



WinterFest 2025

P9



# ROCKY MOUNTAIN GOAT

Your weekly source of news, views and entertainment

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Thursday February 20, 2025  
Volume 16 Issue 6  
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## “Not time to panic yet, but stay vigilant”

### Robson Valley residents react to proposed school consolidation

By ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

The School District 57 board reviewed a report on the state of the district’s facilities during a January 28th meeting which recommended consolidating Valemount and McBride schools within the next ten years due to declining enrolment.

According to the report, both communities will see a

nominal decline in full-time enrolment over the next 10 years: an 8.4 per cent decline in McBride, and a 5.3 per cent decline in Valemount. As this would result in the elementary and secondary schools in both communities being under capacity, the report recommends closing the McBride and Valemount elementary schools and moving all students into the secondary schools.

Reactions to the recommendation range from skepticism to outright disapproval.

Chair of the Valemount Secondary School Parent Advisory Council Shanon Manahan told The Goat she does not think consolidation is a practical idea.

“There [has] been some talk about this before and it just didn’t seem feasible,” Manahan said, citing concerns about negative interactions between older and younger students as well as limited room in the secondary school.

CONT’D ON P3



## First Annual Frostbite Fury SEE P8

Rocky Mountain Speedway hosted Valemount's inaugural Frostbite Fury snowmobile races last Saturday. See more on P8. /LAURA KEIL

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## Fancy a polar dip?

Here at Rearguard Falls on the Fraser River near Tete Jaune Cache the recent cold weather has really made for a spectacular sight with the ice buildup. I believe a polar bear would be only one of a few creatures that could possibly survive a dip in there, especially with the strong undercurrent. /LEON LORENZ

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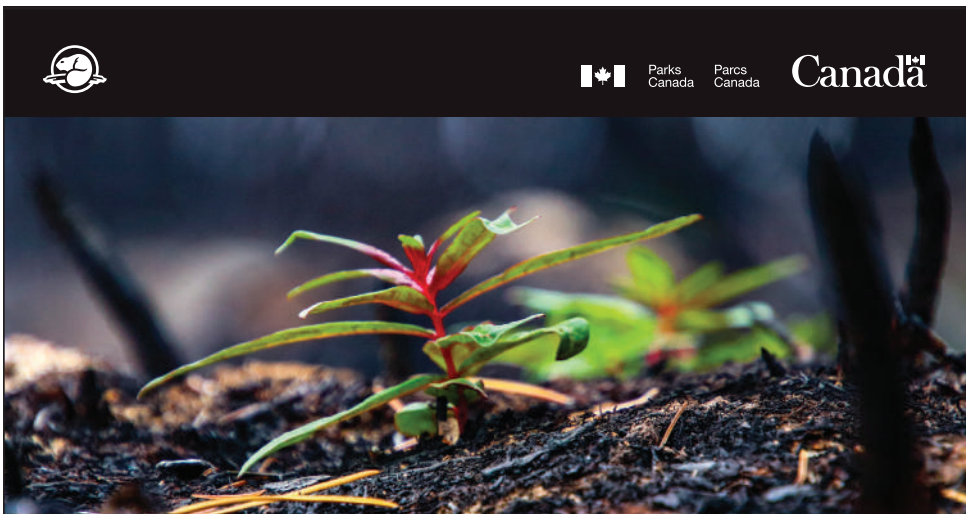
**Tuesday, February 25, 2025**  
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**10:30am to 12:30pm** - Presentation with Linda Fry and Ashley Flavelle  
**12:30pm to 2:00pm** - Free lunch and Visiting

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**Virtual**

**Wednesday, March 5**  
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
[parks.canada.ca/jasper-publicforum](https://parks.canada.ca/jasper-publicforum)

**In-Person**

**Thursday, March 6**  
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Jasper Activity Centre  
**6:00 p.m.** Open House drop-in  
**6:30 p.m.** Year-in-review presentation  
**7:30 p.m.** Table topic discussions

### Nous vous invitons au : Forum public annuel du parc national Jasper

Nous vous invitons à vous joindre à Parcs Canada pour réfléchir à l'année écoulée et pour assister à un bref compte rendu sur le Feu de forêt de Jasper 2024 ainsi qu'à la présentation d'informations fournies par le Centre de coordination du rétablissement de Jasper.

**Séance virtuelle**

**Le mercredi 5 mars**  
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[parcs.canada.ca/forumpublic-jasper](https://parcs.canada.ca/forumpublic-jasper)

**Séance en personne**

**Le jeudi 6 mars**  
de 18 h à 20 h  
Centre récréatif de Jasper  
**18 h** Portes ouvertes  
**18 h 30** Présentation du bilan de l'année  
**19 h 30** Tables de discussion sur divers sujets

## In Loving Memory of...

**Hazel Pauline Dawson**  
Born February 10th, 1930 Jasper, Alberta  
Deceased November 30th, 2024 Prince George, BC

She was a beautiful and loving wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend. She will be truly missed by all.

She was predeceased by her husband Victor and son-in-law Wayne Boudreau.

She is survived by her daughters: Christine (Norman) Norum, Loretta Dawson, Darlene Boudreau, Vickie (Rob) Pepper. Grandchildren: Crystal, Victor, Tina, Sheri and Kody. Great-grandchildren: Gavin, Lyndon, Mayson, Emily, Lennyn & Hayden.




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# Proposed school consolidation...Cont'd

from A1

McBride resident Hazel Sprecher agreed that the consolidation may be harmful for younger children. Similarly, McBride resident Lucille Mintz said there are other cost-saving measures the school district could implement before closing elementary schools.

"If this is about School District 57's budget, maybe they should look into the high cost of [principals], teachers and staff going on out of town trips," Mintz said.

In an interview with The Goat, Robson Valley school board trustee Bob Thompson said he has heard concerns about the proposed consolidation from many local parents.

"In Dunster, my community, we have several young families that have moved in with young children," he said. "Those numbers [in the report] may not bear out."

-Bob Thompson, SD57 trustee

Thompson emphasized that the consolidation is not currently being considered by the board, but he will oppose the recommendation should it come up for discussion.

"Both Valemount and McBride are communities that are struggling... another empty building on our main streets would not be a good thing for our town," Thompson said, adding that a lack of schools may discourage families looking to move to the valley.

Closing schools may not have an immediate financial benefit for the school district, Thompson added.

"The building, until it's sold, will have to be maintained," he said. "It'll have to be heated in the wintertime, it'll have to have maintenance done. There will still be costs associated with the school, even though there are no students in it."

Thompson said he is not sure that the Robson Valley will see the declining enrolment predicted by the board.

"In Dunster, my community, we have several young families that have moved in with young children," he said. "Those numbers [in the report] may not bear out."

If the board does begin to consider consolidation, it will solicit public feedback and have several open meetings before making a final decision, Thompson said.

"It's a 10-year plan - we're talking about 2035. That's a long ways off," he added. "There's no discussion at the current time to do any of the things the consultant recommended."

However, Thompson encourages Robson Valley residents to continue following school board affairs.

"It's not time to panic yet, but stay vigilant. Keep listening," he said. "I'm not saying that it could never happen... but remember, it's just a report."

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# McBride Council: grant support requests, building inspection agreement and airport upgrade discussion

BY ANDREA ARNOLD

McBride Mayor Gene Runtz called the McBride Council meeting to order on February 11th at 6:02 p.m. During the meeting they addressed several requests for letters of support for events and grant applications as well as discussed which projects should be priority at the airport.

### 2030 Summer Games support

Council directed staff to provide a letter of support to the City of Prince George regarding their bid to host the 2030 Special Olympics Canada National Summer Games. The event would be held in July 2030 with approximately 1700 participants participating in 10 sporting competitions - 10 pin bowling, athletics, softball, rhythmic gymnastics, golf, soccer, swimming, basketball, and powerlifting.

Prince George has hosted the BC Games in the past and plans to host the 2025 Special Olympics BC Summer Games, but this would be the first time they host the National Games.

### Robson Valley Music Society support

Council also voted to provide a letter of support to the Robson Valley Music Society for their application to the Northern Development Initiative Trust. The funding obtained from the grant, if successful, would help with this year's Music Festival at the end of August.

### Info Centre provider confirmation

Council approved the issuance of a letter of support to Destination BC confirming the McBride & District Chamber of Commerce as the sponsor organization and sole provider for the McBride Visitor Information

Centre Services. This has been the agreement for the past 20 years. Destination BC provides a grant for \$15,000 to assist with visitor services, and requires a letter from the Village before issuing the grant.

### Building inspection agreement

Council approved the Building Inspections Services Agreement with the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George for a three year term (January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2027). Council also authorized the Mayor and CAO to execute the agreement. Under this agreement, building inspection services would be available Wednesdays between 9:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. between May 1st and Oct 31st each year. Services required during the rest of the year are available by appointment only.

### BC Air Access program grant funding

Council discussed at length the order in which upcoming airport projects should be prioritized before voting on whether they wanted staff to secure cost estimates to bring before council at the March 11th meeting. These estimates would then be used for potential submission of applications to the 2025 BC Air Access funding program.

The projects being discussed are airport perimeter fencing, pilot's lounge/washroom and the extension of the airport hangar line. Many members of Council agreed that the fencing would be the fastest and easiest to obtain cost estimates for and should be the first priority. Councillor Tina Bennett thought that a waiting room and pilot's lounge should be high on the priority list to provide a space for patients to wait for air ambulances, or a place for pilots to wait for their passengers. She believes this would be a step in making the airport more attractive to visitors. Councillor Peter Caputo pointed out that the runway is not long enough

for emergency transport airplanes. Councillor Glen Frear commented that patients waiting for medi-vac transport remain in an ambulance until the time comes to be loaded into the helicopter.

The immensity of a project such as the construction of a new structure for a waiting room/lounge was also discussed. Economic Development Officer Karen Dubé said that it is more complex because there is water, sewer, power, and a structure involved. Given the tight time frame, one month, getting multiple cost estimates for the work may not be possible for the March 11th deadline.

Mayor Runtz also expressed concern that making these decisions before having the budget finalized is a difficult thing to do as the funding only covers a portion of the expenses for each project. Dubé explained to the Council that it is important to be prepared to carry out the project within the timeframe if the grant application is submitted.

Following the discussion council voted to have staff obtain and present estimates for all three projects at the March 11th meeting.

### In-camera

Council moved to an in-camera meeting for consideration of matters of the Community Charter related to Section 90 (1): (c) labour relations or other employee relations. The regular meeting was recessed at 6:28 p.m.

# Letters/Op-Ed

## About Letters to the Editor

The Goat welcomes all letters to the editor and values diverse opinions in our newspaper. Letters should address something that appeared in the newspaper or a current event. Recommended letter length is 400 words or less due to space constraints. Longer letters may be rejected or the author asked to reduce the length. The Goat formats letters and grammar according to Canadian Press style. No substantive changes are made without the author's approval. Letters are reviewed for clarity and libel, but are not fact checked and may contain errors or misleading statements. Letters must be submitted with a phone number for verification purposes and the location of the author, but only the name of the author and location will be published. We may publish anonymous letters when they are in the public interest. Write to us! [goatnewspaper@gmail.com](mailto:goatnewspaper@gmail.com). We ALWAYS confirm receipt of letters. If you have not received a reply from us, please call us at 250-566-4606 so we can make sure we receive it. Our letters deadline is Sunday 5pm the week of publication. Letters received after our deadline may still be included if space is available, otherwise they will be bumped to the following week.



## Northern and remote communities need internet connectivity – but the B.C. premier is preoccupied with political posturing

Up here in Northern B.C., there's a good chance you've heard of Starlink.

Starlink is a high-speed internet service that operates using a constellation of low Earth orbit satellites. This means that homes in areas unequipped with on-the-ground internet infrastructure can simply install a Starlink dish and router and pay a monthly bill of approximately \$140, no matter how rural, remote, or far north they are.

With this kind of private sector innovation, there is no need to rely on costly and slow-to-implement government infrastructure projects.

However, in response to U.S. President Donald Trump's tariff threats, B.C. Premier David Eby stated that he would no longer be pursuing U.S.-based Starlink to deliver high-speed internet to remote and northern communities in British Columbia. Simultaneously, Eby prohibited B.C.'s Crown corporations from awarding major project contracts to American firms.

Ontario premier Doug Ford announced on February 3rd that he was "ripping up" a \$100M contract with Starlink in response to the U.S. tariffs, but just hours later reversed his decision after the tariffs were suspended.

Eby, however, has not announced that he will be

reinstating the pursuit of Starlink. It seems he wants to punish Trump-affiliated Starlink founder Elon Musk in whatever small way he can, at the cost of ensuring that residents of rural B.C. can access high-speed internet connectivity. Musk is the head of the new U.S. Department of Government Efficiency.

Clearly, Eby and the BC NDP are putting politics before people.

Access to reliable, low-latency internet is crucial for growing the economy, accessing educational opportunities, and maintaining familial ties.

Rural and urban British Columbians alike video chat with relatives in other parts of the world, partake in telehealth appointments and web-based medical services, and work remotely. Many youth choose to do some or all of their schooling virtually, and many adults enrol in degree programs or continuing studies online. For those operating a business, high-speed internet is a non-negotiable.

BC Ferries is one Crown corporation that is now forbidden from doing further business with American firms. BC Ferries already purchases Starlink service for their crew, but not yet for their passengers.

In Japan, one of Tokyo Kyushu Ferry's ships is now equipped with Starlink Wi-Fi so that its 300 passengers

can read the news, complete university assignments, or work remotely during the 21-hour marine journey.

The state-run Alaska Marine Highway System offers Starlink Wi-Fi on their largest ferry as well.

In October 2024, Qatar Airways equipped the first Boeing 777 airplane with Starlink Wi-Fi.

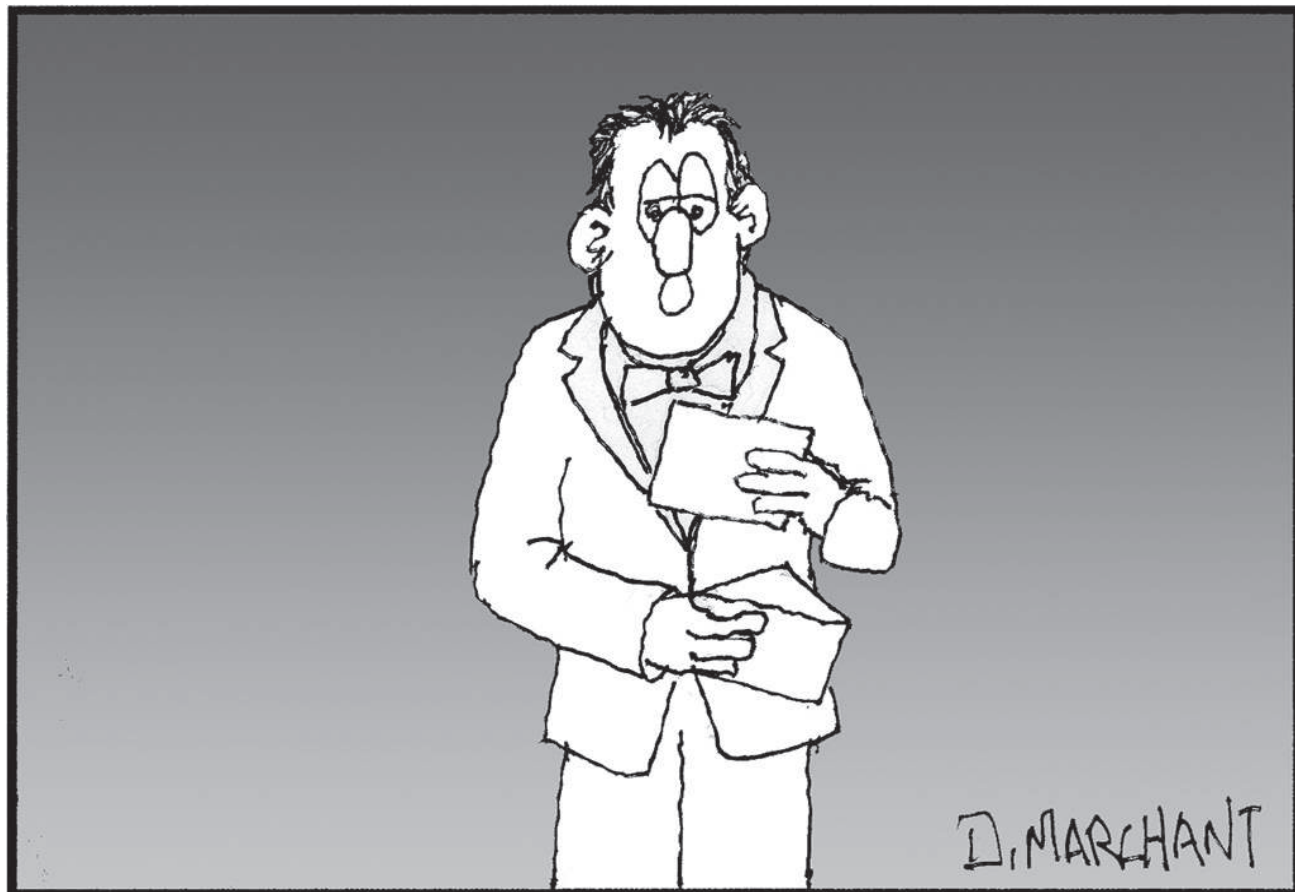
In B.C., we can only dream of having these services.

As it stands, Starlink is the only operational satellite constellation internet provider with full B.C. coverage that offers reasonably-priced services directly to individual homes. Eutelsat OneWeb, which is currently more expensive, targets enterprise and government, while Amazon's Project Kuiper and Telesat Canada's Lightspeed are not yet operational.

Our province has promised that 100% of residents will be connected to the internet by 2027.

The NDP government must not let rural, remote, and northern British Columbians fall behind because David Eby prioritizes his political grandstanding. The government should commit to a Starlink costing and stakeholder engagement study – they should not be closing doors on technology that can seal the digital divide.

*Rosalyn Bird is the BC Conservative Critic for Citizens' Services and MLA for Prince George-Valemount.*



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# Editorial



By Spencer Hall  
Editor & Owner  
goatnewspaper@gmail.com

## Connectivity or sovereignty?

Is Premier David Eby “putting politics before people” by no longer considering Starlink as the provider to connect the northern and rural B.C. communities to reliable high-speed internet?

BC Conservative MLA for PG-Valemount Rosalyn Bird says so, however her letter published on P4 in this week’s edition of The Goat misses key details and context as to why B.C. is no longer working with American firms, including Starlink.

Typically, The Goat doesn’t publicly respond to letters to the editor, however we made an exception this week as Bird is the MLA for our region and is speaking from a position of power.

Even though the 25 per cent tariffs on Canadian goods have been paused temporarily, it is unclear if they will come into effect after the 30 day halt expires in early March. Earlier this month, Trump also introduced a 25 per cent tariff on steel and aluminium, which will stack on top of the other tariffs should they come into effect.

With this potentially devastating trade war lingering in the air, it makes sense that Eby is no longer considering Starlink as a provider of

rural internet services and is instead looking at other proponents to provide internet to remote areas.

Trump has also repeatedly undermined our country’s sovereignty, telling reporters in January that he intends to use economic force in order for the country to become “the 51st state.”

Eby, along with other Canadian premiers, recently travelled to Washington D.C., where senior White House officials confirmed to premiers that Trump is serious about annexing Canada.

“As Canadians, we need to realize that he is not joking, that he is definitively looking towards the 51st state being Canada,” Newfoundland and Labrador premier Andrew Furey told CTV News. “He’s had a chance to change that narrative, and not only has he doubled down, I think he’s quadrupled down now on saying that.”

It is because our very sovereignty is at stake that we can no longer rely on our long standing neighbor, ally, and trade partner. We cannot act as though it is business as usual. It is imperative that the Province diversify its trade partners.

This is not “political grandstanding” but putting your country first against foreign threats against its independence.

While I agree with Bird that reliable, high speed internet is needed in rural areas such as ours, I don’t believe it’s worth partnering with a man who works so closely with an administration that would like to see our country absorbed into the U.S.

Starlink’s technology may be cutting edge, but it is not the only option when it comes to connecting the North. The province does not need to rely on American companies to connect its rural areas and instead can keep our money in our own country by working with Canadian telecom companies to bring high-speed internet to remote areas. In fact, Telus is the proponent of an in-progress project in the Thompson-Nicola area, which will bring high-speed fibre internet to six communities, including Blue River.

It’s worth noting that Eby’s decision to not work with Elon Musk and Starlink doesn’t mean those in rural areas can’t use Starlink services. It is readily available to consumers across the province.

# Global Thoughts

## Different Kinds of Thieves

BY GWYNNE DYER



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

What’s the difference between smash-and-grab raids and protection rackets? Not all that much from the legal point of view, but protection rackets have a lower level of risk and a higher rate of returns.

Take Rwanda, for example. President Paul Kagame is running no personal risks, but the Tutsi soldiers of the M23 rebel army, which essentially works for him, are fighting an actual war in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The current task of the M23 army is to seize control of the part of eastern DRC that borders Rwanda and steal the rich mineral reserves of that region: gold, cobalt, and above all coltan, which is essential for smartphones and almost all other sophisticated electronic devices.

This region contains up to 60% of the global reserves of coltan ore, and it’s easy to steal and market. Stolen coltan currently accounts for a secret but significant share of Rwandan government income, but it’s a typical smash-and-grab operation: lots of violence and a short-term perspective.

It’s working well: M23 seized all of North Kivu last month, and has already conquered most of South Kivu this month. Paul Kagame has even sent 4,000 Rwandan soldiers along to back up the local thugs, but this is the third time in thirty years that Rwanda has sent its army

into the eastern DRC to grab resources. Lots of people die, but it never lasts.

Whereas a protection racket is a long-term relationship: “Nice little shop/country you’ve got here. You wouldn’t want to see it smashed/destroyed now, would you? Just have the cash ready every Friday and nothing bad will happen to you.” Or in Ukraine’s case, just have half your mineral output loaded up for shipment every Friday and you won’t be hurt.

“I told them that I want the equivalent of like \$500 billion worth of rare earths, and they’ve essentially agreed to do that,” Donald Trump told the Ukrainian government last week. Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky knew the mob would be coming round for its cut, and he got his offer to pay in first.

Trump often talks before he thinks, so the first number out of his mouth in reply was \$500 billion. That’s almost five times the value of US military and civilian aid to Ukraine since the Russian invasion three years ago (\$116 billion), but it’s far less than Trump could really screw out of a country with its back to the wall.

In a couple of days, therefore, Trump upped the demand hugely – but he followed Zelensky’s suggestion that it should come out of Ukraine’s future mineral wealth, since Kyiv currently has no spare money at all.

Trump said he now wanted 50% of Ukraine’s future income from exploiting its reserves of rare metals and critical materials: titanium, uranium, lithium, beryllium, manganese, gallium, zirconium, graphite, apatite, fluorite and nickel. Half Ukraine’s mineral income forever could be worth as much as \$5 trillion.

Zelensky didn’t fall for that, so now they are in a negotiation. It’s not just about the price Ukraine pays for survival, but also about what assurances Trump can give that paying off America will really guarantee Ukraine’s survival.

The underlying difficulty is that the White House mob has farmed the enforcement work out to the Kremlin mob, and the Russians may hate Ukraine enough to insist on destroying it even if Trump makes his deal with Zelensky.

It’s the downside of protection rackets. It’s a crowded field, and there are always rival mobs trying to spoil your play or cut you out completely. Don Corleone had to deal with problems like this in his (fictional) past, and Don Kagame has been handling them successfully most of his life. Don Trump is new to this game, and we shall see.



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# Valemount Council: Fees and Charges Bylaw

BY ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

Valemount Council passed its amended fees and charges bylaw during a brief regular meeting on February 11th.

Mayor Owen Torgerson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. After adopting the evening's agenda and the minutes of the previous meeting, Council moved on to discussing the amended bylaw.

## Fees and Charges Bylaw

Council approved amendments to the fees and charges bylaw at their November 26th meeting last year. However, the version of the bylaw it approved accidentally omitted the sections with rates for water fees. The amended bylaw does not make further changes to the fees for violating bylaws, but it does add the mistakenly omitted sections back into the bylaw.

In a previous email to The Goat, CAO Anne Yanciw said staff are unsure how the omission happened. However, the omitted fees have been reinstated since being approved at the meeting. Council unanimously adopted the bylaw.

## Special Olympics Letter of Support

City of Prince George staff sent an email asking for a letter of support from Valemount Council for the city to host the 2030 Special Olympics Canada National Summer Games. Prince George has previously hosted provincial games for B.C. and Yukon athletes twice – once in winter 1991 and again in summer 2001 – and is set to host another provincial game this July.

The national game would serve as a qualifier to compete with Special Olympics Team Canada. In her email to the Village, the City's Event Coordinator Lindsay Timmermans said the City is excited at the possibility of hosting a national event. She asked for a letter of support to include in the bid package she is submitting to Special Olympics Canada.

Councillor Pete Pearson moved to send a letter of support for the bid. Council passed the motion.

## In-Camera

Torgerson adjourned the open session of Council at 7:06 p.m. Council proceeded to an in-camera session for consideration of two items per Section 90 (1)(c) and 90 (2)(b) of the Community Charter to discuss matters related to:

- (c) labour relations or other employee relations.
- (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.



## Thin Ice

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### 2025 Business Licenses – Short-Term Vacation Rentals

All Short-Term Vacation Rentals, whether classified as major or minor, have to be approved/re-approved annually, and licensed by January 31 of each year. Please note that the deadline has now passed. If your STVR is not yet licensed, be sure to submit a completed renewal form, available at the Village Office or on the website at [www.valemount.ca/business/business-licensing](http://www.valemount.ca/business/business-licensing) (ensure you are filling out the Vacation Rental Application form), to avoid being removed from the online accommodations listings.

The business license fee for the major classification (rental of either an entire principal dwelling, or a detached Accessory Dwelling Unit) is \$150.

The business license fee for the minor classification (rental of either a portion of a residence (e.g., a room), or an attached secondary suite (basement suite, garage suite etc.)) is \$100.

### CBT ReDi Committee Meeting Schedule

- February 20, March 13, and April 10, 2025

Meetings are at 6:30pm at the Village of Valemount Council Chambers, 735 Cranberry Lake Road. The Columbia Basin Trust ReDi Grants Adjudication Committee Meeting schedule for 2025 is posted at the entrance of the Municipal Office, and on the Village of Valemount website. Please note that meeting dates and times may change. Approved changes will be posted on the front door of the Village Office and at [www.valemount.ca](http://www.valemount.ca).



### Opportunities To Get Involved!

Council currently has vacancies on the following boards and committees:

The **Clean Air Task Force** is a Select Committee of Council whose mandate is to explore all options to improve air quality in the village. For more information, visit the village website at [www.valemount.ca](http://www.valemount.ca). Look for the Clean Air Website link in the upper right-hand corner.

The **Community Foundation Board** will administer a Community Foundation grant program. The Foundation will support a wide range of causes based on the greatest needs and priorities in the community. Get involved to make a difference!

The Village is also seeking community volunteers to sit on a **Council Remuneration Review Panel**; this is a short-term project of evaluating and recommending Council compensation.

The deadline for applications to the Clean Air Task Force, the Community Foundation Board, and the Council Remuneration Panel is 4:00 pm, Sunday, March 2, 2025. Please submit your application form in-person at the Village Office, by email to [corporate@valemount.ca](mailto:corporate@valemount.ca), or by mail to Village of Valemount, Attention: Corporate, PO Box 168, Valemount BC, V0E 2Z0.

To learn more about each of these unique opportunities, and to access the Board/Committee Application Form, please see the Latest News & Events banner on the Village of Valemount homepage: [www.valemount.ca](http://www.valemount.ca).

### Business Recovery

The Valemount economy is largely based on tourism and transportation through the valley. The community was immediately and significantly impacted by the wildfires, and subsequent highway closures, in July/August, 2024. The Village engaged Strategies North to assist in providing recovery management services. Access the Economic Recovery Strategy on the website: [www.valemount.ca](http://www.valemount.ca).

### Recognize a Deserving Person in your Community

The call for nominations for British Columbia's two top honours – the Order of British Columbia and Medal of Good Citizenship – is now open!

The Order of B.C. recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding achievement, excellence, or distinction in a field of endeavour benefitting the province or elsewhere. Former or current residents of British Columbia are eligible. Posthumous nominations are not accepted. We encourage you to recognize someone for their accomplishments provincially, nationally, or internationally by nominating them today.

The Medal of Good Citizenship recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to their local communities without seeking remuneration. This prestigious honour recognizes acts of selflessness, generosity, and contributions to the betterment of someone's local community. Youth (aged 15 to 25), adult, and posthumous nominations are welcome.

The nomination deadline for both honours is Friday, April 4, 2025. Submissions received after this date will be considered in 2026.

Go to the BC government website to submit your nominations: [www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/celebrating-british-columbia/honours-and-awards](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/celebrating-british-columbia/honours-and-awards)



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# U15 Hockey Face-off

Left: Balazs readies to let a shot fly, hoping it hits the back of the net.  
Right: Walker tries to sneak the puck past Valemount goalie Hunter



McBride and Valemount U15 teams faced off in a double-header on Sunday Feb 9th. The players gave it their all and fans were treated to some good hockey. The McBride Grizzlies held the lead and took the win in both battles. /ANDREA ARNOLD



Left: Harper fires one off into the quick glove of McBride goalie Jayde.  
Right: Mica puts everything into a shot from inside the zone.



## Upper Fraser East snowpack still below average

BY ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

Dry conditions have persisted in the Upper Fraser East region throughout the past month, according to the snow survey and water supply bulletin released by the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship on February 11th. The Upper Fraser East region, spanning roughly from Valemount to Prince George, is currently sitting at 81 per cent of normal snowpack – hardly a change from the January levels, which were determined to be 82 per cent of normal.

81 per cent falls into the “near normal” range of 80 to 105 per cent of normal, the bulletin says. That number is considerably higher than last year, when the February bulletin recorded 63 per cent of normal snowpack in the Upper Fraser East region.

Precipitation was well below normal throughout the province last month, particularly during the dry spell from mid-to-late January, the bulletin says. These conditions, compounded by years of drought in B.C., could mean the province will see a dry spring and summer.

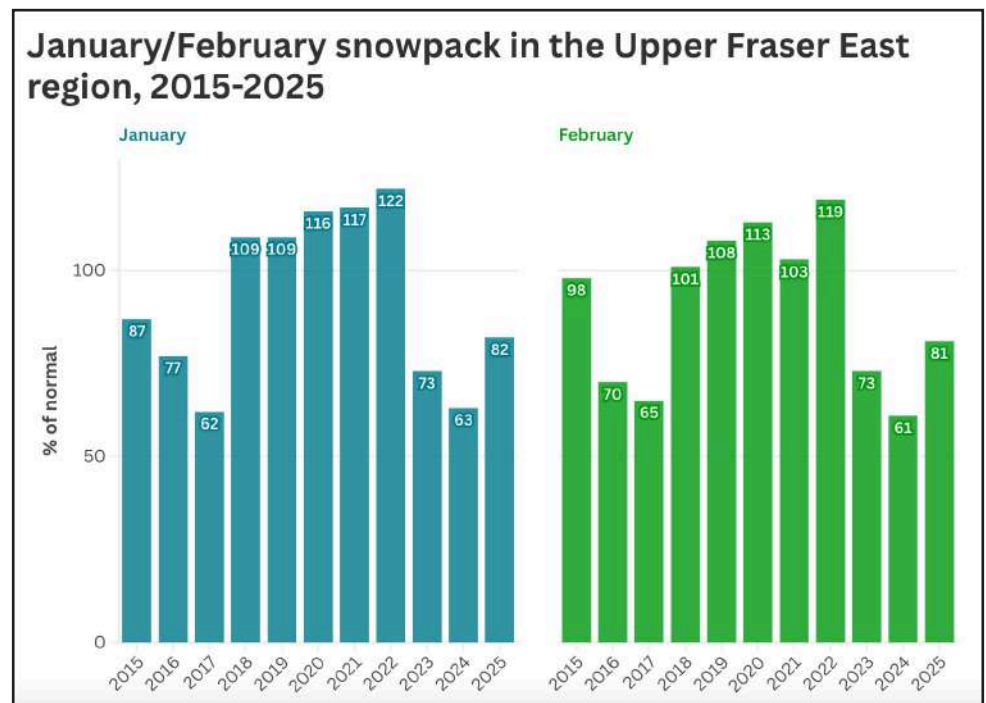
“The current low provincial snowpack (72 per cent of normal), persistence of drought impacts from previous seasons,

and low seasonal volume forecasts are all significant factors for an increase in province-wide concern for drought this summer,” the statement reads.

La Niña conditions – a term for when cold waters from the Pacific Ocean bring cooler-than-typical temperatures to B.C. – could also influence the April 1st snowpack. Typically, April snowpack is higher during La Niña winters, and La Niña conditions have persisted since January 9th of this year, according to the bulletin. The Ministry predicts that B.C. may experience below normal temperatures from February through April.

The Ministry predicts that the volume of seasonal runoff created by melting snow will be near normal for the upper portions of the Fraser. Flood and drought predictions will become more clear during the April 1st snow survey period, the bulletin says.

The next snow survey and water supply bulletin is scheduled to be released on March 10th or 11th, depending on data availability. The bulletin will include an updated seasonal risk forecast on floods and droughts.



The Upper Fraser East region reached historically low snowpack levels last year, but is creeping up towards normal levels in 2025. Currently, the region is sitting at 81 per cent of normal – just within the range of “near normal,” from 80 to 105 per cent. /ABIGAIL POPPLE

# Frostbite Fury



The first-ever snowmobile races at the Rocky Mountain Speedway took place last Saturday, attracting 70 racers in multiple classes with a great turnout of spectators. Tamara Cinnamon, one of the organizers, said local kids right up to seasoned professionals churned up snow on the track, and they expect next year's race to be even bigger. "Our phones haven't stopped ringing," she said. "Next year won't be double, it'll be 3-4 times the size."

From top left clockwise: Tamara Cinnamon waves the starting flag for each race. Jason Michaud takes the lead in the Trophy Dash. Hundreds of spectators turned out to watch Valemount's beloved snow machine put to the test. Barrett, a young racer from Ponoka, Alberta, did a practise lap before races began. Joel Cinnamon, one of the racetrack organizers, hands Jason Michaud the checkered flag for his victory lap. Local racer Ellen Duncan charges ahead in the women's race. Spectators kept warm thanks to warming fires and hot food and drink. Maverick and Conrad hang out with their dad Josh Ball as he and Marlon Jackman troubleshoot a kids' snowmobile for Marlon's son, Eddy. Centre photo: the women's race attracted a number of seasoned and beginner riders. /PHOTOS BY LAURA KEIL & TAMEY WOOD





# Winterfest 2025



Chainsaw artist Tyler Welfing with CarveWel Creations, based out of Vernon, B.C., carved three ice sculptures in as many hours last Friday during Winterfest. His first carving was that of an eagle, followed by a bear and a moose. /SPENCER HALL



Winterfest kicked off last Friday afternoon along 5th Ave from Cedar Street to Birch Street. The event hosted by Tourism Valemount featured local vendors, games, and bounce castles. The event also allowed residents to get a sneak peek at the snowmobiles that were set to race at the Rocky Mountain Speedway's Frostbite Fury event the following day. /SPENCER HALL



# MUSTANGS VS. TEAM 911



The McBride Mustangs Basketball team took on Team 911 in a fundraising faceoff on February 6th. Team 911 brought in the added element of family dynamics as parents, children and siblings faced off during the game. Team 911 consisted of firefighters, paramedics, hospital staff, search and rescue and two former Mustangs for additional support. The score stayed close throughout the game, but Team 911 took this matchup with a final score of 41-37. /ANDREA ARNOLD

Clockwise from top left:  
Durrell prevents Isaac from completing his layup  
Seth drives to the net leaving dad Anthony in his wake.  
Steve and Aziz battle out for possession in the air.  
Tylan gets past his brother River and Jacob for a layup attempt.  
Team 911 member Durrell soars as he takes the tip off in a game against the McBride Mustangs Basketball team.  
Nate uses his height to thwart Wyatt's three point shot attempt.



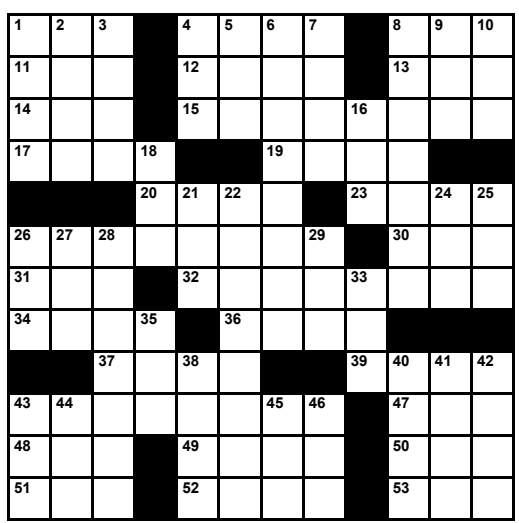
# PUZZLES



## CROSSWORD

Answers on P13

- Across**
1. Fermented sugar-cane
  4. Swallow
  8. Unfortunate
  11. Undivided
  12. Geometry calculation
  13. Distorted
  14. Put away
  15. Interim period
  17. Pac-Man's lunch
  19. Two aces, say
  20. Angel's surround
  23. Prepare for the future
  26. Like some hairlines
  30. Self-image
  31. Row
  32. Marooned
  34. Oft-furrowed facial feature
  36. Kind
  37. "\_\_\_ here"
  39. Unstable
  43. Final courses
  47. Bleed
  48. Vote of approval
  49. Work with a sickle
  50. Remain
  51. Proposal response,
- often**
52. Tense
  53. Cut
- Down**
1. Throughway
  2. "For \_\_\_ us a child is born ..."
  3. Comply
  4. Water blocker
  5. Basic metal
  6. Arsenal inventory
  7. Mom's mom
  8. Spun around
  9. Pitcher's asset
  10. Golf course maker
  16. Overturn
  18. Ship, affectionately
  21. Billboard displays
  22. Strewed trash
  24. Hair colour can be a measure of it
  25. Agree
  26. Steal from
  27. Pencil holder
  28. Traverses
  29. Deficiency
  33. Unused



35. Embodied
38. Nothing more
40. Notable times
41. Angelic quality
42. Had down cold
43. 24 hours
44. Glance
45. \_\_\_ Heuer watch
46. Austin Powers, for one



To dare to hope, to trust and to love, even in the face of uncertainty. That takes courage. Sometimes courage feels like foolishness, but that's OK, too. This week brings an opportunity to break free of patterns that no longer serve. The sun moving into the realm of the fish brings all the empathy, soul and tenderness we need. Let this be a turning point and a sign that fortifications are never far away for those willing to tap the inner well.

-- and probably really good -- to step away. You're recognizing that this dynamic wasn't good for you, which is brave.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19). You're picking up on something important this week -- a distinction between what feels like kindness and what doesn't. You know what it's like to genuinely be met with warmth and care, and when that's missing, it's a valid observation. It doesn't make you overly sensitive; it means you have a radar for emotional safety, and it sounds like it's working just fine.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Relationships are complex and sometimes imbalanced, but it doesn't stop you from showing up as your authentic self, even when your needs and vulnerabilities aren't met in return. Your feelings aren't wrong. They're proof of how deeply you can care and how open you are to people who intrigue and inspire you.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You're a force that can sweep people off their feet with your brilliance, your kindness and your drive. You're still trying to untangle a tangled knot of feelings. You admire someone deeply -- not just for their accomplishments but for the energy they bring into your life. That connection means something profound to you, and you'll find the perfect way to show it.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20). Sometimes you get caught up in trying to define or understand someone else's behavior in concrete terms, but at the end of the day, what matters most is how it feels to you. If it's disruptive to your peace or doesn't nourish you, that's all the clarity you need to make decisions about the role that person should have in your life.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). There's so much beauty and strength in what you share with the world. Someone will be proud of you, and this makes you more proud of yourself. You'll express something incredibly beautiful and wise. You'll embrace your ability to love in this unconditional, expansive way. You'll continue growing, evolving and creating.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 21). Conflict isn't a natural or comfortable space for you, and that's not a flaw; it's a reflection of your values and the kinds of relationships you cultivate, where harmony, mutual respect and kindness take precedence. You deserve relationships that feel uplifting, where the kindness is unmistakable and mutual, and where your joy can shine without interference.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your love isn't contingent on another person's response. Being OK with the fact that things won't always go the way you want but still showing up for yourself and others is a strength that will always serve you. You're not defined by your circumstances or the things that don't align perfectly. Keep going and love deeply.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 22). A relationship will teach you something valuable about boundaries, patterns and your own strength. You'll shift the framing. You'll hold your own. Those are lessons that will serve you well in all your relationships moving forward. Your self-awareness, your humor and your kindness come through strongly, even in the moments when you doubt yourself.

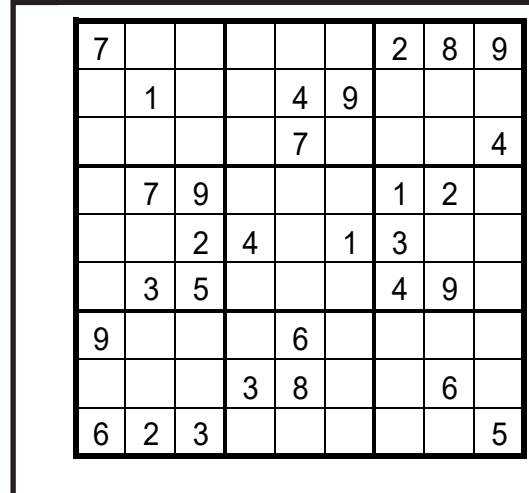
**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The future is full of possibilities for you, and your efforts will pay off without a doubt. You'll be around people, you'll see them, and you'll help them see themselves in a new light. You're already doing it by being present and honest with yourself, and by allowing your heart to keep leading you.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22). Keep reminding yourself that you're more than one connection with one person. You're someone with so much to offer -- depth, warmth, wit, creativity -- and there will be people who match that energy and give back in ways that feel fulfilling and nourishing. You deserve that kind of love and friendship.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20). You sometimes wonder if you have enough of what it takes to create something remarkable, but these doubts are silly. The fact is, you're already doing it. You're gathering talented collaborators, pouring yourself into your work and taking risks others would shy away from. This week gives you a creative touchstone you can come back to when you need confidence.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). It takes strength to choose what's right for your heart over what it's yearning for in the moment. You're incredibly reflective and honest this week. It's OK to miss people, to feel the pull of wanting to reach out. But it's also OK

**THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS:** Your imagination paints a rich inner experience, and your vision will grow all along this solar journey, filling in the gap between the world of your wishes and the one that is.



## SUDOKU

Answers on P13

**HOW TO PLAY**

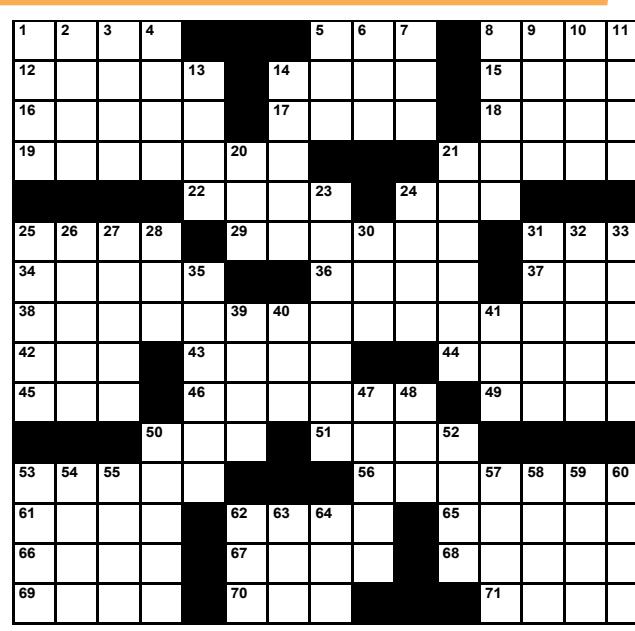
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

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**
1. Guadalajara greeting
  5. Syringe amts.
  8. Addresses in a browser
  12. Hut material
  14. Slumber party guest
  15. He gathered two by two
  16. 17A+53A
  17. 56A-66
  18. 53A+2
  19. Ballpark snack
  21. Hingis rival
  22. Beauty products provider
  24. Agent of Uncle Sam
  25. Alum
  29. \_\_\_ Artois beer
  31. Org. with a caduceus logo
  34. Spanish coins
  36. Seagoing, abbr.
  37. Pink lady ingredient
  38. One who just became a voter
  42. One in Madrid
  43. Princess
  44. Pens
  45. Attention-getter
  46. Actress Papas and others
  49. Mower maker
  50. Letter abbr.
  51. Merriment
  53. 16A-17A
  56. 53Ax17Ax18A+10
  61. First name in country music
  62. Katie Holmes' daughter
  65. Donovan of "Clueless"
  66. The Phantom of the Opera's first name
  67. Tennis great, Arthur
- 20. Two-time U.S. Open winner**
- 21. Airport in Washington**
- 23. Wanting desperately**
- 24. Chimney channel**
- 25. Go faster!**
- 26. Knossos sight**
- 27. Insider's vocabulary**
- 28. "Simpsons" exclamation**
- 30. Non-professional**



68. Bristle-like
69. Own (up)
70. Little Red Book author
71. Nothing more
8. Hungry
9. Aggravate
10. Bathe
11. The Beatles' "\_\_\_ Leaving Home"
13. Auto manufacturer Ferrari
14. Black piano key
20. Two-time U.S. Open winner
21. Airport in Washington
23. Wanting desperately
24. Chimney channel
25. Go faster!
26. Knossos sight
27. Insider's vocabulary
28. "Simpsons" exclamation
30. Non-professional
31. Disco era phrase
32. Certain track athlete
33. "\_\_\_ to bed"
35. Pool ball type
39. What headphones cover
40. Captain's heading
41. Maze animal
47. Madison Ave. cow
48. "Get the picture?"
50. Tops
52. When to call, in some ads
53. Not kosher
54. On earth
55. Fenway Park stats
57. K-6 abbreviation
58. Dark time for advertisers
59. Anastasia's father, e.g.
60. Ivy League school
62. Frodo's gardener
63. Land of the brave and free
64. Sigma's predecessor

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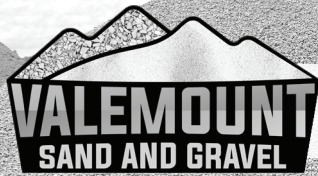
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CROSSWORD ANSWERS

1	2	U	3	4	D	O	W	7	N	8	S	10	D			
11	O	N	E	12	A	R	E	A	13	W	R	Y				
14	A	T	E	15	M	E	A	N	16	T	I	M	E			
17	D	O	T	18	P	A	I	R	19							
20	H	A	L	21	A	L	O	22	P	L	23	A	N			
24	R	E	C	25	E	D	I	N	26	G	27	E	G	O		
28	O	A	R	29	S	T	R	A	30	N	D	E	D			
31	B	R	O	32	W	T	Y	P	E							
33	S	A	M	34	E	35	W	36	E	37	A	38	K			
39	D	E	S	40	S	E	R	41	T	42	S	43	R	44	U	N
45	A	Y	E	46	R	E	A	P	47	A	R	E				
48	Y	E	S	49	E	D	G	Y	50	S	A	W				

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**SUDOKU ANSWERS**

7	5	4	1	3	6	2	8	9
2	1	6	8	4	9	5	7	3
3	9	8	2	7	5	6	1	4
4	7	9	6	5	3	1	2	8
8	6	2	4	9	1	3	5	7
1	3	5	7	2	8	4	9	6
9	8	1	5	6	4	7	3	2
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**TOUGHIE ANSWERS**

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14	P	R	E	T	Z	15	E	L	16	S	E	L	E	S			
17																	
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21	E	U	R	O	22	S	N	A	U	T	23	G	I	N			
24	E	I	G	H	25	T	E	N	Y	E	A	26	R	O	L	D	
27	U	N	O	28	R	A	N	I	29	C	A	G	E	S			
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34																	
35	T	H	36	R	E	37	S	E	V	38	E	N	39	T	40	Y	
41	R	E	B	A	42	U	R	I	43	E	L	L	I	S	A		
44	E	R	I	K	45	A	S	H	46	E	47	S	E	T	A	L	
48	F	E	S	S	49	M	A	O	50	M	E	R	E				

Classifieds In print and online, too!	under 20 words .....	\$8/week
	under 40 words .....	\$12/week
	Classified with photo (<40 words) .....	\$30/week
	Box classified with border (<40 words) .....	\$25/week
	'Guaranteed to Sell' .....	\$40/2months (<40 words)

ROBSON  
VALLEY &  
AREA

# Community Events

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

## Valemount

**Money Matters Workshops** on Tuesdays Feb. 25th from 6:30 to 8:30 PM at the Valemount Learning Centre. Call 250-566-4601 to register or for more info.

**WED Feb 19th Firm Foundations Christian Outreach Annual General Meeting** will be held at 1 pm at 1440 7th Avenue. Everyone Welcome.

**THURS Feb 20th Integris Members informal meet and greet.** Integris Credit Union is coming to McBride and we're inviting Valemount residents and businesses to learn what this means for you. 10am-2pm at VALE coffee and 6-7pm at BoShays Bistro.

**FRI Feb 21st VACS presents Dunster's own Dream Heavy.** "Fearless, epic, melodic, progressive metal with influences in latin, celtic, and other world music, Dream Heavy is a heavy hitter on all fronts." 7:30-10 PM p.m. at the Community Theatre (high school). Tickets available at [valemountarts.org](http://valemountarts.org)

**FRI Feb 21 RVCS Men's Program** invites the men of the community and their children to join us for an outdoor **social Winter Gathering** in collaboration with the Family Place Drop-in! at the Valemount office, 1444 5th Avenue, from 9:00 AM-12:00 PM. This fun-filled event will include music, tobogganing, a cozy fire pit, hot chocolate, and hot dogs to roast over the fire. If you don't have a sled, don't worry—we'll have some extra crazy carpets on hand. No registration needed.

**FRI-SUN Feb 21-23 Minor Hockey U15 tournament** at the Canoe Valley Rec Centre. Concession, raffle and more. Come cheer on our local players! Local team game times as follows:  
**Friday:** 5pm Valemount vs. Clearwater  
**Saturday:** 8am McBride vs. Yetis  
10am Valemount vs. Firehawks  
12pm McBride vs. Clearwater  
6:30 Valemount vs. Yetis  
**Sunday:** 8am McBride vs. Kraken  
**Sunday Finals:**  
10am 1st vs. 2nd  
12pm 3rd vs. 4th  
2pm 5th vs. 6th

**Mon's February 24th and March 3rd** Caregivers and children ages 0-6 years are invited to come learn **ASL** and join us from 12:15 PM to 12:45 PM at Strong Start, at Valemount Elementary School, 1445 7th Avenue. Participants will learn functional sign language through songs and communication, enhancing interaction between caregivers and infants. Babies as young as 6 months can start using baby sign language. This program is brought to you by the Infant Development Program and Strong Start. No registration is required

**MON February 24th and March 3rd** Caregivers of children ages 9-18 years are invited to join us for Let's Talk Tech for Tweens & Teens! Two informative sessions starting at 10:30 AM-12:00 PM, at the RVCS office in Valemount, 1444 5th Avenue. Registration is preferred; please contact the office to register.

**TUES FEB 25th Advance Care Planning workshop and luncheon** at the Valemount Community Hall. 10:30-12:30 Presentation by Linda Fry and Ashley Flavelle. 12:30-2pm Free lunch and visiting. Community bus pick-up 9am at McBride Beaverview Lodge and 9:30 Dunster Community Hall. To reserve a spot on the bus call Sandy Oldenburg 250-569-2266.

**SAT MAR 1 PIXAR on Ice presented by the Canoe Valley Skating Club** performances at 1 & 6 PM. Concession, raffle table and more.

**MAR 6 & 13 How to deal with difficult people** 9 A.M. - Noon @ Valemount Learning Centre #16 1295 Gordon Road. Learn how to ask better questions, improve listening skills, create respectful spaces, manage stress and more. Register by March 1st 250-566-4601 or [learn@valemountlearningcentre.org](mailto:learn@valemountlearningcentre.org)

**MAR 8th Community Yard Sale** from 10-2pm VSS basketball teams are hosting a yard sale

fundraiser held in the Valemount secondary school gym! \$25 for a table 50 spots available please contact to book a table by Feb 28. Teams will be available to help set up. Concession, raffles and cake walk also will be happening! Please contact Ellen Van Der Wilk.

**SUN March 9th Esso Fun Day through Valemount Minor hockey.** An introductory event to hockey and its basic skills for girls aged 5- 18 at the Canoe Valley Rec Centre. Call Kimberley for questions 250-566-1083.

**MON March 10th The Valemount Public Library Association's Annual General Meeting** will be held at 4:30pm in the basement of the library. 1090A Main Street. Curious members of the public and anyone interested in joining the library board are very welcome to join us!

## 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! 1 PM. Everyone welcome.

**Drop-in pickleball - Sun, Mon, Tues, Thurs**  
Drop-in pickleball at the Community Hall at noon Sundays, and 8:30 AM Tuesdays and Thursday. Also 6-8 PM 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 6:30-9 PM. Cost is \$20 per game. Seasonal rate available. Sundays 6:30 PM and Wednesdays 8 PM.

**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)

**Mother Goose - Wednesdays**  
WED's Starting January 29th: Infants aged 0-12 months and their adult caregivers are invited to join us for Mother Goose. This Parent-Child Mother Goose Program is a group experience for parents and their babies and young children. The program introduces adults and children to the pleasure of using rhymes, songs, and stories together. The program runs from 11:15 PM to 2:15 PM and lasts for 10 weeks at the Valemount Public Library, 1090A Main Street. No Registration required. For more info contact 250-566-9107 [events@rvcsbc.org](mailto:events@rvcsbc.org).

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

**WED's Infant Massage** Starting January 29th: Infants aged 0-12 months and their adult caregivers (no siblings, please) are invited to learn about the benefits and techniques for Infant Massage in an 8-week program. Join us from 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM at the Valemount Public Library, 1090A Main Street. The purpose of the International Association of Infant Massage is to promote nurturing touch and communication. Registration is required; for more info contact the office 250-566-9107 or [events@rvcsbc.org](mailto:events@rvcsbc.org)

**Astronomy Course - Wednesdays**  
Drop in and learn about astronomy through the Valemount Library's ongoing astronomy series! 7-8:30 every Wednesday.

**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.

**Drop-In Dance Fitness Classes - Thursdays**

Adult fitness classes at Valemount Elementary Gym (Leave boots at the office entrance please). All genders and abilities are welcome. Ages 16+ Come follow along as we get our hearts pumping and feel good in our bodies! Bring indoor shoes, a water bottle, and a donation (\$5, \$10, or \$20 suggested donations but anything is appreciated). All proceeds go towards school trips. Thursdays 3-4pm February 6th, 20th, 27th, and March 6th and 13th. Feel free to join for less than an hour if that's what works! Please email [hannahlisebf@gmail.com](mailto:hannahlisebf@gmail.com) with any questions

**Drop-in curling Wednesday & Friday nights** 7 PM at the Valemount Curling Club. \$10 drop-in fee after \$10 membership. Brooms provided, just bring clean shoes!

**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 7 PM 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 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 9 AM-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!

**February 21 - Fire and Tobogganing a collaboration with the Men's Program**  
**February 28 - Sensory Bins**

## McBride

**THUR Feb 20** Get ready to unleash your inner artist and join us for an exciting afternoon of **Pictionary!** From 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. Whether you're a seasoned Pictionary pro or first-time doodler, this event is sure to be a blast. Come and showcase your drawing skills or simply enjoy the creative chaos! This event is brought to you by the RVCS Adult Literacy program. No registration required for this drop-in event.

**THUR Feb 27:** Join us for a special screening of the **NFB film "Sons"! Gather** with fellow community members to enjoy this captivating movie and experience the power of storytelling. The movie will start at 1:00 PM -3:00 PM. Come and be part of this exciting event. This event is brought to you by the RVCS Adult Literacy program. No registration required.

**SAT MAR 8 An Evening in Hollywood Presented by the McBride Figure Skating Club.** Doors open at 4:30 pm, show starts @ 5:30 pm. Special guest skater Paislee Trask. Admission by donation. Concession by Live Different. 50/50 draw.

## 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 9 AM-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!

**February 24th - Swim Days at the Best Western by registration only, email [charlene@rvcsbc.org](mailto:charlene@rvcsbc.org) in advance to register**

**ASL Sign Language Club**  
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

**Weekly Program for Children - Tuesdays 3:00pm** starting with a story and snack, each week library staff will host activities under the umbrella of the following themes: constructing and creating, critical cinematic conversations,

board games and cards, and computer lab learning (coding and creation apps). Beginning January 28th, this program is geared to ages 9-12. Please call 250-569-2411 or stop in to register children for some or all events. More info on the website [library@mcbridebc.org](mailto:library@mcbridebc.org).

**Fibre Artists**  
On Wednesdays the McBride Library host the Fibre Artists' group 10 AM-12 PM: come knit, sew or crochet with us! Beginners welcome. Online option available - call the library for info on 250 569 2411.

**Book Clubs for Adults**  
The McBride Library holds two monthly book discussion clubs for adults Thursday afternoons 1:30 PM. Call 250 569 2411 for info.

**Dungeons & Dragons**  
For ages 12-18, the classic fantasy storytelling game. Join us on Tuesdays 3:30-6pm, McBride Library. Bring D&D dice if you have them!

**Rolling with ADHD - Wednesdays**  
WED's starting Jan 15th through to Feb 5th Our Family Support Program is hosting a **Rolling with ADHD** program, this is an 8 module series that covers practical strategies and tools for families. Whether you're looking to relearn skills or develop new ones, we welcome you to register. Afternoon 12-1 PM and evening 7-8 PM options. Contact the office 250-569-2266 or email [events@rvcsbc.org](mailto:events@rvcsbc.org)

**Sunshine Stories**  
10:30-11 AM Thursdays. An early literacy program for children ages 0-5 and caregivers. Songs, rhymes, stories and fun! In partnership with Decoda Literacy.

**Tuesday Night Jam - McBride**  
Now playing in the CN Station Lobby, 6:15-8:30 PM. 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**  
Writing Group for adults meets every Friday afternoon at the McBride library 1:30-3 PM. 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. Join us!

## Dunster

**WED MAR 5th Poetry workshop** at the Dunster Schoolhouse 10:30am-12:30pm. Everyone welcome. Read, write, speak and discuss poetry with Ingrid and Cathy from the McBride Library. Register: 250-569-2411 / [library@mcbridebc.org](mailto:library@mcbridebc.org).

**WED March 12th Dunster Fine Arts School Society Annual General Meeting** 5:30pm at the school. For info: [dunsterfass@gmail.com](mailto:dunsterfass@gmail.com)

**Community Potluck Lunches** hosted by the Dunster Community Association again this winter at the Dunster Community Hall. They will be on the first and third Saturday of February and March. (February 1st and 15th and March 1st and 15th - Mark them on your calendar!) The Doors open at 11:30 AM and Lunch will be at 12:00 noon Sharp. For more information contact Pete Amyoony 250-968-4334 or Loretta Simpson 250-968-4453.

**Fibre Arts Meet Up** Thursdays at the Dunster Schoolhouse!! Starting Thursday Jan 9th. Drop in with whatever you are working on, anytime between 10:00 AM -2:00 PM.

**Schoolhouse Cafe** will be starting up with hot soup and treats starting Wednesday January 15th from 11:00 AM -1:30 PM.



# Library gets a "jump" on the cold

Norma Stromberg-Jones demonstrates how to use the McBride and District Public Library newest piece of technology. The Noco Boost Plus was added to the library inventory at the beginning of February. It is available at no cost to anyone who needs it, but is not intended as an overnight loan. It will jump start gasoline vehicles up to 6.0 litre and diesel's up to 3.0 litre. It is available at the front desk during regular business hours. The booster was provided through the North Central Library Federation's Emergency Planning Preparedness for Libraries. / ANDREA ARNOLD

## UPCOMING EVENTS & NEWS!

**Legion**  **Branch 266**  
BRITISH COLUMBIA/YUKON

### REGULAR EVENTS:

**Friday Night Dinner** served 5:30-8pm

**Friday Night Music** most Fridays 7pm-close! See line-up below

**Sunday Pancake Breakfast** 8-10:30am

**Bingo** - Second Thursday of every month. Doors open at 6 pm

### COMING EVENTS:

**FRI FEB 21ST - Jam Night 7PM**

**FRI FEB 28TH - Open Mic 7PM**

**General Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday of the month 7pm

**Hall Rentals:** available for events, meetings, seminars. Call 250-566-1115 or email [valemountlegion266@gmail.com](mailto:valemountlegion266@gmail.com)

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 266, 970 Main Street, Valemount Underage patrons welcome until 10pm

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## New owner for Robson Physiotherapy

BY RACHEL FRASER

Vanessa McGibbon wants you to complain. She said many of her patients don't want to, but she needs to know what hurts and how it's affecting you, because often she can help. "The population here is very hardworking, blue collar, McBride has a lot of farmers, so people who are very good at putting up with pain."

The physiotherapist is the new owner of Robson Physiotherapy, with clinics in Valemount, on the lower level of the Valemount Health Centre, and McBride, in the Community Health Centre building next to the hospital.

McGibbon said when she first began offering services in the Robson Valley, many people didn't know what physiotherapy was. She said it was interesting to start treating people, explaining the discipline and how it could help them, and the word-of-mouth progression that over the last 5 years has led to her now-busy practice.

The venture began in Valemount in 2020 as an outpost of Jasper Physiotherapy and Health Centre, with McGibbon traveling from her home in Jasper to provide services that weren't yet available in the Robson Valley. She moved to Tete Jaune in 2022 and made a full-time commitment to the Valley by opening a second clinic in McBride, still under the Jasper Physio umbrella. McGibbon eventually expressed interest in buying out her boss to operate Robson Physiotherapy independently.

McGibbon said her interest in physiotherapy goes back to health sciences in high school. As she pursued an undergraduate in kinesiology, she didn't have an affinity for chemistry or pharmaceuticals as much as anatomy and biology, so physiotherapy seemed a natural fit, and she went on to complete a masters degree in physiotherapy.

McGibbon is intensely passionate about exercise. Not all physiotherapists are as focused on prescribing or teaching exercise, though Vanessa says her practice is a mix of manual manipulation, like massage, and

exercise-based therapy.

She sees a lot of seniors in her practice and at the exercise classes she teaches in Tete Jaune.

"Every week I get to see my intergenerational friends, where people in their sixties are coming out," McGibbon says of the classes.

"We have this expectation for seniors... that everything just kind of slows down, but if you look at the World Health Organization's recommendations for what

"Making women past the age of 55 deadlift heavy weight! That's my favourite thing to do."

- Vanessa McGibbon, owner of Robson Physiotherapy

seniors are supposed to do, it's everything adults do plus balance exercises."

Since she began offering physio in the Valley, she's been trying to break down barriers to exercise, especially when outside exercise isn't accessible due to injury or icy conditions.

"People (in the Valley) are active outside, but then you get older or if you have a big health event or an injury, and all of a sudden, you can't walk on the trails you've walked your entire life. If you don't figure out the thing that you can start to do, you get older faster, and then you get health conditions associated with being inactive."

Besides the exercise classes, which she started offering because nothing of the sort existed at the time, she now has a contract with the gym at the Canoe Valley

Recreation Centre to do physio sessions at the gym to teach people how to do exercises and use the equipment.

In a typical city, she might send someone to a personal trainer in the gym, or a kinesiologist who could teach exercises, but here, she finds ways to fill the gaps herself. She also makes orthotics.

"The nature of the job has always been like, where is the need in the Valley, and trying to fill that need."

McGibbon plans to continue her advocacy for different avenues for exercise, such as trying to get a walking track at the Robson Valley Rec Centre for seniors in the winter.

"Making people exercise. I'm never stopping," she said, laughing. "Making women past the age of 55 deadlift heavy weight! That's my favourite thing to do."

She's working on offering some free health talks at the library, such as one about pelvic health, to share information with anyone interested, rather than repeating the same things to individuals paying to see her separately.

McGibbon has specialty training for pelvic floor therapy, which according to her website can help with stress incontinence, overactive bladder syndrome, pelvic pain, pelvic organ prolapse, as well as pregnancy and childbirth related issues.

"You don't have to pee your pants if you sneeze or cough or laugh," she said. "I tell people it's common, but it shouldn't be an inherent thing you have to deal with. It's super treatable."

She is also wanting to offer more menopause management support and said she is trying to get more advanced training for the treatment of symptoms of concussion, head and brain injury.

Most extended health benefits, or self-pay, don't require a doctor's referral, and potential patients can take advantage of her online booking platform (<https://www.robsonvalleyphysio.ca/>), or call, text or email. "Or send it by pigeon. Or stop me in the grocery store." McGibbon said. "One benefit of buying the company is that now I am the admin person, so it's much easier to get a hold of me personally."

Visit my website to see all of my featured listings: [www.valemountmcbriidelistings.com](http://www.valemountmcbriidelistings.com). A great resource for your property search in the valley.

# TOWN OR COUNTRY

**Shelly Battensby**  
REALTOR



**DIFFERENT BETTER**

**455 Horseshoe Lake Rd**

**MCBRIDE**

**\$462,500**

**NEW LISTING!**



This is the best of both worlds: 6 1/2 acres within town limits! The property is fenced and ready for horses, while the 2022 home is bright and modern with a floorplan that makes sense. Perfect for a young family, this home is close to schools, shopping and recreation.

**1411 6th Avenue**

**VALEMOUNT**

**\$462,000**



Centrally located, this home offers up comfort, space, and views for days. Situated on nearly 1/2 an acre, this 3 bedroom home is immaculate and move-in ready. Flooded with light, you'll feel welcomed the moment you step inside. Available for quick possession.

**3535 Crooked Creek Rd**

**VALEMOUNT**

**\$1,300,000**



This elegant log home on 10 acres is just minutes from town yet will take you miles away in peace and quiet. Beautifully accented with log and stone features, this 5-bedroom home features plenty of space for the family or guests. Complimented by a large deck, great views, and a large garage, you just can't lose.

**200 Whiskey Fill Rd**

**VALEMOUNT**

**\$889,000**



If you are looking for a great family home with plenty of space for the wildhood, stop here. 74 acres within minutes of town, with epic views and a move-in ready home, you'll need nothing else. With 3 bedrooms, an eat-in kitchen and a great room with soaring ceilings and views across the valley, you'll never want to leave.



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# Valemount Eatery Hours Guide



**BoShay's Bistro**

M-Thu 8am-3pm, Fri 10am-3pm  
+ M,W,Th 5-9pm 250-566-0154



**Caribou Grill**

Open 4:30-9pm. Closed Mon-Wed  
1002 5th Ave / 250-566-8244



**Summit Grill**

Open 7 days a week 4-9pm  
Located in Best Western Plus Valemount



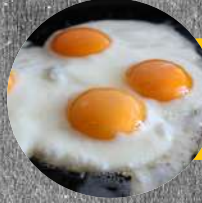
**Valemount Legion Branch 266**

Friday dinner 5-8, music 7-10  
Sunday pancake breakfast 8-10:30  
970 Main Street / 250-566-4343



**Glacier Fire Pizzeria**

Mon-Sat 4pm-8:30pm  
250-566-9090



**Abernathy's**

Open 6am-1pm 7 days a week  
250-566-9199



**Vale Coffee Roasters and Cafe**

Reg Hours: Th 9-2, Fri-Sun 7-2  
info@valecoffee.ca / valecoffee.ca



**IGA Deli**

Mon-Sat 8am-8pm  
Sun 9am-5pm



**Vacation Inn Dine & Lounge**

Open Fri-Mon 4-9pm 250-566-4880  
1495 - 7th Avenue on, Karas Dr



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**Feature Eatery**

**IGA Deli**



**Open**  
Mon-Sat 8am-8pm  
Sun 9am-5pm

\*\*Some eateries opted not to take part in this feature