be funded by the Resort Municipality Initiative will be reviewed in a Committee of the Whole meeting on December 5th, rather than November 28th. Additionally, the draft Resort Development Strategy will now be presented to Council during its January 28th meeting, rather than the December 10th meeting.

As the report was presented for information, Council moved on to its next agenda item without making a motion.

## Simpcw First Nation Working Group

The Village signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Simpcw First Nation in March. The MOU required the governments to form a working group with staff and two councillors from each government that meets quarterly. The group had its first meeting on November 4th.

The minutes of the meeting were presented to Council for information. The working group discussed the Resort Municipality Initiative and potential collaborative projects to increase awareness of Indigenous culture and values in Valemount. For example, Resort Municipality Initiative funding could be used for museum displays or interpretive signs at Cranberry Marsh. According to the minutes, Simpcw First Nation staff and councillors said they may explore a Simpcw Interpretive Project and submit a project proposal to Valemount.

Additionally, the group discussed how to implement the Emergency and Disaster Management Act. In some cases, the act requires that local governments consult with First Nations before declaring a state of emergency. However, the Village did not consult with Simpcw First Nation before declaring a state of emergency during the Cedarside fire in August, according to the meeting minutes. Staff from Simpcw First Nation and the Village will meet to develop protocols for consultation and communication during future emergencies.

Working group member and Valemount Councillor Pete Pearson said the meeting was a good starting point for more frequent collaboration with Simpcw First Nation. Torgerson said he was glad the group discussed the Emergency and Disaster Management Act.

## Potential MOU with Lheidli T'enneh First Nation

The Village held a Community to Community Forum with Lheidli T'enneh First Nation on October 10th and 11th. Facilitated by consulting firm Strategies North, the forum featured presentations, workshops, and discussions on how the two governments can collaborate, according to the summary attached to the staff report.

The creation of an MOU was one of the goals discussed at the forum. In their report on the forum, Village staff recommended that Council approve staff to work with Lheidli T'enneh First Nation to begin developing an MOU. Council followed staff's recommendation.

## Deputy Mayor Schedule

According to the Community Charter, councils must designate a councillor who can act as deputy mayor, who acts as mayor if the mayor is absent. Staff recommended adopting a schedule which rotates which of Valemount's four councillors acts as deputy mayor each month.

Council voted to approve the schedule.

## Committee appointments

Council chooses councillors to represent the Village on various local committees and

organizations. These appointments are typically made annually.

Council made appointments for one-year terms on six committees. It appointed Torgerson to the Prince George Treaty Advisory Committee, Pearson to the Trans Canada yellowhead Highway Association, Councillor Donnie MacLean to the Columbia River Treaty Local Governments Committee and the Columbia Basin Regional Advisory Committee, and Councillor Hugo Mulyk to the Valemount Entertainment Society and Tourism Valemount Destination Marketing Organization.

Council also made appointments for two-year terms on two committees. It appointed Torgerson and Mulyk to the Parcel Tax Roll Review Panel, and appointed Councillor Hollie Blanchette and MacLean to the Clean Air Task Force.

Council appointed tax advising service KPMG as auditor for the Village in 2025. It also appointed Urban Systems as the Village's consulting engineer for 2025.

## Fees and Charges Bylaw

Council adopted an amended Fees and Charges Bylaw, which increases several licensing fees for operating rentals in the Village.

The cost for a Home Occupation Business Licence was increased from \$25 to \$50, the Short Term Vacation Rental licencing fee was increased from \$100 to \$150, and the fee for renting a 20x20 foot outdoor tent from the Village was increased from \$100 to \$200. Additionally, the fee for a Bed & Breakfast licence has been removed from the bylaw, as Bed & Breakfasts are now classified as Short Term Vacation Rentals.

Staff also added a clause to the bylaw which allows the Village to provide facilities and equipment free of charge during local emergencies, such as when the Village opened the Community Hall to Jasper refugees at no cost earlier this summer.

## Updated workplace harassment policy

The Province has required organizations to have a policy forbidding discrimination and harassment in the workplace since 2013. While the Village's Workplace Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy says the policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, it has not been updated since 2018, according to the staff report.

Staff updated the policy based on benchmarks with other municipalities. The policy has been reorganized to more clearly outline the rights and responsibilities of Village staff, and the procedure put in place when an allegation of discrimination or harassment is made.

Council moved to adopt the updated policy.

## Adjournment

Torgerson moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

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# McBride Council: Food program support, volleyball support and regreening

By ANDREA ARNOLD

Acting Mayor Joe Kolida called the November 26th, 2024 McBride Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

## Chevron site update

CAO Jeanette McDougall presented a verbal report concerning Chevron's "abandoned site" at 655 Main Street. Following communication with representatives, she reported that Chevron is preparing to conduct monitoring, and sampling of new wells and existing wells off site to Dec 16th to 20th.

She has been in conversation with Chevron and hopes to have representatives meet with Council either the first or second meeting in the new year. She says they are not very responsive and she thinks this is due to how busy they are divesting properties in Alberta.

## Finance Report

Karen Stahl provided an update on a revamped budget format. She said they have had to do a lot of background infrastructure work in order to make the improvements. Part of this is a new coding system that allows for them to pull information out of their financial system and provides them a way to delve into details better. They have recorded a lot of accounting transactions to clean up the records to allow for clear reporting. They tried to make the purpose of reports clearer by renaming them.

Next year this new system will be used by all areas of the budgeting process. They will then put in a new quarterly financial reporting package with comparisons to budget and will lead right into the following year's audited financial statements. Stahl says it will be a more robust package with summary level information with the detailed transaction information to back that up.

CAO McDougall added that they are looking at implementing EFTs to allow for payments during events such as the mail strike.

## Food program support request

Council approved a \$250 Grant-in-Aid to the McBride Secondary School to offset the food costs that support student nutrition at McBride Secondary School. The school offers a weekly hot lunch and is in need of financial support to keep the program running.

## Emergency Services Supper invitation

Council appointed three Village of McBride representatives to attend the Emergency Services Supper on November 30, 2024 at the Robson Valley Community Hall.

## Park usage request

Council approved the McBride Secondary School's request to use the power to serve hotdogs and hot chocolate at the Steve Kolida Park Pavilion on Friday, November 22, 2024, contingent on receipt of a Certificate of Insurance. The request came between meetings and Council was not able to approve the request before the event.

## Volleyball team support

Council approved a \$250 Grant-in-Aid to the McBride Secondary School Girls Volleyball team to help with the travel, accommodation and food expenses as they travel to the BC Provincial Volleyball Tournament being held in Nanaimo BC. Trans Canada Yellowhead Highway Association Membership

Council confirmed the Village of McBride's continued membership in the Trans Canada Yellowhead Highway Association.

## Development Variance Permit - 849 4th Avenue

Council approved a development variance permit for a single car garage already existing, but that does not meet the minimum requirement for setbacks.

## Bylaw amendment

Council gave Council Procedure Amendment Bylaw No. 832, 2024 first, second and third reading. The new bylaw will state that Regular Council meetings must be held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, with a few exceptions. When local government conferences are being held, the meeting may vary as needed to accommodate members' attendance at the conferences. These dates will be included in the annual Notice of Council meetings. In the months of September and December, only one meeting will be held on the second Tuesday of each of those months.

## Christmas cards

Council directed staff to prepare and send out digital Christmas Cards.

## Regreening

Council directed staff to submit an application to the 2025 BC Hydro Community ReGreening program for a grant of up to \$10,000 towards a project that will see trees planted on municipal property including parks, on Main Street and at the cemetery.

## Tactical Plan and budget

Council agreed to support the Village of McBride 2025 One Year Tactical Plan and Budget, as endorsed by the McBride Tourism Committee, for submission to Destination BC. Through the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT), the Province has been collecting two per cent tax on short term accommodation in McBride since August 1, 2021, after the Village's application to Destination BC was approved in April 2021. The Province has

transferred \$143,726.30 to the Village, collected between August 1, 2021 and August 31, 2024. The spending of the MRDT is guided by a five year strategic plan, stemming from the Council-adopted 2020 McBride Tourism Master Plan, and submission every November of a one-year tactical plan with accompanying budget.

## Christmas party

Council approved hosting a 2024 Christmas Party to a maximum of \$1,500 and that funds be drawn from the Staff Training account which currently has a balance of \$10,334.63.

## In camera

Council moved to proceed to an In-camera meeting for consideration of matters of the Community Charter related to: Section 90 (2): (b) the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and a provincial government or the federal government or both, or between a provincial government or the federal government or both and a third party.

The regular council meeting was recessed for council to conduct the in-camera meeting at 6:25 p.m.

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## Bird visits Valemount ...Cont'd from A1

through addressing the economic impacts of August's Highway 16 and Highway 93 closures, she said. Although businesses in Valemount and elsewhere are struggling to recoup the costs from the lull in tourism, Bird hopes it is possible to attract would-be Jasper visitors to the Robson Valley.

"It might be a good time for the valley to collaborate as a whole, all the way up to Prince George, and see if we can push the valley as a tourism destination," Bird said. "It's not because we want to gain from Jasper's loss. I don't feel like the Robson Valley has really been pushed out to the level it could be in regards to what it offers and who we could draw here."

While issues like power outages and a struggling tourism sector are common ground throughout the southernmost parts of her riding, Bird acknowledges there are Valemount-specific issues, too. Reducing wood smoke and supporting the construction of a hospital are two topics she discussed with Council.

"We talked about the [Clean Air Task Force] and the challenges they are facing with a lot of people who just don't have another option than wood," Bird said. "I was already

aware of that, but I did not know you had an air quality committee... that gives me someone to work with on those challenges."

Councillors also asked Bird if she would support the construction of a hospital in Valemount. While the answer is a definite "yes," Bird says she would consult with other communities to ensure they are getting equitable access to healthcare.

"I would prefer to do it in collaboration and with the understanding of other communities that currently have a hospital, including McBride," she said.

Bird invites constituents to contact her full-time constituency assistant, Wanda Jones, at (778) 744-8598 to share their concerns or feedback. She added that she is exploring the possibility of opening a constituency office in one of her riding's rural communities – McBride, Valemount or Blue River.

"These are just the beginning conversations," Bird said. "I'm trying to think of things we could collaborate on moving together so everybody feels like they're getting a piece of the pie."

# Strategies North visits Valemount business owners

By ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

The Village of Valemount hosted consultants from Strategies North, the consultancy firm Council contracted to develop a business recovery plan, last Wednesday, November 27th. Over the next six months, the firm will gather information on the economic impacts of this summer's highway closures, lobby the provincial and federal government for more financial support of local businesses, and to find other potential solutions to help struggling businesses survive.

Attendees discussed the challenges they have faced as a result of the highway closures, as well as immediate and long-term solutions for struggling business owners in Valemount.

The boom-and-bust cycle of a mostly tourism-dependent economy puts business owners in a precarious place, said Michelle Dallaire, owner of Infinity Office and Health.

"We need to focus on the long-term, on finding people with greater capacity to spend locally," Dallaire said. "If there are no jobs here, if rent is outrageous, then families are just struggling to meet everyday needs. Spending extra is just not going to happen."

However, attendees agreed that immediate financial aid would be a boon to businesses in the short term.

"Most of us, we're looking for some kind of grant funding to help financially float our businesses through the tough times," said Sherrie Houghton, owner of Emerald Earth Organic Spa. "But long-term, we're looking for some kind of solution as to how we can have more people here in Valemount to keep the community running."

President of Strategies North Grant Barley said he wasn't surprised to hear businesses are struggling.

"When you start adding up COVID, the fluctuations in weather with snowpack, then the fire, the compound effects this particular town has been dealt is tough," he told The Goat. "I'm sure other places in Canada have those kinds of challenges, but in a B.C. context, it's pretty unique to be impacted greatly by a fire, but not in your community."

Still, Barley said he was happy to hear that business owners are determined to stay afloat.

"The one reassuring piece is when you talk to a group of entrepreneurs and somehow see they're doing what they can to survive and look at things in a positive way," he said. "It always gives me a sense of optimism, that sense of mentality that it takes to open a business."

It has been difficult for the Village to access government grants, since the emergency that caused the economic downturn took place in a different province, as Mayor Owen Torgerson remarked during the November 12th Council meeting. Barley said this is a challenge, but believes there may be ways for Strategies North to work around it.

"We've had success in the past in convincing government departments to look at the way they're administering that grant money differently on a short-term or

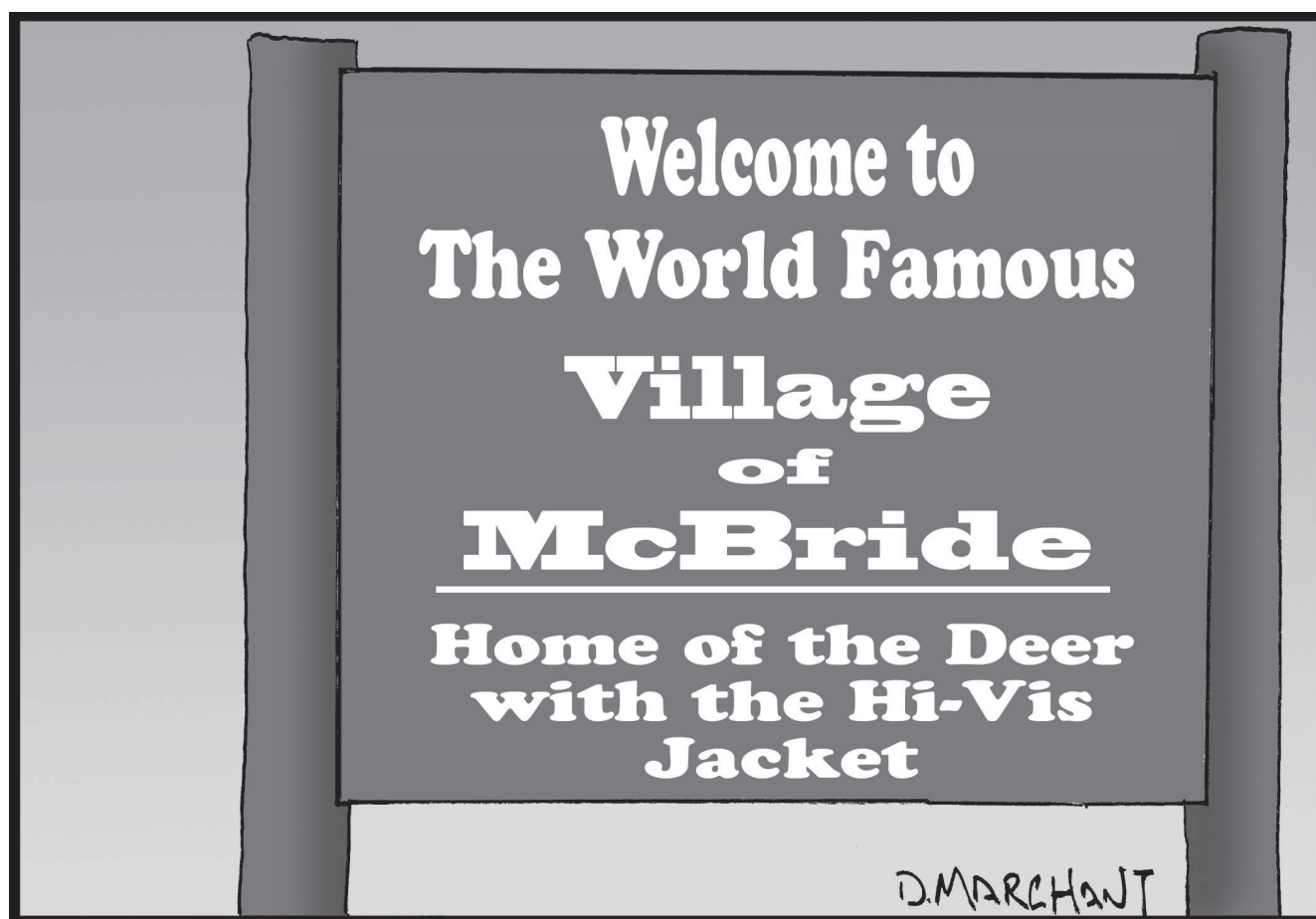
medium-term basis because of a specific set of events," he said. "It's all about making it politically advantageous for them to support Valemount. It's pretty easy when you sit in a room with them and have these discussions. You can see how important it is."

Barley added that grants may not be the only option: a tax deferral could also provide relief to Valemount businesses, he said. In any case, the firm will get creative in its efforts to provide support.

"It's trying to find out what [businesses] need and then use a variety of mechanisms to get them through this next period so that they survive it and can get back to business in the summer," he said.



CAO Anne Yanciw, left, and Strategies North consultant Jacob Barley, centre, listen to business owner Michelle Dallaire at the consultancy firm's meeting with Valemount businesses. The effects of the Jasper fire have snowballed into an economic downturn for the entire village – even landmarks like Valemount's only grocery store, Dallaire said. /ABIGAIL POPPLE



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# Deer rescued from the Fraser River

By ANDREA ARNOLD

The mystery of how McBride's now world-famous deer came to be wearing a black high-vis jacket last week has not been solved. Following events that occurred on the afternoon of Friday November 29th, there is a high possibility the deer has returned to its jacket-less state.

The deer had been spotted throughout the week in various states of undress, with photos being posted of it with the jacket only hanging around its neck. It was spotted near the river with the jacket hanging mostly off of it not long before the river rescue, and there have been no sightings reported since.

On Friday, a deer was seen struggling in the Fraser River. A quick-thinking local made a phone call and a rescue crew arrived with a canoe.

A team of McBride residents worked quickly and carefully to reach the struggling deer and bring it to shore.

Another resident, Sara Olofsson, who arrived to help, thinks it is likely that this deer is the same deer, as she had a black nylon collar around her neck.

"I think she had a more difficult time trying to save herself (restricted by the fabric) in my opinion," said Olofsson.

The collar was carefully removed and the deer quickly checked for any obvious injuries. A few kind hearted individuals did their best to help her warm up before she was moved into a horse trailer with some hay and water.

"We kept her warm and dry overnight out of wind and predators," said Olofsson. "She survived the night and was in good shape this morning so we drove her down to where she was found and set her free."

A video clip and photos show the deer was quite content in the safety of the trailer. When she did leave the shelter, she bounded away into the trees then stopped and looked back for a moment.



A struggling deer was rescued from the Fraser River on Friday. Locals hope it is the deer that became famous for being outfitted with a high-vis vest last week. After being warmed up overnight, McBride local Sara Olofsson took the deer back to where it was found and set it free. /SUBMITTED

# Global Thoughts

## Netanyahu and the ICC

BY GWYNNE DYER



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

The indictment of Israel prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu and former defence minister Yoav Gallant by the International Criminal Court on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza has triggered a great deal of public moralising, both pro and con. Almost all of it is missing the point.

Netanyahu and Gallant have not been found guilty of anything. However, Israeli weapons under their ultimate control have killed more than 44,000 people, most of them innocent civilians, in the past year, and no Israeli court or official inquiry has examined the circumstances of their deaths.

Moreover, it is extremely unlikely that any Israeli authority will conduct such an investigation so long as Netanyahu is in power. It is in cases like this that the ICC must act – even though it can only expect compliance from countries that have signed the Rome Statute and accepted its authority.

So why have most countries signed up to the ICC, while a minority have not?

As American mobster Al Capone once put it, "You get more with kind words and a gun than with kind words alone." That is why Russia, China, the United States and India do not recognise the jurisdiction of the ICC. As

great powers (at least in their own minds), they still have guns that work.

For 'gun' read guns, rockets, bombers, aircraft carriers, submarines and nuclear weapons in large enough numbers to frighten lesser powers into submission, or kill enough of their citizens to make the rest obey.

For 'kind words' read diplomacy, the rule of law, the United Nations Charter, the whole edifice of non-violent dispute settlement that weaker countries hope will protect them from the untrammelled power of the strong. Sometimes it does protect them. Sometimes it doesn't.

Whether a country signs up for the ICC or rejects its authority is not a moral choice. By and large, countries that think they can still get their own way by force usually reject the ICC, while those that doubt their ability to protect themselves sign up.

Israel has not joined because it can still get more with a gun (and can even skip the kind words) because a genuine superpower, the United States, is pledged to protect it from retaliation. But how can the ICC bring charges against two leading Israeli politicians if Israel has not signed the treaty?

The ICC has no power to interfere if alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity are being properly investigated by the courts of a law-abiding sovereign state,

but it is the court of last resort when such investigations are not taking place.

Netanyahu could have avoided these arrest warrants simply by opening a credible investigation by Israel's own legal authorities into his own and his government's conduct before, during and since the Hamas attacks of October 7, 2023. He chose not to do so because he rightly feared that such an investigation would cause his coalition government to fall.

Member states are obliged to carry out the ICC's arrest warrants. Non-members are not, so Netanyahu is not in any immediate danger of arrest. If he sets foot in any of the 124 countries that have signed the treaty, however, he could be arrested and transported to The Hague for trial.

Netanyahu won't go to jail over this, but even long-term friends and de facto allies of Israel like the United Kingdom say they will "follow the law" if he shows up on their soil. (Russian dictator Vladimir Putin participated in a recent summit in South Africa entirely by Zoom because he feared arrest on an ICC warrant.)

The Israeli prime minister's world has suddenly shrunk by more than half. Moreover, his trial at home on charges of breach of trust, accepting bribes, and fraud, halted a year ago when the war began, will reopen early next month. Netanyahu may be running out of rope.



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# Holiday rush increases driving risk in Fraser-Fort George

Last December saw nearly 800 crashes a day in the province. Here's how to stay safe

SUBMITTED BY ROAD SAFETY AT WORK

Winter driving in B.C. is challenging at the best of times. The added stress of a busy holiday season can make it even more dangerous, cautions Road Safety at Work.

Last December, 24,534 crashes were reported to ICBC — an average of nearly 800 per day. The total included 1,554 in the North Central region, which includes the area around Prince George.

“Rushing to your destination while driving might seem like a way to save time when you've got a lot to do, but it greatly increases the risk of a crash,” says Trace Acres, program director for Road Safety at Work.

Driving too fast for the conditions is one of the major contributors to winter crashes. “Slowing down and giving yourself extra time is one of the best ways to help ensure you and your loved ones travel safely this holiday season.”

Many other factors combine to make driving at this time of year more perilous. Road and weather conditions can change quickly in the Fraser-Fort George region. Fewer daylight hours mean more driving in the dark. The hectic pace of life and work can increase fatigue, which slows driver reaction time. Holiday celebrations can include alcohol or drugs. Phone use distracts driver attention from the road.

In addition, traffic can increase as more people drive to shop, visit, attend seasonal events, or as part of their job.

“The holidays can create a lot of stress, which can affect our driving decisions,” says Acres.

ICBC statistics show that December has had the most crashes of any winter month over the last five years. WorkSafeBC statistics show that work-related crashes increase by 26% during the winter months.

As part of national Safe Driving Week December 1 to 7, Road Safety at Work offers these additional tips to help drivers keep themselves, their passengers, and all road

users safe as we head into the holiday season:

1. **Avoid driving when conditions are poor. They may worsen in an hour or two.**
2. **Know before you go by checking DriveBC.ca for road conditions and weather updates.**
3. **Leave more space between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you, so you have more time to react to other drivers.**
4. **Use winter tires even if you're in an area with little snow. They provide better traction in cold temperatures and on slippery roads.**
5. **Leave your phone alone.**
6. **Be fully rested before long drives. Fatigue can be as dangerous as impaired driving, especially on dark, icy roads.**
7. **Take extra care in busy parking lots, especially after dark.**
8. **Follow your organization's safe driving procedures if you drive on the job.**

“We all share the responsibility for making BC's roads safer during the holiday season,” says Acres. “Our friends and family members want us home to celebrate with them.”

For more tips on safe winter driving, visit [ShiftIntoWinter.ca](http://ShiftIntoWinter.ca).

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[www.valemount.ca](http://www.valemount.ca)

## Be Visible, Be Safe

Reflective feathers can be picked up for free at the Village office. During the short winter days, it is important to be visible to drivers. Clip these feathers on to coats, backpacks, bags, dog leashes — anywhere! — to make sure drivers can see you when walking.

### Prevent Slips and Falls

Wear appropriate footwear, walk with care, and be aware of potential ice under snow.



### Wes Hudson Annual Light Up

Judging for the Annual Light Up contest begins December 5, and will end on December 19. This program was initiated in 1996 in memory of former Councillor, Wes Hudson, who is remembered for his enthusiasm and dedication to decorating his property for the Christmas season. Prizes will be awarded for residential and commercial properties.

1<sup>st</sup> Place, \$75 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Place, \$50.



## Valemount Economic Recovery

The Village of Valemount is seeking your help to secure financial support for businesses impacted by the Jasper fire and highway closures. Partnering with Strategies North, the Village is assessing the extent of these impacts to strengthen our case. If you are a business owner or manager in Valemount, please complete the very short questionnaire Strategies North has created, as your input will provide the critical evidence needed to advocate for the support your business needs. Thank you for contributing to this vital initiative.

Please contact the Strategies North team at:  
[valemountrecovery@strategiesnorth.ca](mailto:valemountrecovery@strategiesnorth.ca)

### Be Prepared for Winter Storms and Power Outages

Winter storms may include snowfalls, ice storms and blizzards with high winds and blowing snow. These storms can cause outages that last for days.

Have your 72-hour emergency kit ready, and ensure it has **extra items** to prepare for the cold and dark winter:

- Warm blankets or sleeping bags for each person
- Warm clothing and footwear
- Crank or battery-operated radio, flashlight and/or lantern with extra batteries

For a full list of what to keep in your 72-hour emergency kit, please visit:

- [getprepared.gc.ca/](http://getprepared.gc.ca/), or
- [gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/preparedbc/build-an-emergency-kit-and-grab-and-go-bag](http://gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/preparedbc/build-an-emergency-kit-and-grab-and-go-bag)

## 2024 Property Tax and Utilities Deadline

Remember that 2024 taxes and utilities must **be paid in full by December 31, 2024**. Outstanding balances will roll over to the 2025 tax year and accrue daily interest.

Due to the postal strike, please see the website for alternative payment options including:

- Third party credit card
- Interac e-transfer
- Online and telephone banking
- In person at the Village Office

[valemount.ca/village-office/finance/tax-and-utility-payments](http://valemount.ca/village-office/finance/tax-and-utility-payments)

### Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives!

Ensure you have working smoke alarms outside each bedroom, and on every level of the home. Your family is not safe if they can't hear the smoke alarms.

### Municipal Office and Visitor Information Centre Hours

Open Mondays to Fridays  
8:30am to 12:30pm & 1:30pm to 4:30pm

**Shop Local! 40% OFF select items at the Visitor Information Centre for the month of December!**



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Jenny



Coral



Lina

# Volleyball Provincials 2024

The Mustang Girls Volleyball team travelled to Nanaiamo, B.C. for the Single A Volleyball Championships. The trip was full of experiences. A win at the provincial level, touching the ocean, seeing an orca, bonding with friends, watching high-level volleyball games, more intense game experience than ever, riding the ferry, watching a pod of whales spouting, and lots of laughs. Among many other achievements, the team played 3 sets against the bronze medal team and scored 18 points against them. They came home proud of what they accomplished and with a renewed drive to return for Provincials 2025. / SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Jayde



Micah



Sara



Bella

# Go Mustangs!

## Through the Lens with Leon Lorenz



Here in the alpine of the Muskwa-Kechika wilderness (this past fall) I had just taken my lunch out of my pack when this mother grizzly and her second summer cubs came over a distant rise in the terrain. They were feeding on the abundant blue huckleberries that grow just above the ground. Quickly I grabbed my camera out of my pack and attached it to my tripod and started filming without taking the time to collapse the legs to a much lower filming angle or to re-strap on my holstered revolver which I later regretted. The always alert mother spotted me almost instantly in my standing position but she wasn't about to give up this prime feeding area. They advanced closer and closer as they fed along and at one point one of her cubs blocked her view and she roughly knocked the youngster away so her line of sight to me wasn't restricted. More to follow over the next two weeks. /LEON LORENZ

## Jasper's living wage skyrockets to \$31.40 per hour

By PETER SHOKEIR, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Jasper is among the most expensive places to live in Alberta, according to a new report on living wages.

The Alberta Living Wage Network (ALWN) calculates Jasper's living wage has increased from \$24.90 per hour in 2023 to \$31.40 per hour in 2024. This is the highest living wage ranked in this year's report among cities such as Calgary, Edmonton and St. Albert.

"This recognition underscores the significant cost of living in our community, which presents unique challenges, particularly as we work to balance the needs of our wage-earning residents with the demands of our tourism-driven economy," said Jasper Mayor Richard Ireland in a statement.

A living wage is the hourly wage required for individuals and families to meet their basic needs and maintain a modest standard of living, according to ALWN. This is calculated based on the local costs of essential goods and services while accounting for government benefits and taxes.

Ireland noted the purpose of Jasper's involvement in the report was not to impose requirements on businesses or individuals but to ensure Jasper had "the information needed for data-informed decision-making."

"As we continue recovery efforts, we are mindful of the delicate balance between fostering economic recovery and supporting the well-being of our residents," he said.

According to the ALWN report, the annual expenses for Jasperites are \$96,968 for a family of four, \$65,619 for a single parent with one child and \$49,885 for a single individual.

ALWN attributed increasing rent over the last year as the driving force behind rising costs in Alberta. Jasper's chronic housing shortage has been exasperated by the recent wildfire that destroyed 820 residential units.

"The Municipality of Jasper remains committed to supporting both the recovery of

our community and the sustainability of our tourism sector, working collaboratively with local businesses, residents, stakeholders and all levels of government to ensure fair and sustainable solutions for all," Ireland said.

While Jasper's living wage is the highest of 21 communities across Alberta, not all communities in the province participated. Canmore, which had the highest living wage in Alberta at \$38.80 per hour in 2023, was not included in this year's report.

For 2024, the next closest to Jasper was Calgary at \$24.45, Barrhead at \$24.50 and Airdrie at \$24.30.

Heidi Veluw, executive director of the Jasper Employment and Education Centre, said she was unsure whether the report had gathered the data before the wildfire but noted Jasper had already been unaffordable for many.

"Living wage or not, Jasper things are expensive," Veluw said. "Right now, so many people are underemployed or unemployed. They've lost so much."

With dozens of businesses gone, the summer season cut short and much of the natural landscape marred, the wildfire has had a devastating impact on the local economy, with many struggling to find work.

"At the employment centre, we're seeing most people [working] 30 hours or much less, and nothing's affordable when you're on employment insurance or working 20 hours a week," Veluw said. "And is that an employer's fault? No, but wage increases should be considered."

Although acknowledging how difficult the current landscape was for Jasper employers, Veluw noted they needed to explore how they could have equitable wages even with decreased business and do things differently to retain workers.

"I just think we have to look at new opportunities right now to make life more affordable for people," she said. "And there's so much opportunity to look at things differently because it's a new Jasper."

An ALWN spokesperson was not available for comment and could not confirm when the data was gathered.

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# Wind energy company seeks deal with Village of Valemount

ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

Calgary-based company Ventori Energy Inc. is looking to build wind turbines in Valemount. In exchange for land where the turbines can be installed, the company would share 25 per cent of its revenue with the Village, the company's vice president Sarah Scott said in a delegation to Valemount Council on November 26th.

Ventori is a relatively new company, having been incorporated on April 24th, according to Alberta's corporate registration system. However, Ventori's sister companies – Australia-based ReVair and US-based Pascal – have both been incorporated for over a decade. Valemount is the first municipality to answer Ventori's inquiries, Scott told *The Goat*.

The company has not yet found a manufacturing plant to produce the turbine in Canada, but they are working on shipping prototypes from Australia, Scott said. The company has worked closely with Rudolph Oelofse, the inventor and patent-holder of their wind turbine, she said.

According to court documents obtained by *The Goat*, Oelofse has been sued at least twice: once in 2018 for fraud, and again in 2021 for neglecting to pay the law firm he contracted to help him obtain patents.

"For months, Oelofse and/or his agents made a variety of false promises and misrepresentations to [the] plaintiffs... including that they would receive a benefits and ownership interest in the technology and/or the company," the 2018 suit filed against Oelofse reads.

The 2018 plaintiffs opted to settle out of court, according to documents from the Superior Court of California in the County of Sacramento.

The 2021 case was also dismissed by the court as neither party appeared at trial, according to documents from the Superior Court of California in the County of Orange.

Scott declined to comment on either suit against Oelofse.

## Delegation in Valemount

During her delegation to Council, Scott outlined the company's hopes for a wind energy project in Valemount, alongside Sales Director Teaken Blair.

Installing wind turbines in Valemount could generate millions of dollars in revenue, according to Scott and Blair. The revenue would be split four ways between the Village, Ventori, Pascel, and another investor. According to Scott, the company has not found the fourth investor yet.

Ventori staff estimate that each turbine could produce about \$2M annually, so an installment of 50 turbines would amount to \$100M/year, or about \$24M per investor. While Valemount would receive the same portion of revenue as the other investors, the Village would not have to buy shares in the company, according to Scott and Blair.

"We're not expecting you guys to put any money into this – all we need is land," Blair said.

Scott and Blair said the type of turbines Ventori would produce – called Vertical Axis Wind Turbines, or VAWTs – are more compact, less noisy and better for local bird populations than traditional turbines. They are 60 feet tall and 40 feet wide, and constructed from an organic composite material which is significantly lighter and stronger than steel, according to the presentation. The turbines can last for up to 25 years with no maintenance, Blair said.

Scott and Blair referenced a 2014 study titled "Institutional Perspectives on Small Wind Energy Permitting" as evidence of the turbines' low impact on local bird populations. While the study largely focuses on comparing various local government policies on wind energy and does not focus on Oelofse's patented turbines in particular, its section on bird ecology did conclude that VAWTs have a minimal impact on bird ecology and behaviour.

The turbines would connect to a battery which would provide power to the Village, Blair said. According to him, this would allow the Village to move completely off-grid.

## Questions from Council

After Scott and Blair's presentation concluded, Council moved to receive the delegation.

Councillor Hollie Blanchette asked how much it would cost to replace a turbine, and if the Village would be expected to cover that cost.

"This is a really good question, because whose responsibility is it to replace the turbines? These are all questions that we're still working out," Scott said. "The way the agreement would work is that we are selling the energy, we're not selling you the turbines."

Scott added that the company would establish a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) – a type of contract between an electricity generator and a customer – with Valemount if the Village decided to strike a deal with Ventori.

Councillor Pete Pearson asked if Ventori would need to build a substation to connect the wind energy turbines to the community power supply.

"We wouldn't necessarily need a substation for a small amount of turbines," Blair said. "But you're right, if we're running a substantial amount of energy, then it wouldn't work with just the batteries, we would need a substation. So it just depends on how many turbines we run."

Pearson asked if the Village could continue working with Independent Power Producers if it partnered with Ventori.

"One of our philosophies is [that] we are looking to collaborate and cooperate with other existing forms of energy function," Scott said. "We're not asking you to cut it off at that, we want this to be an addition."

Mayor Owen Torgerson asked if the company has ever launched a project in B.C., or worked with BC Hydro. Scott and Blair said they have not.

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**Columbia Basin trust**

"I would highly recommend you look at [Hydro's] interconnection study procedures on what it means to connect to their grid," Torgerson said. "I would also recommend looking at their standard offer program, which is their form of PPA... and have a serious look at what they require in order to attach to their grid."

Scott said the company would look into the standard offer program. Torgerson said the Village would not be able to assist in negotiating with BC Hydro.

"We can advocate for a partnership, we can do a lot of things, but we certainly do not have the capacity to assist with a Power Purchase Agreement," Torgerson said.

In her interview with *The Goat* on Monday, December 2nd, Scott said the company had not yet looked into a standard offer program with BC Hydro, but it was on her to-do list for the upcoming week.

"If the power source is done right, we won't really need to tap into BC Hydro," Scott added. "We won't need to tap into the grid, but it will give the town of Valemount the option to sell [energy] back to the grid."

She said Ventori hopes to establish itself in small, mountainous communities like Valemount to provide energy and revenue to towns that may be struggling with rising costs of living.

"I heard the skepticism in the Council's voice when we were talking about this," she said. "I think what we need to clarify is that the idea here is to help communities understand that they can be their own utility. That's the goal: we want to empower towns like Valemount to understand they can be their own utility."

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# Calendar featuring firefighters amid Jasper wildfire aftermath to support local crisis response

By PETER SHOKEIR, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Crisis Team Jasper Society is launching a 2025 fundraising calendar featuring firefighters amid the landscape following the recent wildfires.

Every dollar raised will go toward the society's mission of supporting individuals in Jasper experiencing trauma or tragedy.

"We're grateful for the unwavering support from our community and the Jasper Volunteer Fire Brigade," said chair Kelly Dawson in a media release. "Together, we're making an impact that goes beyond crisis response, strengthening resilience and community well-being."

Operating since 2007, the Crisis Team mans a phoneline that agencies – the RCMP, health-care staff, outreach workers and others – can call when they have a patient, visitor or community member in crisis and in need of support.

A crisis can be anything from a mental health incident to an unforeseen tragedy, most calls coming when a majority of Jasper is asleep. The phoneline runs 365 days per year on evenings and weekends.

"Basically, someone in crisis would go, for example, to the emergency room if it's after hours and then that nurse or doctor would call the Crisis Team and ask us for support with logistics," said Lisa Darrah, a support worker with the Crisis Team.

Such supports include arranging hotel rooms for those who do not have anywhere else to stay. Darrah noted that fundraising is the primary source of funds for the phoneline and logistical support for crisis clients.

The Crisis Team's major fundraiser is the annual golf tournament at Jasper Park Lodge, but because this tournament was cancelled due to the wildfire, the Crisis Team is launching the calendar new fundraising initiative, with the help of the Jasper Volunteer Fire Brigade.

Darrah said this was the first time they had launched a fundraising calendar and would likely continue putting one out each year if successful.

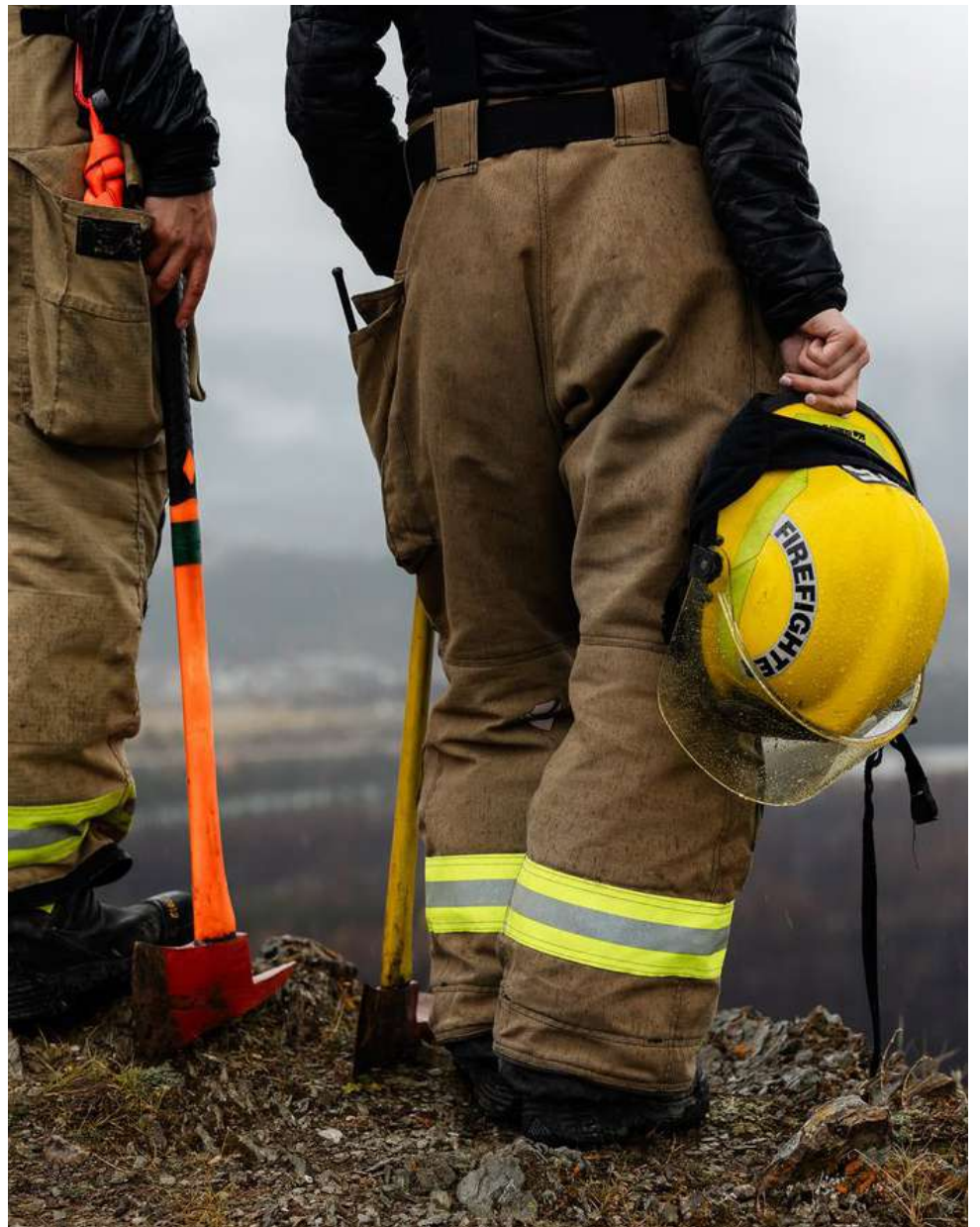
The images, taken by Kinfolk Photography, primarily depict local firefighters amid the aftermath of the Jasper Wildfire Complex.

"The pictures are impactful and inspiring," Darrah said. "Each firefighter, if they are a skier or they're a hobbyist, we've kind of tried to include that into a shot, so you'll have firefighters standing in the forest with skis on their shoulders."

Darrah described the Crisis Team as "a humble, after-hours, covert organization" that gets referrals from frontline organizations and does not publicly advertise its services unless they are fundraising.

"These funds go to providing this after-hours service to visitors and locals," she added. "So...we don't have any boundaries around who we support. It's just they're in Jasper and they're in crisis. It doesn't matter."

Calendars will be available on the Crisis Team Society's website.



The Crisis Team's 2025 fundraising calendar will feature photos of local firefighters amid the aftermath of the Jasper Wildfire Complex. /KINFOLK PHOTOGRAPHY

## Valemount men agree that men's mental health programming is needed.

By RACHEL FRASER

Robson Valley Community Services (RVCS) has started offering some men's programming, organizing events such as a bike tune-up event held in May, a luncheon in October and a climbing event on the evening of November 20th. Jana MacMaster, Co-Executive Director, Operations and Support Services Manager for RVCS says the purpose of the program is to "deliver programs and activities geared towards men, to increase socialization, decrease isolation, provide resources and to support peer-to-peer opportunities for connection among men."

She said RVCS has hired a program coordinator for this role and offered a survey to collect feedback "from men in the community to offer ideas and their own expertise so that it is in essence created by men, for men."

According to the Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) website, the "Men of Valemount" project was given \$120,000 by the Columbia Basin Trust in 2020/2021 to support the mental health of men experiencing or at risk of experiencing vulnerabilities. MacMaster says this is a one-time grant that will fund programming until it runs out, and that RVCS is open to contributing, within their capacity, and by sharing learnings from this program, with any initiatives the community takes on to continue supporting men.

Village councillor and Legion chair Pete Pearson has previously been involved in efforts to support men.

Alarmed by five suicides in the Valley, he tried to spearhead a Men's Shed in Valemount prior to COVID, but trying to get enough already busy volunteers together to commit to forming a society to secure funding proved challenging. The Men's Shed is a program that originated in Australia to combat the loneliness and loss of purpose experienced by retired men, by giving them a venue to work on projects together. McBride has a chapter.

Pearson says he didn't want it to necessarily be geared toward retired men, but to all men 19 and over. He said he thinks the main issue for local men is the stigma of seeking out mental health services. "My mantra through all of this has been that men will talk shoulder to shoulder versus face to face. So if you're working on a project together, you know, there's more likelihood you'll start a conversation versus sitting

"My mantra through all of this has been that men will talk shoulder to shoulder versus face to face."

- Pete Pearson, Valemount Councillor

down in this 'bare your soul' conversation kind of thing," said Pearson.

Pearson pointed out that RVCS does good work, but feels men's services is a gap in their service offerings. Despite similar goals at the same time, conversations around the direction for programming went in different directions.

"This was kind of the sticking point, is having a woman facilitating a program for a men's wellness group or mental health group, I find would be a challenge. I think these are programs that need to be facilitated and run by the men involved."

Pearson isn't giving up on establishing a Men's Shed.

"It's something I'm pretty passionate about, to try and get it going."

Valemount local community organizer John Grogan has also been invested in starting a Valemount Men's Shed. He's visited a few Men's Sheds in other towns, including in Mackenzie and McBride, and seen how it can bring men together. "[In Mackenzie], they [were] putting a roof on a shed. It was a really nice workshop. Everybody who showed up just had a good attitude. Varying life experience, you know? I mean, there was an executive and there was a mill worker, and there was somebody who was chronically unemployed."

Most of the men The Goat reached out to had not seen the survey or heard of the events already held, but most would be interested in attending if they were aware. A few with young families said they are already too busy, and some simply didn't feel it was for them.

Valemount local Andru McCracken said he would participate depending on the vibe. "If community building is the heart of it, then awesome, otherwise it feels kind of clinical and weird," he said.

One local man who said he sees a need for men's programming is Ian Griffiths. "There was a once-a-week men's mountain bike ride that happened this summer and there was usually a good turn out. Sometimes five people and sometimes 20. It eventually morphed into a ride open to all genders, which I think is totally fine. But men can have a 'men's only thing' and it doesn't have to be weird. I know that historically men's only things have been toxic at times but they don't have to be."

Coulter Beeson said he also sees a need. "It's important for people to have healthy role models and a chance to discuss things that don't necessarily pop up in casual conversation.

CONT'D ON P15

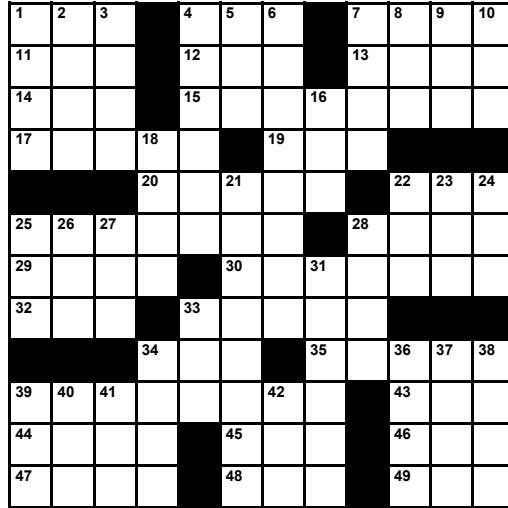
# PUZZLES



## CROSSWORD

Answers on P13

- Across**
- Pack animal
  - Put money (on)
  - Radio "P"
  - "\_\_\_ only as directed"
  - Rowing implement
  - Saudi, e.g.
  - Leaves in a bag
  - Sets off
  - Act like a volcano
  - Akeelah's contest
  - Song container
  - Female deer
  - From Santiago, e.g.
  - Show
  - Trots
  - Sundae topping
  - Craving
  - Rand McNally book
  - Be in debt to
  - Sleeveless garments
  - Scatter
  - Surprise, surprise!
  - Tooth trouble
  - Television network with a plus sign in its logo
  - Delay
  - Real estate paper
  - Radio spots
- Down**
- Pretty
  - Computer operator
  - Handsome guy
  - Glass receptacle
  - Big beagle feature
  - Court of justice
  - Summon
  - "The best things in life \_\_\_ free"
  - Tee score
  - "Crunched" muscles
  - Valuable stone
  - Friends
  - Study of Louis Pasteur
  - Water barrier
  - Valuable rock in a seam
  - Snaky fish
  - Weep
  - Lemon or peach, e.g.
  - Roadside lodge
  - \_\_\_ of operations
  - Crows' cousins
  - \_\_\_-inspiring
  - Newspaper column,



- 2 words**
- Seasoning and preservative
  - Asian cuisine
  - Learned one
  - Annual June honoree
  - Diamonds
  - That female
  - Lawn cover



**BY HOLIDAY MATHIS**

## New Moon, New Month

The new moon on the first day of December is a refresher to our hopes and dreams. Those who have ever aspired to a goal that, once attained, failed to serve up the expected outcomes know firsthand how important it is to want the right things. The work we do on the front end such as research, interviews and cost analysis can be the essential factor that keeps us striving for aims that cannot fulfill the deeper purposes of their quest.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19). If a relationship is so fragile it will break if you're ever mad at each other, then it can only last for as long as there is no conflict. Also, you'll be afraid to play together because the stakes are too high. What's fun for you this week will be a relationship that is as dynamic and resilient as a basketball.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20). There are things you want to learn, do and master. It's fun to imagine what "extra" you might unlock from life by applying yourself to the task. The fantasy is you'd come out of it existentially upgraded, but of course, all the potential to feel wonderful is not out there but right here, right now. Happiness is an embrace of this immutable rule of life.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 21). You'll work in groups, everyone dedicated to the same problem. You're not threatened by people you don't agree with because they help you understand more sides of life. The essence of intelligence is being able to work problems from different angles, and it's harder to get that opportunity surrounded by like minds and "yes" people.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 22). The questions people ask you reveal more about them. Also, just keep in mind that the powerful truth of the matter is that you can answer or not answer any question you want, in any way you want, revealing as much or as little as you want. To learn a person quickly, mirror their own questions back to them.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22). It is impossible to be any more fully human than you are. Whether you are happy, disappointed, strong, vulnerable, behaving to your own preferences or not, you are the same amount of human and as worthy of your own love and support as ever. The more you accept about yourself, the better you will feel.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You have an eye for spotting the potential for high drama and steering clear of it this week, a practice that keeps your relationships in good standing, your goals on track and your life one of peaceful, steady focus. But it's not all about seriousness or work this week.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). People come to you looking for a safe space to explore their thoughts, gain insight or express things they

might not feel comfortable sharing elsewhere. They do this because there's something unique in how you're using our conversations. You bring depth and nuance, digging into the questions and complexities.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). This week will illustrate an important point: Things don't have to last to matter. In fact, they matter more when you know they will end soon. You will benefit from the pressure of a deadline or the knowledge that a stage of a project or relationship is unique and fleeting, and therefore worthy of your careful and keen devotion.

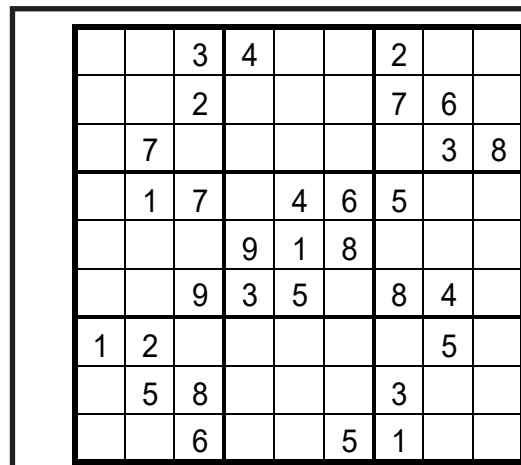
**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). It will be better to throw creativity and time at a problem than money, which will only be a temporary fix. It's lucky to lollygag, think hypothetically, delight in whimsy and generally play around. The wild fun will expand your range and ultimately help you get focused and down to business when it matters.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). There are always deeper levels of reality, but this week, it's the shallow levels that give you real insight. What would stick out to people coming into the situation for the very first time? Something obvious is being overlooked in a familiar setting. Once you make that right, many other things will fall into place.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Love and sharing matter more than proving points. You understand that a good relationship thrives when both partners focus on building the relationship instead of on trying to win or be right. This week, the wisdom will bring warmth to your connections and will keep them free of the distractions of disharmony.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20). Life is a fast-moving picture this week. Themes include privacy, giving others grace, and the weight of other people's secrets. Should you really be asked to bear that? And what would you ask of others? A thoughtful, reflective mood will have you touching into your wise humanity, mixing it with warmth and sharing broadly.

**THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS:** You're more comfortable with who you are than ever, so you don't need everyone to like you, and yet your popularity just keeps soaring this year. Your fascination with the inner workings of things, people and more will lead to a lucrative endeavor. When the deal is on the table, ask for the world and negotiate from there. More highlights: A wistful fantasy will come true. You'll experience different kinds of love and know in a profound way what it means to be heard, to need support, to understand yourself and the people around you.



## SUDOKU

Answers on P13

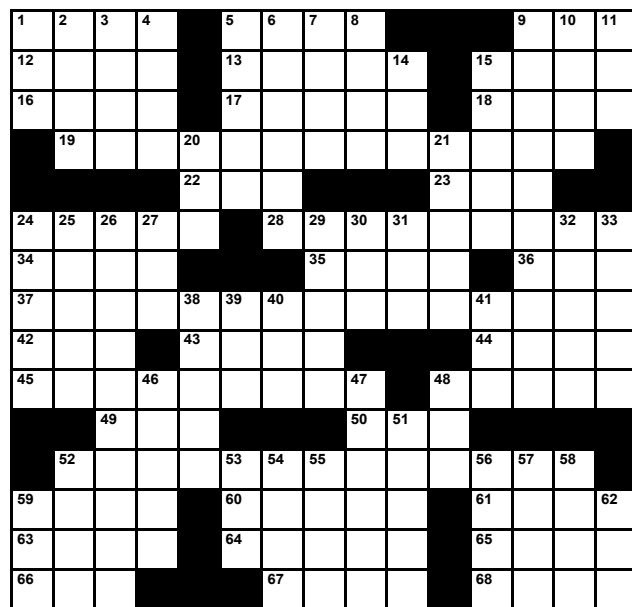
**HOW TO PLAY**  
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

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**
- Tooth tops
  - Famed Monty Python meat to
  - Napoleonic marshal
  - Six-sided state
  - Part of the Cartesian coordinate system
  - Crystal ball gazer
  - Dog in Oz
  - One of the family
  - Cronies
  - Snappers
  - Hubbub
  - City on the Danube
  - Take \_\_\_ of
  - Monet subject
  - Weight allowance
  - Entre \_\_\_ (confidentially)
  - A boy named \_\_\_
  - Urban painters
  - Parisian summer
  - Certain coffee table shape
  - Spotted
  - Southwest's business
  - Male singing voice
  - Battery abbr.
  - World's largest volcano, Mauna \_\_\_
  - Mercator and Henry Pelham
  - Conduit
  - Everglades bird
  - "Pardon me"
  - Salt Lake athletes
  - Append
  - Clean out
  - "\_\_\_ Rosenkavalier"
- Down**
- Director's cry
  - Straddling
  - Trail
  - Drive away
  - Church council
  - Casino game
  - Downsizer
  - Glassy mineral
  - Narrowly avoided collisions
  - They're caught in pots
  - Calendar spans, abbr.
  - Third qtr. closer
  - Incantation
  - Really small amount
  - Writer Fannie
  - Not knowing what to do
  - Port-au-Prince is its capital
  - Do an office chore
  - Common Korean name
  - Foot part
  - \_\_\_ man



- Where It.'s at
- Stringed musical instruments
- Kind of question
- Defeat
- "On the Beach" actress, Gardner
- Loo, for short
- 'Life \_\_\_ cabaret, ...'
- Lowest mouldings
- South American plains
- Goes with humbug
- Debuts, as a movie
- Reference
- Columbus Day mo.
- Tennis great, Steffi
- See red
- Pitcher handles
- Stat start
- Navy commando
- London dessert, abbr.
- Abbr. on a French letter

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1	C	2	U	3	B	4	B	5	E	6	T	7	P	8	A	9	P	10	A
11	U	12	S	13	E	14	T	15	O	16	A	17	R	18	A	19	R	20	A
21	T	22	E	23	A	24	R	25	I	26	G	27	E	28	R	29	S		
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41																			
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55																			
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45	D	46	I	47	S	48	P	49	E	50	R	51	S	52	E	53	A	54	H
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65	D	66	E	67	E	68	D	69	A	70	D	71	S	72	T	73	I		

### SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

### TOUGHIE ANSWERS

1	C	2	A	3	P	4	S	5	P	6	A	7	M	8	N	9	E	10	Y
11	U	12	T	13	A	14	H	15	A	16	X	17	I	18	S	19	S	20	E
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44	S	45	I	46	D	47	E	48	W	49	A	50	L	51	K	52	A	53	R
54	E	55	T	56	E	57	O	58	V	59	A	60	L	61	S	62	E	63	E
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## Valemount

**Fri Dec 6th** you are invited to join us as we honour the memory of the 14 women tragically lost in the 1989 Montreal massacre on this National day of Remembrance and reflect on the on the ongoing issue of gender-based violence. Candles will be provided by us to illuminate this important moment of remembrance. The vigils will take place at 3:30pm in Valemount at 1451 5th Ave.

**Fri Dec 6th Late-Night Shopping** 5-9pm (some stores close at 8pm). Christmas tree lighting and Santa's arrival at 5pm, followed by great deals at local stores and santa photos at the Rocky Mountain Goat 5:30-7.

**Sat-Sun Dec 7-8th U7 & U9 minor hockey tournament.** Come cheer on local players at the Canoe Valley Rec Centre!

**Valemount & McBride game times:**

Sat 9am U9 Valemount vs. Clearwater  
Sat 11:10 U9 McBride vs. Prince George  
Sat 12:05 U7 Valemount vs. Jasper  
Sat 1:20pm U9 Valemount vs. Prince George  
Sat 2:15 U7 ValeMcBride vs. Clearwater  
Sat 3:30 U9 McBride vs. Clearwater  
Sat 4:25 U7 Valemount vs. ValeMcBride  
Sun 8:55am U7 Valemount vs. Clearwater  
Sun 10:10 U7 ValeMcBride vs. Jasper  
Sun 11:05 U9 McBride vs. Clearwater  
Sun 12:20 U9 Valemount vs. Prince George  
Sun 2:30 U9 Valemount vs. McBride

Sat Dec 7th **Wet/needle felted Christmas stocking workshop** at Twin Peaks Resort. To sign up call Donna at 250-566-1503.

**Mon Dec 9th The RVCS AGM** is Monday, December 9th at 1:00-2:00PM, at 1444 5th Ave in Valemount. If you would like to stop by and see some program highlights from the year, meet our staff and board, and learn more about what we do, we welcome you to join us! Please call or email for more information: 1-844-324-2004 or [info@rvcsbc.org](mailto:info@rvcsbc.org)

**Thurs Dec. 12th Christmas Skating Exhibition** by the Canoe Valley Skating Club 4-5:30pm.

**Fri-Sun Dec 13th-15th CANCELLED Adult co-ed hockey tournament** at the Canoe Valley Rec Centre.

**Fri Dec 13th Open mic at Valemount Legion** Bring your instrument and songs! Starts at 7pm after the regular legion dinner at 5:30.

**Fri Dec 13th German Christmas Market** at Three Ranges Brewing Co. Enjoy local goodies and hot and cold drinks by local vendors! More details TBA.

**Dec 13th Open Mic** at the Valemount Legion. Music starts at 7pm following the regular Friday night dinner at 5:30.

**Sat Dec 14th Mini Christmas Fair** 10am-2pm at Vale Coffee. Soap, art, pottery, canned and baked goods, consignment, home decor, crafts. 940 Main Street.

**Sat Dec 14th Elf Movie Party** at the Valemount Library 1-3pm, all welcome. Join us for a movie, crafts and hot chocolate. Wear your best elf costume!

**Sat-Sun Dec 14th-15th Christmas Stocking workshop** at the Lions Hall 1-3pm. \$35, all supplies provided. Drop ins welcomes.

**Tues Dec. 17th** Drop-in adult craft time at the Valemount Library 1-4pm Lower level of the public library

**Fri Dec. 20th Christmas Carol/Holiday song Karaoke** at the Valemount Legion. Music starts at 7pm following the regular Friday night dinner at 5:30.

## Ongoing Valemount

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

**Cribbage - Mondays**

Join us every Monday at the Golden Years Lodge for a game of cribbage! 1pm. Everyone welcome.

**Drop-in pickleball - Sun, Mon, Tues, Thurs**  
Drop-in pickleball at the Community Hall at noon Sundays, and 8:30am Tuesdays and Thursday. Also 6-8pm Mondays and Thursdays at the high school.

**Crafty Stitchers - Sundays in December**  
Sundays 1-3 pm Crafty Stitchers meet downstairs at the Valemount Public Library, all welcome! Call 250-566-4367. Library closed for the holidays Dec. 24-Jan 2nd.

**Oldtimers drop-in adult hockey -Sun & Wed**  
Co-ed drop-in hockey 6:30-9pm. Cost is \$20 per game. Seasonal rate available. Sundays 6:30pm and Wednesdays 8pm.

**Board game drop-in - Tuesdays**  
Join us for board games at the Valemount library every Tuesday 6-8pm. For more info call 250-566-4367.

**Personal Tech Help - by appointment**  
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](mailto:learn@valemountlearningcentre.org)

**Old-time Music - Wednesdays**  
Oldtimers band and music night at the Golden Years Lodge in Valemount 7pm every Wednesday. All welcome! Play music, listen or dance.

**Astronomy Course - Wednesdays**  
Drop in and learn about astronomy through the Valemount Library's ongoing astronomy series! 7-8:30 every Wednesday. Library closed for the holidays Dec. 24-Jan 2nd.

**Valemount Coffee House - Thursdays**  
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.

**Tween Scene Book Club - Every 3rd Friday**  
Free book club for kids 9-12yrs. Sign up in library or give us a call 250-566-436.

**Legion dinner and music nights - Fridays**  
Dinner at the Valemount Legion 5:30 followed by music at 7pm every Friday. Music varies by week and includes open mic, karaoke, jam sessions and special events. Check under the Valemount events list at right or the Legion facebook page for details about specific dates. No music Dec 6th or 27th this month.

**Family Place Drop In Program - Fridays**  
If you have questions, are looking for parenting resources, or just need to chat, you can join us in person 9am-noon every Friday in Valemount at 1444 5th Ave. Our weekly targeted programming is a great way for kids ages 0-6 (with their caregivers) to play, connect, explore, and learn!

Dec 6 – Snow Painting at Centennial Park  
Dec 13 – Making Snowflake Decorations  
Dec 20 – Holiday Baking with the family  
Dec 27 – RVCS winter closure –No FPDI

## McBride

**Thurs Dec 5th Ladies Christmas Tea - McBride** @ the McBride Evangelical Free Church, Doors open @ 6 for light appetizers (sweet & savory) and socializing. Short Christmas program to follow.

**Thurs Dec 5th Join us for our Tech Drop-In** whether it's setting up your smartphone, troubleshooting your laptop, or getting the most out of your apps. No question is too small – come in and let's make tech easier together! Come by between 11am-3pm with questions about using technology and we will work to support you to learn more about your device. No registration required, for more information call 250-569-2266 or email:

[events@rvcsbc.org](mailto:events@rvcsbc.org). This program is brought to you by the McBride Adult Literacy Program.

**Fri Dec 6th** you are invited to join us as we honour the memory of the 14 women tragically lost in the **1989 Montreal massacre on this National day of Remembrance** and reflect on the on the ongoing issue of gender-based violence. Candles will be provided by us to illuminate this important moment of remembrance. The vigils will take place at 3:30pm outside at the McBride RVCS office, 942 3rd Avenue. We encourage all members of the community to join us in this meaningful moment of reflection and solidarity.

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

**Thurs Dec 12th** Join us at the Elks Hall in McBride for a **Festive Wreath making workshop!** This is a wonderful opportunity to get creative and add a personal touch to your holiday decorations. Registration is required, please contact the office to sign-up. For more information call 250-569-2266 or email: [events@rvcsbc.org](mailto:events@rvcsbc.org). This program is brought to you by the McBride Adult Literacy Program.

**Fri Dec 13 Valley Piecemakers Quilt Guild Meeting** at 1 pm at the McBride Elks Hall. Interested in quilting? Come and join us

**Sat Dec 14th** Doreen Beck is performing a **Christmas concert on the harp** at the McBride Library 1:30pm.

**Sat Dec 14th Auxiliary Extravaganza - McBride** 7pm - 8:30 p.m. More details TBA.

**Tues Dec 17th Join us for Let's All Take Part In Art! Children ages 0-6 years** and their caregivers are invited to join us from 10am-12pm making Christmas ornaments at the McBride office 942 3rd Avenue. Registration is required, please contact the office to sign up. For more information call 250-569-2266 or email: [events@rvcsbc.org](mailto:events@rvcsbc.org). This program is brought to you by the Infant Development Program and Family Literacy Program.

**Thurs Dec 19th Join us for a Festive Social event** at the McBride RVCS office for a cozy and cheerful gathering. Enjoy a warm cup of coffee/tea and indulge in delicious home baked cookies. It's the perfect way to celebrate the season with friends and neighbors! No registration is required, for more info call 250-569-2266 or email: [events@rvcsbc.org](mailto:events@rvcsbc.org).

**Wed Dec 25th Free Community Christmas Dinner!** McBride churches and community members are offering Christmas dinner for those who would like to share a meal with other community members at McBride Evangelical Free Church. We need volunteers to help Dec 24 and Dec 25 for one, two or more hours for different tasks (such as preparing vegetables, serving, and clean up). We're also looking for donations of desserts. For more info or to volunteer, contact Pete Amyoony at 250-968-4334 / [peteam@telus.net](mailto:peteam@telus.net)

## Ongoing McBride

**Family Place Drop In Program** 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!

December 9 – RVCS closed, FPDI cancelled  
December 16 – Letters to Santa and Craft  
December 23 & 30 – RVCS winter closure –No FPDI

**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 Thursday afternoons 1:30pm. Call 250 569 2411 for info.

**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 Thursdays. An early literacy program for children ages 0-5 and caregivers. Songs, rhymes, stories and fun! In partnership with Decoda Literacy.

**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!

**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.

**Writing Group - Fridays**

Our Writing Group for adults meets every Friday afternoon at the McBride library 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? Join us!

## Dunster

Sat Dec 7th **Christmas Market** 2-5p.m. @ the Dunster Schoolhouse. Handmade products and food. Chili and Chai vendor tables. Vendors can contact Kat McNaughton.

## Blue River

Mon Dec 9th Join Director Lee Onslow and TNRD staff for a Zoom session focused on TNRD Area B on zoom 6:00-7:30 PM. Information packages available at the Avola schoolhouse, the Log Inn Pub, the Blue River library and post office and online at [www.tnrd.ca/area-b-engagement](http://www.tnrd.ca/area-b-engagement) The zoom link can be found at [tnrd.ca/area-b-meeting](http://tnrd.ca/area-b-meeting).

## Tete Jaune

Sun Dec 8th Tete Jaune Community Club's **Christmas Potluck Dinner**, doors at 5:30, dinner at 6pm. Bring a side dish and/or dessert.

# Valemount men's programming need ...Cont'd from P10

Both of which are hard to find in Valemount but especially if you're not already highly integrated in the community."

Sean Carman attended the climbing event and said there were 7 or 8 attendees, mostly in the 30-40 year-old age range, several of whom were new to the community.

"It was a neutral location to do a nice physical activity. Good for physical and mental health and nothing too serious. A nice atmosphere and space for people to connect," Carman said.

When asked if there was any facilitated conversation, directed by the RVCS coordinator, he said there wasn't, and the event was focused around the activity, with the opportunity for organic connection. "There (was) a lack of coordination [driving connection or deeper conversation]... I think it could naturally occur, but without direction, it could also naturally just fall apart." He added that a regular opportunity to network could help that naturally occurring connection.

John Crowley confirmed that the RVCS program coordinator, a woman named Kina LaBrie, reached out to him to help organize the climbing event.

While Carman didn't feel that RVCS having a female coordinator for a men's program had a detrimental effect in this event, he noted it could potentially be a drawback going forward.

"It would be really nice to see if somebody can rally that [male] perspective, that energy for them," he said.

When asked if a social-focussed initiative is enough to meet the needs of men in the community, Carman said, "I think it's a good start. I think myself and other guys have mentioned they would like to see something where it also gives back to the community. Because guys like purpose. Well, everybody loves purpose, but it's like that 'acts of service' thing. If there was an ability to have the decompression and giving back to the community, in the future."

Beeson said he thinks sustained consistent programming is key, though one-off events can be good to get people engaged initially.

"It's hard to get people to commit to anything these days though. I think for something like this to be successful it needs a guy or group of guys to champion it, and maybe gently harass people into going," he said.

Carman said they were given a flyer for the next event, a coffee meet-up, Thursday December 19th, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.


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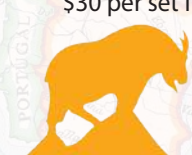
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