Snowmobilers arrive en masse, despite COVID measures

By ANDRU McCracken

Snowmobilers are making their way to Valemount and McBride despite a travel advisory in this province and major restrictions in Alberta. Alberta’s tough anti-COVID measures have been in place since Dec 13. That province has closed all restaurants, bars, lounges and cafes throughout Alberta to in-person service in order to slow the spread of the virus. At the moment, Alberta currently has more than 20,000 active cases, double BC’s number. But the restaurant and bar rules don’t apply when Albertans cross the border into BC.

Albertans violating a public health order in their own province are subject to a $1000 fine and can be prosecuted for up to $100,000 for a first offense. In BC there is a travel advisory stating that all non-essential travel should be avoided. Essential travel includes travelling locally for work or for medical appointments. The advisory explicitly states: “Do not travel for a vacation.” However there are no associated penalties.

It makes McBride senior Nadine Shovar wonder how long it will take for Valemount and McBride to experience the kind of outbreaks Alberta is seeing.

“Right now, they shouldn’t be allowed to come here,” said Shovar.

Dining out with friends in a restaurant recently, Shovar saw a group of sledders who weren’t wearing masks or social distancing. At the end of the evening a maskless, inebriated patron held the door open for Shovar’s party. They didn’t welcome the gesture, but proceeded through, potentially exposing themselves to the virus.

Shovar said restaurants and other local businesses sometimes have a hard time getting sledders to follow the local mask protocols and socially distance.

“Enforcing protocols is easy to say, hard to do,” said Shovar. What ticks her off is that some sledders are neglecting the...
Mother Nature has provided lots of opportunities. Many thanks go to the volunteers who have shovelled and
With most indoor sports and activities shut down, lots of community members have taken to the outdoors where

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peek for us.
Anything to bring our JACK home.
security cameras perhaps you can take a
and when you're out and about. If you have
morning.
Please keep your eyes open for
gate when the wind caught it early Dec 6th
we love him. Sadly missed by his parents and
16 year old Springer spaniel. Liver ( brown)
All we want for Christmas is our JACK back!
LOST DOG - VALEMOUNT
DESPERATELY SEEKING
LOST DOG - VALEMOUNT

Marsh SKATING

With most indoor sports and activities shut down, lots of community members have taken to the outdoors where Mother Nature has provided lots of opportunities. Many thanks go to the volunteers who have shovelled and maintained the ice surface for skaters. /PHOTO WENDY DYSON

Snowmobilers...

Cont’d from A1
rules and putting locals in peril, while many elderly residents won’t even see their grandkids this Christmas—a sacrifice they make for the wider good.
“While COVID is raging, please stay home,” asks Shovar. “It will be an absolute miracle if it isn’t widespread between the two communities.”
The pandemic is serious enough to warrant a shutdown, despite the impact to local businesses, she said.
“We have one lab tech and x-ray technician; if they get sick we have nobody.”
Not all sledders are disrespectful or flaunting the rules, though.
Linda Fry said the Grizzly Pub hasn’t had much difficulty with visitors as late as December 15. When they opened for family dining though, they did have some trouble with “kids running amok.”
She said that sledders are greeted, asked to provide their contact info and instructed to wear a mask unless they are at their table.
She said they have some burly folks on staff who could intervene in a pinch, but so far that hasn’t been necessary.
She said her staff know how to stay way ahead of any issues.
“We seem to have created a culture that works in our favor,” she said.
Acting Mayor Lucille Green said the Village of McBride has discussed whether they should remain open to visitors to the community.
“There is no official restriction that prevents travel, but the hope is that common sense will prevail,” she said.
Green said if visitors were advised of the provincial directives, they would follow them.
“There is no legal reason why visitors cannot come to our community. Each business will be responsible for their own risk assessment to determine whether they will accept visitors to their business.”
Green said that McBride is famous for being welcoming.
“Council encourages the community to be respectful to any visitors that we see, and we are confident that they will be respectful in return,” she said.

Send us your true personal stories under 1200 words on the theme of Hot and Cold for a chance to win and see your story published in a special edition of the Goat!

CONDITIONS: Stories must be written in 1st person about a true experience that happened to you OR someone close to you. All stories will be considered for publication (story must not have been published before, and you mustn’t publish it elsewhere for 1 year after we publish it). You must use your real name or the name you commonly go by. The best story will receive $100. All published entries will receive a 6-month subscription to the Goat (can be added to an existing subscription).

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: January 21st 2021
PUBLICATION DATE: February 4th 2021
Submit to goatnewspaper@gmail.com with the subject line WINTER STORY. Attach the story as a word document. Do not indent paragraphs or put spaces between lines. Give your submission a title and write the word count at the top.

The RMG's 2nd Annual Winter Stories EDITION

THIS YEAR'S THEME: HOT AND COLD

This year has looked a little different, but our wishes for you remain the same: peace, happiness and time with those who matter most.
Happy Holidays from your Duncan FCC team.

Desperately seeking lost dog - Valemount
All we want for Christmas is our JACK back! 16 year old Springer spaniel. Liver (brown) and white. Hard of hearing and blind, but we love him. Sadly missed by his parents and 2 small children. He escaped through our gate when the wind caught it early Dec 6th morning. Please keep your eyes open for him in your yard including under porches and when you're out and about. If you have security cameras perhaps you can take a peek for us. Anything to bring our JACK home.
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DREAM. GROW. THRIVE.
Carol Hammar assisted Santa as he drew the winners of the McBride Hospital Auxiliary Christmas Food Hamper raffle on December 17th. The Auxiliary would like to thank everyone who donated time, space or product to this year’s hamper. The organization was gifted a few additional prizes, so four names were drawn: Christmas Hamper and Turkey: Arlene Haugen Turkey: Gail Mason Roasted Bean Coffee: Robert Johnson Roasted Bean Coffee: June Vandermark

/ANDEA ARNOLD

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Commercial Building. Good revenue stream with leases in place. Motivated Vendor! Make an offer on this experienced mobile home on a large half acre lot. Newer garage, storage sheds and easy access off Highway 5.

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Great street appeal: 3 bedrooms up/ 1 down. Family friendly street, central location, detached garage. Full, partially finished basement with wood stove.

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Country Home on 5.94 Acres close to Mt Robson Park. 2 bdrms up with potential for a 2 bdrm suite in the basement with private entrance.

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Perfect Location! Hot Tub bordering Mt Robson Park. Gorgeous main chalet/open concept/custom cabinets & counters, stainless appliances. Separating cables great for guests or large family.

Mount Robson
$869,000

6 Bedroom Log Home. Almost 4000 sq ft on 3 floors. 3 bathrooms, huge wood beams, large open concept kitchen/living room, cozy brick fireplace.

1100 7th Avenue
VALEMOUNT
$349,000

Off the Grid! This riverfront acreage is over 22 acres of your own private forest! Only 25km from Valemount. Enjoy nature, peace and privacy.

18405 S Hwy 5
VALEMOUNT
$349,000

Riverfront Acreage: 30 acres surrounded by a gentle flowing river. Very rare property only 1.5 miles from Valemount. Enjoy a piece of paradise!

Lot A Crooked Creek Rd
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$450,000

Good sized town lot on a very quiet street, just a short walk to the downtown area. Fully serviced with a few nice trees. Convenient location.

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SOLD!
Urgent **LIGHT** in the **DARK**

Our Christmas cactus starting flowering last week. Fuschia pedals with translucent styles. I was sitting beside it in our armchair one morning after waking up hours before sunrise and thought what an odd thing—a plant that blossoms when sunlight dwindles.

Some things are like that—they blossom when things get dark and the need arises. They bloom not despite of adversity but because of it. And this year has shown me that shared adversity can do some pretty wondrous things.

The week the first shut-downs were announced in March, I went into shock. I remember spending a good amount of time on my couch crying. I pictured 10 years of newspaper work crumbling before me. I imagined all our advertisers pulling out and our newspaper sales dropping and being forced to make impossible choices, or simply shut down. But after the shock wore off, I jotted down some ideas. And I decided we'd keep going as long as we could. I knew other businesses were mulling their choices too. And if one shut down it could cause a cascade of others to shut down too.

So we hung tight and helping hands began to arrive. Community partners and sponsors and our rock solid advertisers who hung in there and have weathered the storm with us. I am immensely grateful to all the people and businesses who went out of their way to support us and even just asked how we were doing. In turn, we have looked for ways to give back, and you know what? It feels like we're on an upward spin cycle of cooperation, support and solidarity.

If there's one thing I'm holding onto from this period it's that—the urgent support for one another. We know something is on the line. But there's always something on the line. The heart of our community doesn't lie inside us—it lies between us.

At winter solstice, and black sky anchors us morning and night in our separate corners. But I stare out and see the Christmas lights—and it's the brightness I see.
Live Plant Christmas Tree

In my family, the first week of January has always been the traditional time to take down the Christmas tree and put away the decorations for another year. For the past ten years, I have just had to put away the decorations, as the ‘tree’ stays right where it is until next year!

My tree is my large Jade Plant. It is already growing in its large pot next to a window facing the road. I don’t have to move any furniture, track in dirt bringing it into the house, sweep up needles, wipe up spilled water from the stand or find a way to get rid of it when the season is over. With a string of small lights and some light ornaments and tinsel, it always seems proud of its newfound purpose.

Another possible candidate for this use would be the Norfolk Island pine, a wonderful houseplant that many people in our area already have in their homes. This little beauty is much more like a traditional Christmas tree in shape than my jade plant.

In its natural South Pacific home, the Norfolk Island pine grows up to 120 feet (30m) but grows quite slowly as a houseplant at 3-6” per year. They tolerate quite a wide range of conditions, although they like to be kept cool in the winter with cool nights and daytime temperatures around 70F (20C). It needs to be kept bare of all leaves so that it will thrive in direct winter sun. During the winter and spring, it should be watered every few months to keep it green and healthy. If it is reported every three or four years into the next size larger pot, it will grow and be happy. Although the Norfolk Pine prefers filtered light in the heat of summer, it can thrive in direct winter sun. The main thing to remember is that this tree comes from a small island in the warm Pacific Ocean and will not tolerate our cold Northern winters! If it grows too large for the years you go by, the top can be "air-layered" and a new tree started. Taking cuttings from a branch will not succeed, as the branches will only grow upward. If this idea of a live, year-round tree appeals to you, this may be a good time to be on the lookout for a good buy.

Global Thoughts

BY GWYNNE DYER

Love Jihad

The ‘Prohibition of Unlawful Religious Conversion Ordinance’ was passed into law in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh on 28 November, providing jail sentences of up to ten years for Muslim men who marry Hindu women with the intention of converting them.

The ‘Prohibition of Unlawful Religious Conversion (Love Jihad)’ to create a Muslim-majority India?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi depends almost exclusively on Hindu votes to win elections, so anything to help secure a Hindu majority in India.

Moreover, the conspirators behind the love jihad are disillusioned with the BJP.

So the disloyal thought occurs that it is definitely time for a morale-boosting anti-Muslim hate campaign.

Indias population is one-and-a-third billion people (1,353,000,000 people, to be precise), and there are currently only 195 million Muslim Indians – 14% of the whole. For Muslims to become the majority by ‘love jihad’ will require Muslim men to marry at least 481 million Hindu girls.

There’s probably no more than 75 million Muslim men of marriageable age in India, and most of them are already married. According to Islam (and to Indian law), Muslim men can have up to four wives, but there’s still not enough Muslim men to marry all those Hindu women without exceeding four wives each.

Of all the populist leaders that have come to power in the past few years, Modi is the most dangerous. He is cleverer and more disciplined than the others.

Erdogan: also clever, also cynically manipulating religion but it probably wouldn’t survive seventeen years of Modi.

Duterte, and India is the second-biggest country in the world.

When he wrote recently in the Indian Express: “We need to be kept bare of all leaves so that it will thrive in direct winter sun. During the winter and spring, it should be watered every few months to keep it green and healthy. If it is reported every three or four years into the next size larger pot, it will grow and be happy. Although the Norfolk Pine prefers filtered light in the heat of summer, it can thrive in direct winter sun. The main thing to remember is that this tree comes from a small island in the warm Pacific Ocean and will not tolerate our cold Northern winters! If it grows too large for the years you go by, the top can be ‘air-layered’ and a new tree started. Taking cuttings from a branch will not succeed, as the branches will only grow upward. If this idea of a live, year-round tree appeals to you, this may be a good time to be on the lookout for a good buy.”

By my calculation, around 200,000 years, give or take a millennium or two. So the disloyal thought occurs that maybe the BJP’s goal in passing laws against an alleged Muslim ‘love jihad’ isn’t really to defend the majority status of the Hindu population and its own voting base.

Maybe it’s to stir up anti-Muslim hatred and paranoia and energise Hindu voters who are getting a bit disillusioned with the BJP.

The BJP won a landslide victory in last year’s national election thanks in large part to a fortuitous military confrontation with Pakistan at just the right time, but its economic performance has been poor and it has been losing state elections even in its traditional strongholds.

Unemployment is high, the BJP’s initial response to the coronavirus was chaotic, the farmers are starting to revolt, and the government lost a mini-war with China in the Himalayas last June. It’s definitely time for a morale-boosting anti-Muslim hate campaign.

Of all the populist leaders that have come to power in democratic countries in the past few years, Modi is the most dangerous. He is cleverer and more disciplined than people like Donald Trump, Boris Johnson and Rodrigo Duterte, and India is the second biggest country in the world.

Actually, Modi is more like Turkey’s Recep Tayyip Erdogan: also clever, also cynically manipulating religion even though he is genuinely a believer – and seventeen years in power. Indian democracy has quite deep roots, but it probably wouldn’t survive seventeen years of Modi.

Indian journalist Tasleem Singh may have been right when she wrote recently in the Indian Express: “We see in India to be regressing into a Hindu version of Pakistan.” After 73 years of democracy in India, that would be a very great pity.
**COVID-19 vaccinations to begin in northern B.C. this week**

FRAN YANOR / LEGISLATIVE REPORTER

COVID-19 vaccinations will begin this week in nine locations across the province – including the north. Last week, B.C. received 3,900 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. As of Dec. 18, more than 2,500 shots had been administered from two locations in the Lower Mainland. The 3,900 doses were B.C.’s portion of Canada’s first shipment, which Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said would amount to up to 249,000 doses by the end of December.

“This is momentous news,” said Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry when the vaccines arrived last week. “The first step in our path to protecting people most at risk in our communities and taking the pressure off our health care system.”

More vaccine is expected this week, when vaccination locations will expand to nine across B.C., including the north. New vaccine shipments are expected every week following. When sufficient supplies exist, estimated to be sometime in January, vaccination locations will expand to 30.

The initial batches of Pfizer vaccine doses across the province are being administered by appointment only, to long-term care, acute care, and ICU healthcare workers. Because of stringent storage and transportation requirements for the Pfizer vaccine, including –70 C storage conditions, the company won’t allow transportation of the doses until B.C.’s system is tested and proven reliable.

“It’s a very delicate vaccine, it’s very unstable once it’s been thawed, and has to be used within a very short period of time,” said Henry. “So those logistical constraints make it challenging.”

For the first while, vaccine must be administered from each of the locations where they are delivered and cannot be transported to long-term care facilities, for instance. The Moderna vaccine, expected to arrive as early as next week, is more easily transportable, requiring only refrigeration.

“As soon as one or the other is available, we’ll be looking at how we can move it out to long-term care homes rapidly,” said Henry.

Public health officials estimate that long-term care residents, healthcare workers in long-term care, acute care, ICUs, and those people at highest risk of developing severe illness from COVID-19 (about 400,000 people) will be vaccinated by the end of March.
BC expands enforcement to crack down on COVID-19 rule breakers

BY FRAN YANOR / LEGISLATIVE REPORTER

The Province is authorizing conservation officers, liquor and cannabis inspectors, and others, to “crack down on rule breakers” and help police enforce COVID-19 public health orders throughout the province, announced Premier John Horgan this week.

“There are those who are not prepared to bend a little bit in their personal lives to the benefit of all of us collectively,” Horgan said on Dec. 15. “Consequently, we’re going to be beefing up enforcement on public health orders over the next couple of weeks.”

Workplace safety inspectors, community safety investigators, and others in positions of standards’ compliance, will now be called upon to enforce public health rules and orders as part of their job.

“Anywhere where you have an authority over citizens, we’re going to ask you to be working with law enforcement to ensure that our public health orders are in place and being acted upon,” Horgan said.

These additional ‘enforcement agencies’ have been directed to actively assist police in enforcing COVID-19 rules and orders as they come across violations in the course of their duties, and in public places, said the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General Mike Farnworth in a briefing on Dec. 16. “That will be additional support for the police in terms of doing their jobs.”

WorkSafe BC has also been instructed to step up in-person inspections, focusing on sectors with high virus transmission rates.

“As part of our additional support, the police can recommend charges that may result in additional penalties, fines or jail time,” said the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General. “If you’re not prepared to follow the rules, if you’re going to look for loopholes, there’ll be consequences for that.”

After weeks of public health orders restricting social interactions to immediate households only, B.C.’s new cases have finally flattened. To keep the trend going and dip the numbers into decline, public health orders have been extended through Christmas and into the new year until Jan. 8.

“We’re hopeful if we continue to abide by public health orders over the weeks ahead, getting through the Christmas season, we’ll be in a much better position come January when we all turn the page on this tragic year,” said Horgan, “and start focusing with hope and optimism on a better future in 2021.”

“Let’s get to that better future, he said every British Columbian possible should get vaccinated when it’s available to them, and people need to adhere to several simple, now well-known, rules: Keep your distance from other people. Keep your bubbles very tight over the holiday season. Don’t interact with people you normally don’t interact with. And, if you’re in a public place, wear a mask, Horgan said.

“I want you to have a great holiday season,” said Horgan. “But I also want you to be safe and I want you to recognize and understand that your actions can not just save your family members, but they could save other people’s family members as well.”

Fran Yanor / Local Journalism Initiative / Fran@tdgoanews.ca

NOTICE OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION
TEMPORARY USE PERMIT No. 240

What: Consultation regarding Temporary Use Permit No. 240
Owner: Province of British Columbia
Applicant: 1072223 BC Ltd.
Agent: Shawn Fowler
Proposal: The purpose of Temporary Use Permit No. 240 is to permit Preliminary Resource Processing use on the subject land for up to a three-year period. Zoning Bylaw No. 2892 defines Preliminary Resource Processing as the crushing, screening, washing, storing, packaging or other processing of rock, sand, gravel, aggregate or soil, originating on the same site and does not include asphalt plants or concrete plants. The subject land is legally described as Part Of South West 1/4, District Lot 7372 And Part Of West 1/4, District Lot 7373, Caniobo District and located 5km south of the Village of Valemount.

Region of the Fraser-Fort George

How can I participate and provide comment? Anyone who believes that their interest in land is affected by the proposed Permit shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to submit written comments prior to the Regional District Board considering issuance of the Permit.

Submit written comments: Written comments will be accepted by the Regional District until 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 by:
Email: developmentservices@rfffg.bc.ca
Hand/Mail: 155 George Street, Prince George, BC V2L 1P8
Fax: 250-562-8676
Any material received will become public information.

Need more info? A copy of the proposed Permit and any relevant background materials are available for review by the public on the Regional District’s website at http://www.rfffg.bc.ca/services/development/land-use-planning/current-applications/ or at the Regional District office, by appointment only.

Decision by the Regional District Board: Following the public consultation, the Regional District Board will consider issuance of Temporary Use Permit No. 240 on Thursday, January 21, 2021 during the Regional District Board meeting which starts at 1:30 p.m. in the Regional District Board Room located at 155 George Street, Prince George, BC.

Regional District of the Fraser-Fort George

UP SHE GOES

The Valemount Affordable Rentals Society’s new 13-unit apartment building is making steady progress on Juniper Street just across from the Dogwood track crossing. (COURTESY: VIVIAN KENKEL)

Up she goes

The Valemount Affordable Rentals Society’s new 13-unit apartment building is making steady progress on Juniper Street just across from the Dogwood track crossing. (COURTESY: VIVIAN KENKEL)
Keeping the faith in a pandemic is about hope, compassion and prayers-by-Zoom

By GOAT STAFF

The Goat recently sat down – via the internet – for a Q and A with Rev. Kim McNaughton, United Church Diocesan Minister from the Robson Valley Shared Ministry, to learn how she and her parishioners have kept connected during COVID-19 times, and what keeping the faith in a pandemic has taught them.

How have you changed how you’ve reached out/kept in touch with congregants during the pandemic?

The biggest change has been not being able to visit people in their homes/relationships, particularly outdoors. We have written more letters, emails, and had phone call visits – parishioner-to-parishioner, and between myself and congregation. Certainly, the internet has been a blessing.

What are the challenges you’ve encountered trying to keep people connected?

One challenge, is how tired people are of screen time. Many are being inundated with emails, online worship and prayer opportunities, Zoom invitations.

The other obvious challenge is that we have members of our faith family who are not online or do not use computers.

Have any interesting innovations sprung up?

Absolutely. Thanks to Rev. Michael and Valemount Community TV, in April 2020 we were able to televise and have our services on the internet. Our online worship “congregation” went from averaging 15 people per week, to 60 people. We found out how technology can keep us connected and expand our circle.

The most important information for us is that we have been that online worship and our faith community are more accessible to people when online. The pandemic has made us more willing to try new technology. Although we’ve faced a challenging learning curve, we’ve learned to use the internet to our advantage and been able to carry on as usual with church board meetings, worship services, prayer groups, and bible study group.

How have your parishioners fared under COVID-19?

Parishioners have, for the most part, kept their spirits up and held out hope for others. The Christian faith is all about hope and offering compassion to others. It is about new life when we least expect it and not giving up, even in the face of isolation, illness, and death. It is trusting in the Divine who is always loving with us. So, our faith has helped us in this COVID time.

We have found ways to keep serving our wider community as we look after our own faith community. We have created phone trees and mail outs to stay in touch. We’ve cooked and delivered soup, and we’ve worked safely at keeping our Thrift sales going, when safe to do so.

Not to say that it hasn’t been difficult, especially for those who live alone and who do not have family close by, or are not connected to the internet. We miss each other, we miss being together. It is the small, everyday conversations we miss and that help us stay connected, the conversations that happen before church, or after, at our coffee hour.

What is your message to your members who are anxious or upset about the public health orders or their own futures related to the pandemic?

My message would be simply this: God is with us, we are not alone. Reach out by telephone to me, or another faith family member if you want someone to talk to, to pray with, to sit in silence together. We are here for each other even as we keep distancing and work to stay safe and healthy.

What is your view of the public health orders?

We all know this is a complicated, unusual time and that everyone is tired, sad, frustrated, and often discouraged.

My view is that we follow public health orders and that we dig deep in order to be graceful and thankful.

Robson Valley Shared Ministry online Christmas services:

Dec. 21: Christmas Carol sing-a-long and the Longest Night “Blue” Christmas on Connectnorth.ca

Dec. 23, 9:30 AM: Christmas coffee via Zoom

Dec. 24, 5 PM: Christmas service on Valemount Community TV and VCTV’s YouTube channel

Dec. 25, 11 AM: Christmas service (repeat) on Valemount Community TV and VCTV’s YouTube channel

‘All are invited to join this community of faith. All are welcome, and we hope, feel included,’ McNaughton said. ‘We are a community seeking connection and meaning through faithful living and we are thankful that COVID-19 has not changed that about us.”

Call Rev. Kim McNaughton at 250-968-4467 to connect. Answers have been edited for clarity and brevity.

Churches comply... Cont’d from A1

the public health order while other businesses remain open, is unequal treatment.

“Instead of saying, this is what they did wrong and this is what needs to change, they shut the whole thing down,” Reimer said.

Provincial Health Minister Adrian Dix and Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry recently came under fire from a Baptist minister in Victoria who warned that the public health restrictions risked alienating all the British Columbians who practiced religion.

Reimer said, saying faith leaders across the province had been consulted and kept informed throughout the pandemic.

Recently, three Fraser Valley churches were ticketed by police and fined thousands of dollars combined after repeatedly defying health orders and holding in-person church services.

“If they think that somehow their rights are more important than people’s health, they are wrong,” said Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General Mike Farnworth Dec. 16. “Charges have been forwarded to the crown prosecutorial service, and we shall see what happens from there.”

People in the healthcare system are working hard to look after all of us and we do them a disservice by not following, as best as we can, the public health orders, said Rev. Kim McNaughton, United Church Diocesan Minister for the Robson Valley Shared Ministry.

“We all know this is a complicated, unusual time and that everyone is tired, sad, frustrated, and often discouraged,” said McNaughton. “My view is that we follow public health orders and that we dig deep in order to be graceful and thankful.

From the Lower Mainland, Archbishop I. Michael Miller, from the Archdiocese of Vancouver, was pragmatic, calling the public health restrictions “a necessary burden.”

“Christmas without Holy Mass, it might not seem like Christmas,” Miller conceded on Dec. 7. “(However) that is the lot that has been put out for us to observe.”

The archbishop was hopeful for the new year.

“We really can’t afford to allow our hospitals to be over run, so if we see that’s not happening, and that the numbers are going down, there’s every reason to think that there will be an appropriate lifting of restrictions come January 8.” Miller said.

At the Holy Rosary Church in Prince George, bible study classes have continued online, and services are pre-recorded and offered on the internet at the usual times. Congregants can meet via Zoom before Sunday services, and the church’s own YouTube channel, said Stephanie Swan, the church office coordinator, and now, digital content editor.

The North Thompson Ecumenical Shared Ministry – the Church of St Paul in Barriere and Trinity Shared Ministry of Clearwater – has a YouTube channel, along with an upbeat message for parishioners on its homepage: “We will still be doing the work in the world we are called to do, we just won’t be doing it together on Sunday morning!”

According to an informal survey, most religious organizations in the Robson Valley, North Thompson, and Prince George areas are following public health orders and offering some form of online services.

“I respect the role of faith in people’s lives; faith will help people get through this pandemic,” said Solicitor General Mike Farnworth Dec. 25. “But faith alone will not protect you from this virus.”

Live-streamed Christmas services will be available to all members of the Parishes of North Thompson, including the Good Shepherd in Valemount, St. James in Clearwater, St. George in Barriere, and Our Lady of Snow in Blue River (pictured above).

Live-streamed Christmas services will be available to all members of the Parishes of North Thompson, including the Good Shepherd in Valemount, St. James in Clearwater, St. George in Barriere, and Our Lady of Snow in Blue River.

Fran Yanor / Local Journalism Initiative / Fran@thegoa news.ca
Pipeline construction shutdown
IN WAKE OF BURNABY ACCIDENT

BY ANDRE McCracken

An accident has caused the 12.4 billion dollar Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion project from Edmonton to Burnaby to shut down until January 4. "Our top priorities remain the safety of our workers and maintaining a safe work environment as we continue to work towards the successful completion of this critical Canadian project. Over the past two months, we have seen safety incidents at our work sites that are unacceptable to Trans Mountain," said Ian Anderson, President and CEO of Trans Mountain.

Some local workers were due to take off for the Christmas holidays anyways, but a spokesperson for Trans Mountain said that the break will be more than two weeks and project-wide. Trans Mountain and the Canadian Energy Regulator have not provided details about the incident, other than that a worker was seriously injured in Burnaby on December 15. Anderson said the company would take the time to 'review, reset and refocus.'

"We are committed to a strong culture of safety above all else and insist that our Project contractors and subcontractors are equally committed. This is non-negotiable, we must improve the safety culture and performance on our Project," said Anderson.

He said the temporary stand down would provide a chance for Trans Mountain to engage with contractors, their staff and their own employees. "We will dedicate this time to ensure all safety management systems are in place, including COVID-19 protocols, to ensure everyone returns to work safely," he said. Anderson said that the project is about 20% complete so far.

"Next year, 2021, will see peak construction for the Project, with thousands of people working in hundreds of sites across Alberta and British Columbia. It is during this time that one of the greatest risks to the Project becomes worker safety," said Gitane De Silva Chief Executive Officer of the Canada Energy Regulator said the occupational health and safety for the Trans Mountain Expansion Project is shared between her organization and WorkSafe BC.

"Any incident is one too many. Every day, on every work site, people have the right to feel and stay safe. This sad occurrence brings home why we must always keep safety as our priority," said De Silva.

Robson Valley Rec Centre

The hours for the Recreation Centre Arena and the Exercise Room are subject to frequent changes as we operate under COVID-19 Provincial Health Orders and WorkSafe BC regulations. Please call the Arena for the latest facility hours.

Use of the Arena and FitPit will require an appointment. To book an appointment please call 250-566-3360

Please note the following:
Face masks are required in all areas of the facility, except when using exercise equipment.

Adult Team Sports are suspended until further notice, including Adult Hockey, Pond Hockey, Stick Time and Lawn Bowling.

Open ice time is available by appointment. For adults this means leisure skating only. Maximum 6 people on the ice at one time. If participants for open ice time are not from the same “bubble”, they must all wear masks – on and off ice. Child and youth programs, figure skating, minor hockey, open skate (check facility for open skate times), continue.

There are to be no spectators at a program for children or youth unless the presence of a spectator is necessary in order to provide care to a child or youth.

ARENA - Open Skating:
Appointments will take priority over “Walk-ins.” Maximum of 6 people permitted at one time, for Open Skating. Shower facilities are unavailable at this time. Skate rentals are unavailable at this time. Skate sharpening is available in reduced capacity; Drop off Thursday - pick up Monday after 2pm. Drop off Saturday - pick up Wednesday after 2pm

FITNESS FACILITIES:
Walk-ins for the fitness facilities may be permitted provided maximum occupancy (under our COVID-19 Safety Plan) has not been met. Reduced Facility Capacity: Maximum of 2 people in the free-weight room, 1 person in the stretch room. 2 people in the cardio area, for a total of 5 people in the Fit-Pit. You must bring your own water, towels, etc. Showers are unavailable at this time.

Canoe Valley Rec Centre

The hours for the Recreation Centre Arena and the Exercise Room are subject to frequent changes as we operate under COVID-19 Provincial Health Orders and WorkSafe BC regulations. Please call the Arena for the latest facility hours.

Use of the Arena and Exercise Room requires an appointment. To book an appointment please call 250-566-4740.

Please note the following:
Face masks are required in all areas of the facility, except when using exercise equipment.

Adult Team Sports are suspended until further notice, including Adult Hockey, Pond Hockey, Stick Time and Lawn Bowling.

Open ice time is available by appointment. For adults this means leisure skating only. Maximum 6 people on the ice at one time. If participants for open ice time are not from the same “bubble”, they must all wear masks – on and off ice. Child and youth programs, figure skating, minor hockey, open skate (check facility for open skate times), continue.

There are to be no spectators at a program for children or youth unless the presence of a spectator is necessary in order to provide care to a child or youth.

SUPPORT LOCAL NEWS
Subscribe today: CALL 250-566-4606

Readership Questionnaire

We want your feedback! We want to know what you think of our newspaper coverage. What do you want more of? Less of? What ideas do you have to improve the newspaper so it better serves the community? Answer this reader survey and return it in one of the following ways: drop it in our drop-box outside our office at 1170 5th ave. Valemount; mail it to Box 21 Valemount; V0E2Z0; fill it out and take a photo or scan it and then email us (goatnewspaper@gmail.com). Thank you for taking the time to give input and help shape our coverage!

How often do you buy the paper? Are you a subscriber?

Why do you buy the paper? (or why do you subscribe)

What parts of the newspaper do you read often?

What parts of the newspaper do you read sometimes?

What parts of the newspaper do you read seldom?

What would you like to see more of?

What would you like to see less of?

What do you think of our local reporting? How could it be improved?

What do you think of our Legislative reporting? How could it be improved?

Any other ideas you have to improve the newspaper so it better serves you?
Since we are unable to hold our New Year’s Eve open house this year I wanted to wish everyone a Merry Christmas in the hopes 2021 will be a little bit easier on all of us and visiting will be in the books again.

Let’s not forget we are still so much better off than millions of others. Stay healthy and all the best!

- Maria Lerch and family

To our friends,

Happy Holidays from all of us at Columbia Basin Trust.

Request your free 2021 #basinlife calendar:
ourtrust.org/calendar
Happy New Year!
2021

Happy New Year
2021
LDM LAKES DISTRICT MAINTENANCE INC

Happy New Year
2021

HAPPY NEW YEAR!
Thank you to all our customers

UNCLE MARK’S
CUSTOM MEAT CUTTING
250-569-7805

Happy New Year!
We hope your New Year is filled with friends, family and good times!

Swift Creek Residence
On behalf of the Residents we would like to wish you a Happy Holiday Season and a Prosperous New Year!

Wishing you and yours a healthy, happy

Andru
Laura
Deanna
Jean-Ann
Trish
Fian
Andrea
Laura

Wishing you a bright and happy new year!

Tim Hortons Valemount
250-566-4116

2021
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
All the Best for a Happy and Healthy New Year!

PETRO-CANADA
250-566-4151

AGW
250-566-4104

Real Tree Wood Products
From Robert and Eleanor Johnson, 250-569-2459 / 250-569-7912

Happy Holidays!
Wishing everyone a very healthy and happy New Year

FROM
Sherri Malone & Family

Happy New Year!

HAPPY NEW YEAR
HAPPY NEW YEAR
HAPPY NEW YEAR
HAPPY NEW YEAR
HAPPY NEW YEAR
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
Thank you to all our customers!

ROBSON VALLEY BUSINESS SERVICES
250-569-7941

We hope your New Year is filled with friends, family and good times!

Wishing everyone a very healthy and happy New Year

FROM
Sherri Malone & Family

Wishing you and yours a healthy, happy...

Happy Holidays!
Wishing everyone a very healthy and happy New Year
FROM
Sherri Malone & Family

Wishing you and yours a healthy, happy...

Happy Holidays!
Wishing everyone a very healthy and happy New Year
FROM
Sherri Malone & Family

Wishing you and yours a healthy, happy...

Happy Holidays!
Wishing everyone a very healthy and happy New Year
FROM
Sherri Malone & Family

Wishing you and y
May 2021 be a year of positive opportunities and good health!
HAPPY NEW YEAR

We wish to thank all our dear customers and look forward to serving you in the New Year!

From the whole team

VALEMOUNT HEIGHTS
PIZZA

250 - 566 - 4056

2021

Wishing everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Our warmest wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year!

2021

Four Rivers Co-op Petroleum
1-800-309-2667

On behalf of Simpcw First Nation Staff & Chief and Council we wish you a Happy New Year

Simpcw
People of the Rivers

CANGAS
1-833-852-8811

Wishing everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year!
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau tweeted the arrival of Canada’s first batch of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine in Montreal this evening (Dec. 13, 2020). The vaccine will be distributed on a per capita basis. B.C. received 3,900 doses the week of Dec. 13th under police protection at two undisclosed healthcare locations in the Lower Mainland. “We’ve received (information) internationally and from Canadian agencies that there has been a concerted effort to try and interrupt the cold chain and to sabotage immunization programs,” Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry said on Dec. 10. Typically, vaccines must be carefully packaged and refrigerated to maintain efficacy. The cold chain refers to the process and conditions under which vaccines are stored, transported, and distributed. The Pfizer vaccine requires an unusually stringent storage temperature of about -70°C. “We need to make sure that we are taking appropriate precautions to make sure that it is safe, and it’s not tampered with during that whole process,” said Henry. The initial 3,900 Pfizer shots are the earliest of seven vaccines ordered by Canada. The vaccines will arrive at staggered times depending on regulatory approvals. The first batches of Pfizer’s vaccine touched down at Mirabel International Airport in Montreal Dec. 13th. As of Dec. 18, 2,592 doses of the Pfizer vaccine had been administered from two yet-to-be identified healthcare facilities in the Fraser Valley and Vancouver Coastal Health. “The RCMP have been involved, and at the national level, the Department of National Defense have been supporting the whole operation across the country,” Henry said. Earlier this month the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) issued a global alert warning of the rise in fake vaccines, false COVID-19 cures, and fraudulent testing kits being marketed on the internet. INTERPOL also identified potential threats to the safe delivery of authentic vaccines and advised law enforcement and health regulatory bodies to work together. “As governments are preparing to roll out vaccines, criminal organizations are planning to infiltrate or disrupt supply chains,” said INTERPOL Secretary General Jürgen Stock in a press release Dec. 1. “It is essential that law enforcement is as prepared as possible for what will be an onslaught of all types of criminal activity linked to the COVID-19 vaccine.” A day after the INTERPOL alert, the cybersecurity branch of IBM revealed its discovery of a sophisticated phishing campaign allegedly intended to interrupt the COVID-19 vaccine supply chain and attack the integrity of vaccines. Phishing is when someone fraudulently assumes the identity of a trusted person, usually via email, in order to trick the recipient into sharing sensitive or personal data. According to the IBM report, a cyber attacker posed as a biomedical executive of a company qualified to transport the COVID-19 vaccine. The imposter then sent phishing emails to other corporations in the cold chain sector attempting to gain employee credentials and other confidential data about the vaccine distribution system. IBM Security, which provides security software programs to corporations, has tracked cyber attacks in Germany, Italy, South Korea, Czech Republic, greater Europe and Taiwan, on biopharmaceutical, IT, and energy companies, among others. "We're just really excited to get the vaccine, get it going, get it into the arms of people and start saving lives here in B.C.,” Henry said. "We're just really excited to get the vaccine, get it going, get it into the arms of people and start saving lives here in B.C.”
The Adopt a Senior program delivered gifts to 76 seniors in the Valemount area this year. Local families and children helped deliver the gifts to the seniors, many of whom cannot be with family this Christmas.

Above: the Joslin family helping to load boxes. Far right: Ryder and Ivy as Santa’s little helpers. / PHOTOS COURTESY MARIAN PLUMMER AND SHAY WIED.

New titles in store!

Did You Know...

- Safe Home is for self-identified women and their dependents who reside in or are traveling through the Robson Valley, and are at risk of, or have experienced violence
- Violence can be sexualized, physical, emotional & more
- Resources available for child abuse, elder abuse, date rape, family violence, stalking, cyber-bullying, and sex workers

Confidential, Free, 24 hour Safe Home.
Call 250-566-1847 24/7 (If in immediate danger, call 911) Or 1-844-324-2004 toll-free

THE BOREAL FEAST
Featuring prized northern ingredients, like morel mushrooms, birch syrup, birch tar, spruce tips and blueberries, The Boreal Feast is a celebration of boreal food and forest.

COMMANDING HOPE
In his new book dedicated to his young children, Homer-Dixon explores complexity science, how societies can evolve, and how people handle threats, to show we can shift civilization onto a new path if we mobilize our minds, spirits, imaginations and collective values.

FROM THE ASHES
From the Ashes is a remarkable memoir about hope and resilience, and a revelatory look into the life of a Métis-Cree man who refused to give up.

To order a book
email lauraishere@gmail.com
Located at 1170 5th Avenue, Valemount, B.C. ACROSS FROM THE IGA DOWNTOWN

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

It is with the heaviest of hearts that the family of Gary Wright announce the far too soon passing of our beloved husband, father, grandfather, son, brother, son-in-law, brother-in-law and friend to so many. Gary leaves to mourn his best friend and love of his life for over 38 years, wife Tracy; son Keaton (Nicole); daughter Karli (Mike); his grandsons Jack and Skye Wright; sister Cindy (Victor); sister Dianne Timmins, brother Kents Chupika. In-laws, Bill and Sharon Balaicen, Tam and Rob Read, Sharron and Steve Massery Scott and Laura Balaicen, as well as nieces and nephews and a large extended family. Gary was predeceased by his father Derek and his brother John.

Gary lived and loved life to the fullest, growing up in McBride. Gary found adventure wherever he went and had the broken bones and scars to prove just how unstoppable he was. Gary started dating Tracy in high school in 1982 and the adventure began with Gary and Tracy always working through life side by side, maybe with Tracy being pulled along by her fingernails on a few of the more hair raising adventures but they always came out the other side together, a little stronger, wiser and always with a whole bunch of new friends.

Gary excelled at whatever he did whether it was logging, excavating, and building rock walls. If you are lucky enough to have had landscaping done by Gary you know the true artist he was. Though he loved his work, he also worked so that he could enjoy life. To watch him come down a mountain on skis was a thing of beauty as he taught himself acrobatic moves on skis, bikes, sleds, skates or whatever was under his feet at the time. Gary’s dad Derek passed on his passion for flying which cumulated in to Gary and Tracy purchasing their first plane a 1970 Cessna 172 in the 90’s and then partnering in the purchase of Doctor Geoff Cowburn’s 1938 DH Tiger Moth purchased in 2015. Airplanes, the comradery of fellow pilots and all of the adventures that came with the flying family made Gary smile as much as anything he ever did in his life. A world without Gary is a little slower, a little less enthusiastic and missing his genuine kindness and compassion but we will all carry on with a smile and a tear whenever we think of him. Our lives were all made better for having been included in his short but incredibly impactful time on this earth.

Tracy and her family would like to thank all of the staff at Kamloops Hospice Association for the incredible care and devotion to Gary and the whole family during our most difficult time. You all made the journey a bit gentler. In lieu of flowers you can donate to Kamloops Hospice 72 Whiteshield Crescent S, Kamloops, BC V2E 2S9.

Due to the current pandemic we cannot hold a celebration of life for Gary at this time. Once things get back to semi-normal there will be a celebration in McBride we will keep everyone posted on the date.

October 25th 1964 – December 3rd 2020

The RMG Bookstore

Located at 1170 5th Avenue, Valemount, B.C. ACROSS FROM THE IGA DOWNTOWN

Valemount | McBride | Dunster | Blue River

Wednesday December 23rd 2020  15
The fund is open to companies with less than 500 employees operating in forestry and logging; support activities for forestry; wood product manufacturing, and pulp and paper manufacturing. Companies that may qualify include, tree planting services, tree seedling nurseries, tree seed orchards, forest product manufacturers, businesses providing services such as, logging, surveying, cruising, engineering for road and block layout, brushing and spacing, and other forest sector operations with eligible tree-planting expenses. COVID-19 health and safety costs must have been incurred between Apr. 1 and Dec. 31, 2020, and be directly related to implementing health and safety measures. Eligible expenses include wages, worker training, professional and technical services, contractors, PPE supplies, laboratory and field equipment maintenance, transportation, rentals, upgrade or expansions of facilities, travel expenses, and taxes paid. All expenses must have been incurred at the work site or work camp, such as modifying a structure for isolation, versus the cost of an employee quarantining at home. Online applications must be completed between Jan. 5 until Feb. 1, with results delivered by Mar. 31, 2021. For more information, go to, https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/managing-our-forest-resources/silviculture/working-in-silviculture-sector-covid-19/issmf

Deputy Mayor Lucille Green called the McBride Council meeting to order at 7:05pm on Tuesday December 15, 2020. In attendance were Councillors Hruby, Frederick, and Smith.

COVID Visitor Concern
McBride resident Ole Shuflebein addressed council to express concern regarding non essential travel/visitor to the valley. Alberta has the highest per capita COVID case ratio in Canada. His request was that council add their voice in expression of concern for the safety of the community and province.

Tourism Master Plan
Council passed the motion to adopt the Village of McBride Tourism Master Plan as presented.

Community Calendar
Councillor Hruby recused herself as a member of the Chamber of Commerce before Council passed the motion to join into a partnership with the McBride District Chamber of Commerce to continue the Community Calendar for one year. In the partnership, each group would contribute 50%.

Village Statement on Out of Town Visitors
Council requested that Administration reply to Ms. Maureen Brownlee’s letter expressing concern about essential travel/visitor to the valley. Alberta has the highest per capita COVID case ratio in Canada. His request was that council add their voice in expression of concern for the safety of the community and province.

Grants, Snow Removal, COVID Concern

Snow and Ice Removal Revamped
Council moved to rescind Snow and Ice policy PW-01 and adopt Snow and Ice Policy PW-01.2 as presented. The new policy accounts for emergency response routes, and school route. The discussion that followed indicated that there is room for adjustment if an unforeseen situation arises.

Tax Levy
Council passed the motion to give the Village of McBride Municipal and Regional District Tax Levy Bylaw No. 797, 2021 first and second readings. This will be used in an application to DestinationBC to implement the 2% Municipal and Regional District Tax in McBride in 2021.

Grant Writer Support
Council moved to direct Administration to prepare an application to the Northern Development Initiative Trust’s Grant Writing Support program for 2021. In this, Council is also agreeing to support the overall grant management.

Train Restoration Project
Council passed the motion to prepare an application for submission to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program - COVID-19 Infrastructure Resiliency Stream for the following project: Train Station Rehabilitation Project. There are other grant/support possibilities out there for the projects, and at this point the train station is a manageable rehabilitation/restoration whereas if it gets put on the backburner, the cost of the work will increase over time. The priority items that have been identified are as follows:
- Restoration of exterior envelope operational and heritage integrity (roof surface replacement, window and door upgrades)
- Upgrade main floor washroom to highest accessibility standards and install ventilation
- Rehabilitation program for the entire 2nd floor to bring it to building code as a usable space
- Room for more items as the project unfolds.
### Recovery Benefit open for applications

**By Fran Yanor / Legislative Reporter**

Despite two weeks of grilling from the Opposition about the Recovery Benefit qualification process and roll-out, online applications for the tax-free relief payment began on Dec. 18, with payments expected five days after applying.

The Recovery Benefit, promised by Premier John Horgan during the recent election campaign, is a one-time, tax-free COVID-19 relief payment of up to $500 for individuals and as much as $1,000 for families, depending on their income levels.

A family that earned less than $125,000 in net income in 2019 will receive the full $1,000. Families with net incomes up to $175,000 will qualify for a lesser benefit amount.

Individuals who earned less than $62,500 in 2019 will qualify for the full $500 benefit, and those with net incomes up to $87,500 will receive lesser amount.

Debate over the Recovery Benefit dominated Question Periods and debates in the two-week legislative session in December.

On Dec. 17, Liberal Finance Critic Mike Bernier grilled Finance Minister Selina Robinson about how the income ceilings were set, why 2019 tax data was used, and how the payments would be rolled out.

One key criticism on the Opposition side was the government’s decision to base the Recovery Benefit qualifications on people’s income from the previous year.

“I thought the whole point of this exercise was to look at people that were affected by COVID, not to look at what happened in 2019,” Bernier said to Robinson during debate over funding for the Recovery Benefit.

Tax returns were the simplest, fastest and most reliable means by which to determine eligibility, Robinson responded.

Because 2020 tax information hasn’t been filed yet, Canada Revenue was approached to see if the provincial payment could be delivered using more current federal data or existing funding mechanisms, she said.

“CRA is absolutely swamped and unable to adjust their program to accommodate any changes that we would be making, so it was a given that that was off the table,” Robinson said, responding to questions from Bernier.

After Dec. 21, applications for the benefit can also be made by phone or in-person at a ServiceBC location. Payment delivered by direct deposit into people’s bank accounts should arrive within five days of applying, Robinson said.

British Columbians have until June 2021 to complete an application. For those without bank accounts, or for people who are unable to meet eligibility requirements, such as tax information or a fixed address, a second delivery system is being developed to enable the disbursement by cheques in the new year.

“Staff are working diligently to develop the parallel system that has all the checks and balances like an online system,” said Robinson. “The goal is to work as quickly as we can to get these resources into people’s hands.”

For more information, visit the following website: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/economic-recovery/recovery-benefit#apply

Fran Yanor / Local Journalism Initiative / Fran@thegoatnews.ca

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### Rental Round-up!

**WONDERING WHERE YOU CAN RENT WINTER SPORTING GEAR? HERE’S A HANDY GUIDE.**

**By Trish Dunn**

**Dunster Schoolhouse**

X-Country Ski Rentals: adult and kids sizes. $5 per set per month. Rental sets can be returned in the spring. Call the Dunster Store at 250-968-4488. Closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year’s Day.

**Canoe Valley Community Association (Located at Valemount Lions hall)**

X-Country Ski Rentals $50 for the season with a $160 deposit. Sizes Available from 5-7yrs to Adult. Contact Rita at 250-566-1879.

**The McBride and District Library - 250-569-2411**

The library has 8 pairs of adult snowshoes to rent (3 different adult sizes, depending on weight) and 3 pairs of children’s snowshoes. People just need a library card and they then borrow them just like a book. Holiday Hours: Closed Dec. 24-Jan 1st. Last day before break Dec. 23rd 10:30-5. Re-opens Sat. Jan 2nd 2:30-5. Reg. Hours: Tues 10-5 & 7-9, Wed/Thurs 10-5, Fri 1-8, and Sat 2-5.

---

**Valemount Library**

250-566-4367

Rentals are available to library patron card holders, generally for one week loans, and can be picked up and/or dropped off during library hours (currently Tues, Thurs, Fri 12-4, Wed 12-9 and Sat 12-4). Holiday hours: Closing Dec. 24 at 3pm and re-opening Jan 2nd at noon.

**Winter sports equipment:**

The library has 15 pairs of snowshoes; 6 kids sets up to 100 lbs, 3 adult ones up to 150 lbs, 3 adult sets up to 200 lbs, and 3 adult sets up to 300 lbs.

**Non-sporting gear** (some items only available starting 2021):

The library recently added a collection of lendable technology; 2 VR headsets, 1 radon detector, 1 drone with camera, 1 new HD Kobo Clara e-Reader, 1 smart telescope, 1 thermal imaging camera, 1 GPS, 4 birding backpacks (2 adult and 2 kids, with binoculars), 1 digital projector, 1 camcorder with tripod, and a children’s collection of LeapPads, LeapReader, and Learning tablets.

Musical instrument rentals: so far they have 1 acoustic guitar, 2 ukuleles, and 1 steel tongue drum.

---

**Canoe Valley Recreation Centre**

250-566-4740

No skate rentals available at this time. Skate sharpening is available:

- Drop off Thursday - pick up Monday after 2pm
- Drop off Saturday - pick up Wednesday after 2pm

**Robson Valley Rec Centre**

250-569-3360

No skate rentals available at this time. Skate sharpening is available in reduced capacity:

- Drop off Thursday - pick up Monday after 2pm
- Drop off Saturday - pick up Wednesday after 2pm

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**The living arts retreat house**

**Tête Jaune Cache, BC**

- individual artist residential retreats
- small group retreats
- family vacation rentals
- large multi-use studio space
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- accommodation/amenities for 10

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**Contact info:** livingartsretreat@gmail.com
Do you have some seeds from this year’s garden that you can donate to the local seed library? Please drop them into the library, or you can email opengategarden@gmail.com for more details. The seed library is a community resource, offering free seeds to local gardeners. Take some seeds; grow some seeds! Thank you for your support.

VALEMOUNT

WED Dec 30 - Tech Cafe. ARE you needing a little extra help navigating your laptop or device? Not quite understanding how to set up a program? Want to know how to operate Zoom or Word? MAYBE you received a new gadget or phone over the holidays and need some help setting it up? call Jill at 250-566-9107 to book your 15 minute spot. Masks are required.

TUES Dec. 15 - Pelvic Floor Physiotherapy Presentation with Physiotherapist Vanessa McGibbon, from 5-6PM. Join us via Zoom, for this informative educational session on the importance of the Pelvic floor, strengthening exercises, and when an appointment might be recommended. Contact Sharon Darragh at 250-566-9107 or email sharon@rvcsbc.org to obtain the zoom link.

MCBRIDE

TUES - FRIs. Do you have memories on old slides or home movies that need to be preserved? The Valley Museum & Archives wants to help! call us at 250-566-3000 to sign up. OR, are you willing to help with the New Horizons Voices from the Past Project? please connect!! Open Tuesday - Friday 11am -4pm

Phone Check In Program: its pretty easy to feel isolated and lonely this time of year. If you are a senior who would like a phone call wellness check, on a schedule that works for you, or you'd like to volunteer to be a caller, please contact sherri Ghee at 778-773-1341, 1-844-324-2004 or sherri@rvcsbc.org

Tech Sessions for Seniors! Are you puzzled by computer terminology? Would you like to learn to make a poster online? How about how to use skype or zoom? Do your grandkids laugh because you don't have an Instagram account?! We want to hear from you! We are interested in hearing what technical skills seniors would like to learn so we can offer small group or 1-to-1 training, as part of a New Horizons for Seniors grant. Call us on 566-2411, email library@mcbridebc.org or drop in the library and ask for Abi.
THE TOUGHEST
by Myles Mellor
Answers on P21

Full Moon Bookends
The Full Moon in Cancer on June 22-23 will require you to ultimately let go, to take the risk, to be unwell enough to be well in a new way. It’s a big reason why you need to be flexible about what you want and need, that you want to improve, to work with varying degrees of efficacy. Still, this week will bring you a particular kind of satisfying win.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
You may be secretly ambitious, but that’s not what the world sees now. They experience you as increased helpfulness, skilled and willing to support the group effort. Little do they know that you’ll someday lead. Everything you’re learning now prepares and primes you for a vision grounded in the reality of what you need.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)
There are those who strive to put forth a polished image, and while you admire those efforts, you’ll also notice their mileage and love from your very relatable approach. You can figure out how to get what you want. Just be together. "If you want what you need, and that’s a big reason why you ultimately get it.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)
There are those who strive to put forth a polished image, and while you admire those efforts, you’ll also notice their mileage and love from your very relatable approach. You can figure out how to get what you want. Just be together. "If you want what you need, and that’s a big reason why you ultimately get it.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
If anyone can be regal and at ease, it’s the royal lion. There’s a time when the leader should be serious, but you’re so powerful now that you get to say that is. If you feel like using humor instead, trust that you can color in the corners with less. This week will be a good time to work with varying degrees of efficacy. Still, this week will bring you a particular kind of satisfying win.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
Maybe you’re existing in the same make, but without no mistake; this is new territory. As it goes with “foreign land,” you can’t expect to know immediately what you’re doing. It may take a few tries to accomplish effective problem-solving here. At the very least, you’ll need to calibrate your approach.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22).
To construct an ideal self and then measure yourself to that standard can be an act of ambition, cruelty, or, more likely, both. It’s kinder to first take stock of your position, commend the journey, love this stage, and then think about what a 5% improvement would look like. This week, a nudge will be better than a push.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21).
This week sees you in collaborations, some of which you’re no control over. So when you do have options regarding your team, which will also be the case at times, it’s important to shop around and carefully choose partners whose influence you welcome. You most certainly rub off on another one.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).
You will walk that line between being assertive and aggressive. Because you haven’t asked for your rightful due, it may now feel to everyone involved including you not actually yours. The change will take effect, but you need to step up, stand up for yourself. It will be worth the risk.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): The House of most things has already done with it. When the others need what you have to offer, the waters become easier. If the relationship is rocky, you feel self-conscious, if the plans don’t work, or worse, they get afloat but can’t land, it’s a problem of casting. When the people are right, the rest is easy.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).
Your initial vibes about a person or situation might not be completely accurate, but they are also not completely unfounded. Your ability to take the information that comes from your mind and senses must be neutral and logical if in an objective mental file is truly remarkable—a superpower that prompts amazing decisions.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).
Catch and release; nurture and let go; run to carry the torch and then pass it on. This is the cycle of work. Without the second part of the cycle, legacy is thwarted. To a great extent, a creation, project, product and even a relationship will only be as powerful as your ability to pay it forward and release it to live a life of its own.

THIS WEEK’S BIRTHDAYS:
It comes upon many times this year, the sneaking suspicion that this life you are living would be the envy of many around the world, that you are blessed beyond measure, and that you are very well may be the best possible steward of this good fortune, as you are both grateful and gracious, paying it forward, sideways and basically all around. In spite of the world’s problems, you see beauty, opportunity and connection. You point it out. You move constantly toward solutions.

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at HolidayMathis.com
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Answers on P21
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Crossword Answers

1. Pianist
2. Proud
3. Record
4. Coast
5. River
6. Service
7. Article
8. Service
9. River

Toughie Answers

1. Robson Valley & North Thompson Classifieds
2. Rustic Luxury
3. Valemount Rental Listings
4. Seeking New Clients
5. Photos & Details
6. When Results Matter
7. Community Classifieds
8. Contact Us Today
9. Classifieds
10. Classified Ads
11. Classified Categories
12. Classified Listings
13. Classifieds for Sale
14. Classifieds Wanted
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for the residents. What they need are your beautiful photos from across the Robson Valley to use as wraps for the long-term care doors in the McBride Hospital.

“In all of the Robson Valley (from Valemount, McBride, and surrounding area), we have beautiful photographic opportunities, and we want to make our environment in long-term care similar to what they are used to seeing in communities,” says Krista Cunningham, Clinical Practice Lead at the McBride and District Hospital.

Submit your high resolution photo by email to krista.cunningham@northernhealth.ca and the best two photos will be chosen to be blown up and proudly displayed in the hospital. Deadline for photo submissions is January 4, 2021. Please send a maximum of four photos per photographer to allow for many participants to offer their photos.

Many thanks to the local Co-op and the Northern Health DementiaAbility program for providing the funding to make this happen for our residents.

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RETHINK - REFUSE - REDUCE - REUSE - REPAIR - RECYCLE
this Holiday season

Christmas is a wonderful time of year to celebrate family traditions, but it is also a time when we generate a lot of waste. It is estimated that Canadians toss out 25% more garbage during the holiday season.

Here are a few ways to make your holiday celebrations more sustainable:

Wrapping Gifts
- Create gift wrap from flyers, comics, maps or outdated calendars
- Reuse last year’s Christmas cards to make gift tags
- Make the wrapping part of your gift – use fabric a tea towel or reusable bag

Decorations
- Try your hand at simple homemade decorations – reuse old ornaments and repurpose them into centerpieces and wreaths
- Use natural decorations like popcorn and cranberry garland – you can put it out for the birds once the celebrations are over
- Christmas packaging and boxes can be used year after year to store decorations

Meals
- Resist disposable cups, plates and cutlery
- Use cloth napkins, fabric tablecloths rather than the disposable options
- Plan out your shopping list, avoiding impulse buys and excess purchases

TIPS FOR HOLIDAY RECYCLING

Wrapping Paper
Recycle wrapping paper in the mixed paper bins at the Dunster, McBride, and Valemount Transfer Stations.

Christmas Trees
Live Christmas trees can be dropped off at the Valemount Transfer Station for composting. Please ensure all decorations, lights and tree stands have been removed.

Electronics and Small Appliances
Received a new TV or microwave as a Christmas present? Need to recycle the old ones that do not work anymore? The Valemount Recycling Center accepts electronics and small appliances for recycling.

Fridges, freezers, washers, dryers, stoves, and dishwashers are all accepted for recycling FREE of CHARGE at the McBride and Valemount Transfer Stations.

Batteries and Cellphones
Batteries do not go in the garbage. Recycle rechargeable and single use batteries at the McBride and Valemount Transfer Stations.

Christmas Lights
Have you replaced your old string lights with more efficient LEDs? Now you need to recycle the old string lights. Visit www.productcare.org to find the Light Recycling depot in Prince George or Kamloops.

For more waste reduction tips visit www.sortsmart.ca
Regional District launches survey on cell and internet service

By Regional District of Fraser-Fort George

The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George is working together with the District of Mackenzie, Village of McBride and Village of Valemount to get a better understanding of how Internet and cellular service within the region can be improved. TANEx Engineering Corporation, a BC engineering consulting firm specializing in technology and communications, is carrying out the work.

The first step in the process is to identify the current state of connectivity and residents and business owners in the region are invited to participate in a survey to share what cell and Internet services are being used, where the service gaps are and where people would like to see service improved.

Surveys are 100% confidential and available online and in hard copy.

The online survey for residents is available here: www.surveymonkey.com/r/rdffg-res

The online survey for business operators is available here: www.surveymonkey.com/r/rdffg-bus

Hard copies of the surveys are available in the Mackenzie, McBride and Valemount municipal offices or by contacting the Regional District office at 1-800-667-1959.

People are invited to test the speed and quality of their Internet through this free, confidential link: performance.cira.ca/frasert fortgeorge. Following the surveys, TANEx will provide information to the regional district to set connectivity goals for region, identify gaps and provide a strategy for closing the digital divide.

The Regional District says closing the connectivity gap in our rural and remote areas is critical for not only the immediate need of keeping residents safe and able to participate in an online world but is critical in positioning this region as a viable place to live and do business.

There is currently no end date for the survey.

(Edited for clarity)
The property has street parking—both front and side, as well as visibility and opportunity. Zoned C1, the options for development are broad and varied, reaching 1180 5 minutes from town, this 2 acre property has a roadway in and a partially cleared building site. With easterly views, you’ll be afforded views of the Canoe river valley. Just minutes from town, this 2 acre property has a roadway in and a partially cleared building site. With easterly views, you’ll be afforded views of the Canoe river valley. The property’s location is both close to amenities and recreation, putting you within easy reach of the country lifestyle you are looking for.

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1136 7th Avenue, Valemount

**1233 6TH AVENUE**

$429,000

Located in the heart of downtown Valemount, this corner commercial lot has great visibility and opportunity. Zoned C1, the options for development are broad and varied, reaching $148,500

**2440 PINE ROAD**

$850,000

This immaculate home sits on 40 acres and is only 2 minutes from Valemount. The home was built with efficiency and minimal maintenance in mind. Hardie board on the exterior, triple-pane windows, 10" walls, a wood boiler outside supplying heat to the main floor with automatic lights in many of the rooms. Basement has suite potential with egress window, 3 piece bathroom already completed and the kitchen is roughed in. Swift Creek runs along the back of the property, making this acreage incredibly desirable by any outdoor enthusiast.

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**VALEMOUNT**

$425,000

3497 Jeck Road, MCBRIDE

1136 7th Avenue, VALEMOUNT

**SOLD BY RE/MAX COURTESY OF ROYAL LEPAGE ASPIRE REALTY.**

1020 Main Street

This turn-key bakery operation comes with a world-renowned reputation and the benefits of an established business. Whether looking to walk right in or to put your own stamp on it, the location offers you the flexibility to love what you do or even live where you work.

**VALEMOUNT**

$345,000

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