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Valemountians bid farewell to local brewery



Locals raise a glass to Michael Lewis and Rundi Anderson who poured their heart and soul (not to mention blood, sweat and tears) into Three Ranges brewing over the last 13 years. Former locals Jake and Jill Joslin came all the way from the Sunshine Coast to mark the historic end of an era. /LAURA KEIL

Three Ranges closes its doors

By SPENCER HALL

After nearly 12 years of supplying Valemount residents and tourists with fresh, locally made craft beer, Three Ranges Brewing company officially closed its doors to the public on Wednesday, July 16th. The brewery then held a private party for its mug club members on Friday evening.

The decision to close the brewery was not one that owners Michael Lewis and Rundi Anderson took lightly. Anderson said many factors went into the pair's decision to list the brewery for sale, including burnout, multiple delays to the brewery's brewhouse expansion and financial pressures stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and decreases to tourism due to lower snow levels and the Jasper wildfire last summer.

The pair listed the business for sale last October and initially anticipated it would close a month afterwards. However, after dozens of community members packed the brewery in November to attend a brainstorming meeting aimed at keeping the business going, Lewis and Anderson decided to push forward and see how long they could keep the business running.

Now, after eight months of operating with no additional staff, relying on volunteers and dealing with daily uncertainty about their future, the pair have decided to close.

"For us, we kind of have to set a course based on our capacity to deal with things and not sitting, waiting and kind of dragging it out further," Lewis said.

While it may seem counterintuitive for the brewery to close in the middle of

CONT'D ON P2

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Three Ranges...Cont'd from A1

its busiest time of year, Lewis explained that in order to adequately prepare for the summer's increase in beer consumption, the brewery has to start preparing months in advance.

"For us to be prepared for summer, to actually take advantage of the traffic flow and everybody that's coming to town, we have to start in like April. Like you have to have all your tanks full of beer and the problem is we can't afford the grain or the freight or the staff to do all of that," he said.

While the brewery has faced its share of hardships over its 12 year history, Anderson and Lewis also hold fond memories of launching the brewery while raising their two young children, Keslin and Isa.

"It's funny when people come back after years and then they see our girls walking around, they're like, oh, my God, that's the baby," Anderson said.

"There's a picture... of Keslin at like two and a half years old working the canning line. Like, we took a bar towel and used little tiny binder clips. It fit all the way around the back. And I could clip the bar towel together with binder clips and clip one corner over her shirt," Lewis recalled.

Over the years, their children have grown and Three Ranges found its way into the hearts of many Valemount residents, with many visiting regularly and joining the brewery's Mug Club. Anderson said some tourists even go out of their way to visit the brewery during their annual vacations.

For many, including Valemount resident Mandy McMinn, the taproom feels like home and over the years, fellow patrons have become like family.

"The dream carries on because the family carries on," McMinn said.

During the brewery's final day of operation, residents gathered in the taproom and on the patio to raise one more pint to Lewis and Anderson. The evening concluded with a live performance of "Closing Time," sung by Nick Beddington and Cat Crowley-Wied.

While the brewery's closure marks the end of a chapter for Lewis and Anderson, the pair remain hopeful that a buyer will come along and inject new life — and extra capital — into the business.



The locals table, as seen on the last day the Brewery was open to the public, a rare all-women congress. L-R Andrea L., Korie Marshall, Velda Pidhirnyj, Grace Schmitke, and Grace Duperron-Michaud. /LAURA KEIL



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Robson Valley Music Fest prepares for what may be its final year

By ANDREA ARNOLD

This year's Robson Valley Music Festival, to be held on August 29-31, could be the last opportunity to experience the local event. After 18 years, organizer Shara Gustafson has determined it will quite possibly be the final curtain call.

However, she is not dwelling on the sad emotions that come with this announcement. "I am excited about all the acts and activities we have planned this year," she said. "We have a jam-packed line-up, and it's impossible for me to say who I am most excited about."

The full line-up can be found at <https://www.rvmf.ca/#/>. It includes a diverse array of artists, from sister duo Piqsiq who specialize in Inuit throat singing to Montreal-based Afrotonix, who play a fusion of African rhythms and electronic music.

The festival will also highlight local groups, including Gustafson's own band, Dream Heavy, and McBride-based City of Golden Sunsets, among others.

Gustafson is excited for every act, and said she looks forward to a one-man performance of the Star Wars trilogy by Charles Ross.

"I saw him perform Lord of the Rings in March," said Gustafson. "He is so, so good."

The festival prides itself on being a family-friendly experience. This year, kids will get to see a performance from 13-year-old professional magician Blake Aleong, as well as a puppet show and workshops in juggling and stilt walking.

The rules around the event have not changed. Organizers ask that smoking only occurs in designated smoking areas, and that there be no alcohol brought in. There are several stages that will host performances and workshops for attendees. They have a variety of food trucks lined up, including the local vendor The Country Girl's Kitchen, and a large selection of vendors in the Artists Market.

One set of festival goers this year are adding an element of romance, as the venue will host its first-ever wedding.

"The bride attended last year and decided it was the perfect place," said Gustafson. "She wanted to share the magic. The guests for the wedding have bought about 100 tickets!"

Gustafson expects that tickets will sell out before gates open. She said that as of July 10th they had sold as many tickets as they had by opening night last year, and the speed of ticket sales always increases as dates get closer.

Although the long-term future of the Festival is unknown, Gustafson is sure there will not be an event next year. For now, she's focusing on ironing out the remaining details for this year.

"It has been incredibly busy getting all the ingredients together," she said. "Hopefully we can knock it out of the park."

More information about the event, performers and ticket sales are available on their website, <https://www.rvmf.ca/#/>.



Last year, Tsimshian folk artist Saltwater Hank, based in Prince Rupert, made the Robson Valley Music Festival the second stop on his August 2024 West Coast tour. This year's line up features and eclectic line up and will also highlight local groups such as McBride-based City of Golden Sunsets. /PHOTO BY ABIGAIL POPPLE

FOREST OPERATIONS MAP REVIEW

Carrier Lumber Ltd., invites the public to review its Forest Operations Maps (FOM ID: 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, and 2369) which provides development plans within the Robson Timber Supply Area and administered from the Prince George Natural Resource District. The FOM(s) have been prepared in accordance with the Forest and Range Practices Act and describe areas planned for Cutting Permit and Road Permit development within the next three years. The public may provide comments on the FOM(s) at any point during the review and comment period, which starts July 10, 2025 and ends August 8, 2025.

The FOM(s) is accessible for public review and comment submissions online at the following website address:
Forest Operations Map (gov.bc.ca) or
<https://fom.nrs.gov.bc.ca/public/projects#publicNotices>

Alternatively, in-person review and comment of FOM(s) can be completed, by appointment to ensure a Carrier Lumber woodlands staff member will be available, at the following locations during regular office hours (8:30 am to 4:00 pm):

4722 Continental Way, Prince George BC V2N 5S5

FOM(s) comments may also be submitted by mail to the above address or by phone at (250) 563-9271 or by email at fom.pg@carrierlumber.ca

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When in doubt if it's out...

By ANDREA ARNOLD

The importance of not just extinguishing a campfire but drowning it in water, even going as far as stirring up embers and making ash soup was driven home hard last week.

During a recent camping trip, I had to make a bathroom run at about 2 a.m. While I was out, I noticed a bright red glow coming from a firepit a bit further down the way. The wind gusts were causing embers and sparks to fly towards the trees and pine needle covered ground nearby.

I grabbed a large pot and made two trips from the lake with water, alternating between dumping water and stirring up the embers to make sure everything was under water.

The part about this scenario that bothered me the most? We have no idea how long it was left before our arrival. We had been there for about 12 hours at that point. We had not seen anyone since our arrival. We had not met anyone on the road into the site for most of the drive in. We had even investigated this specific fire pit during a walk around earlier in the evening. It was unique as it had metal chair legs (we thought) among the ashes. It seemed to be out.

The gusty winds in the night proved otherwise.

Since this incident, I have been in contact with BC Wildfire. They asked why I didn't report the campfire. I replied that I honestly didn't know it needed to be reported as I put it out. That and it was several days before I had cell service again. But now I know.

To report an unattended campfire or open burning violation, or irresponsible behaviour that could start a wildfire in B.C., call the RAPP line at 1 877 952-7277.

The Prince George Fire Centre Information Team BC Wildfire Service asked if I could share the following information regarding campfires.

“A Category 1 fire, or campfire, is defined as an open fire that burns piled material no larger than 0.5 metres high by 0.5 metres wide,” explained a statement from BCWS.

“The following precautions must be in place when lighting or making use of a campfire:

There is ready access to a shovel or at least eight litres of water the entirety of the time the campfire is lit,

There is a fuel break around the campfire, free of any debris or combustible materials, and

The fire is fully extinguished and the ashes are cold to the touch before leaving the campfire for any length of time.”

Upon further questioning about what a fuel break looks like, BCWS confirmed that a ring of rocks would be fine as a firebreak.

“Just make sure you create a wide fuel break (sometimes called a firebreak) around your fire by scraping the area around your fire down to bare dirt to remove any flammable material,” BCWS stated in their email. “Your fire should be on level ground that is a safe distance from tent walls, shrubs, trees or other flammable materials. Do not build your fire beneath low-hanging branches.”

The BCWS say that the financial consequences of being found in contravention of any open-burning prohibition also apply to those found breaking the rules around campfires. A violation ticket for \$1,150 may be issued and an administrative penalty of up to \$10,000 may also be added. If convicted in court, a person may be fined up to \$100,000 and/or be sentenced to one year in jail. If the violation causes or contributes to a wildfire, the person responsible may be ordered to pay all firefighting and associated costs.

So far this year we have been very fortunate and Category 1 fires and campfires are still permitted, and the valley has been mostly smoke free. Let's each do our part in keeping it that way.



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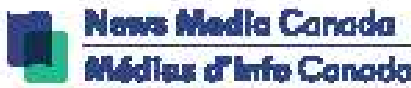
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Global Thoughts

BY GWYNNE DYER

Trump: The Least Bad Outcome



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

I would rather eat worms than write about the current hullabaloo on the American right over the conspiracy theories about paedophile Jeffrey Epstein and his various pals and accomplices. The temptation is just to sit back and enjoy watching the MAGA revolution devour its own children, but Duty calls.

It is becoming clear that this scandal will probably injure Donald Trump personally and weaken him permanently. It doesn't matter whether he was really implicated in Epstein's crimes or not. As usual, it's the attempted cover-up that does the damage.

Nobody outside the United States has any influence on how the political storm that is growing there comes out, but everybody has a stake in the outcome. What happens there matters, but what should we hope for?

The first principle is that we should all work to ensure that Trump remains in office for the remaining 42 months of his four-year term. He would only leave voluntarily if his entanglement in the Epstein affair grows so damning that he has to resign in order to be pardoned by his successor, President J.D. Vance, but that is not out of the question.

The great virtue of Trump as candidate for the role of first American dictator is that he's not up to the job. The

push towards a 'soft fascist' authoritarian system is real and quite rapid – the ever-growing ICE is emerging as his private army – but his instinctive preference for a state of chaos that maximises his options is not a sound foundation for a lasting dictatorship.

Another three-and-a-half years of Trump freed from all the restraints that the 'grown-ups' put on him during his first term will probably do great damage to the US economy. However, it would also make it unlikely that either a chosen successor (or Trump himself in defiance of the Constitution) could win the presidency in 2028.

Democracy in the United States can survive Donald Trump. The number of people who swallow all the lies is shocking and shaming, but they never exceed half the population. A democratic comeback is possible.

On the other hand democracy in the United States would probably not survive a 'President' Vance who took power long enough before the 2028 election – by succession to a physically incapacitated or criminally implicated Trump or simply by a putsch – to rig the vote.

Just look at him. You know it's true. So put up with Trump. Within limits, of course.

The limits would include any US invasion of a near-neighbour (Greenland, Panama, Canada), but the rest of the world has tacitly accepted US air-strikes on at least

half-a-dozen distant countries in recent decades. Now is not the right time to get picky about it.

And what about the impact on world trade of Trump's ceaseless tampering with tariffs? Many countries are concluding that the United States is not a reliable trading partner. The endless struggle to keep up with the changes is just not worth it.

The likely outcome is that supply chains will increasingly go around the United States rather than to or through it. That's not a limitless disaster for the United States, just a handicap that can be repaired in time.

The arrival of Trump 2.0 has been a shock to both the global trading system and the alliance structures that had prevailed since the 1950s, but they are adjusting fast and fairly well to the new realities. Or at least, it could have been a lot worse.

It could still take a turn for the worse, of course, but that's always the case. The task when things are threatening to fall apart is always to decide what is really important to preserve, and make your other choices and goals serve that overriding objective. Right now, that means keeping J.D. Vance from the throne, even at the cost of putting up with Trump.



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McBride Council: train station, summer meetings, emergency training

By Abigail Popple, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter, RMG

McBride Council discussed grant applications for the train station, Council’s summer meeting schedule and emergency services training during its regular meeting on July 8th.

Mayor Gene Runtz called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m.

Council amended the agenda to remove a delegation from Chuck Rollinson, who was scheduled to give an update on the BC DragIT event but could not attend the meeting. Council also added a request from the McBride and District Housing Society to provide a letter of support for a grant application. Then, Council adopted the minutes of the June 24th regular meeting of council.

Housing Society

Chair of the McBride and District Housing Society Jackie Edwards gave a presentation to update Council on the Society’s activities and request a letter of support for an application to the McBride Housing Incentive Program, which is funded with money from Northern Development Initiative Trust.

Edwards said a letter from Council would make the Society’s application more competitive. She added that the Society is submitting an application to BC Housing’s grant, the Community Housing Fund, before the July 31st deadline.

Runtz asked if Edwards had any other comments and she said she would discuss the request for a letter in more detail during a presentation scheduled for later in the meeting.

Dust collection permit

The Dunster Community Forest Society plans to install a new dust collection system for its BRKH woodmill on 1st Avenue. The system will be 30 feet high, which exceeds the 25 feet maximum height in the Village’s zoning bylaw.

Business and Marketing Administrator of the Dunster Community Forest Society, Marie Hyde, requested a development variance permit for the system. According to the staff report attached with her application, the Village issued notice to adjacent property owners, but did not receive feedback.

Councillor Glen Frear asked if there would be a negative impact to allowing the dust collection system to be installed. Runtz said he was wondering if raising the building height would pose a problem for fire safety.

CAO Jeanette McDougall said she is not aware of any safety problems associated with the building height, and that the Dunster Community Forest is on top of fire safety in its operations. However, she offered to do more research and bring it back to Council for approval at a later meeting, or have Council approve the permit on the condition that staff do not find any fire safety issues with the system.

Runtz agreed, and Council gave conditional approval to Hyde’s application as long as the fire department does not find an issue with the building’s height.

Train station grant

The Village is in the midst of an effort to improve the train station, which includes renovating washrooms to be wheelchair-accessible, installing an automatic door opener at the 1st Avenue entrance, and replacing the flooring in the lobby, among other improvements such as electrical and plumbing system updates. While the Village has received \$450,000 from the Province’s Destination Development fund, bids for the project sent in May were well over budget at \$482,000 and \$729,000.

During the June 24th regular meeting, Council decided to re-issue the project as three separate tenders, in the hopes that it would make the project more accessible to local contractors and keep it on budget. However, staff recommended applying for an additional \$100,000 through the Northern Development Initiative Trust’s Cultural Infrastructure Program, to raise the budget.

Economic Development Officer Karen Dubé told Council the grant has a timeline which would align with the interior improvements for the station, planned for the fall and winter. Council approved applying to the grant.

Community building grant

Council approved staff to submit two applications to the Union of BC Municipalities’ Strategic Priorities Fund, which distributes money from the federal Community Building Fund to local governments working on infrastructure projects. The grant has two funding streams: a capacity building stream, which provides funding for projects related to asset management and long-term infrastructure planning, and a capital infrastructure stream, which funds large-scale infrastructure projects.

McBride staff will submit an application to each stream. One application would provide funding for the Village to develop a parks and recreation plan, which could include a new design for Steve Kolida park, local trail improvements, and extensive community consultation. The staff report says a parks and recreation plan would make the Village a strong candidate for future infrastructure grants.

Additionally, staff are applying for funding of a storm and sewer upgrades project. The funds will be used to replace sewer pipes, construct storm sewer piping, and complete roadway reconstruction. According to the staff report, staff will bring more detailed scopes of work as well as cost estimates to Council for review before submitting the grant applications.

Annual report

The Community Charter requires municipalities to prepare an annual report by June 30 of each year, then make the report available for public inspection. The report includes audited financial statements from the year, a list of the tax exemptions council approved, and a statement of the municipality’s goals for the next year, among other information. Annual reports must be shared with residents for feedback, and the Village posted it on the McBride website, Facebook pages, and in the McBride Little Free Paper but did not receive any questions or comments, according to the staff report.

The 2025 report highlights include McBride’s improved website launched last May, rehabilitation of the airport runway, and hiring a special project manager to oversee the alternative water supply project.

Council approved the report with no discussion.

Meeting schedule

Council discussed cancelling the July 22nd and August 26th council meetings. According to a staff report, municipalities often cancel one or two meetings over the summer to allow easier vacation scheduling for councillors and staff. For example, Valemound has one scheduled meeting in July and August, the District of Hudson’s Hope only has one meeting in June, July and August, and the District of Mackenzie only has one meeting scheduled for July.

Councillor Joe Kolida suggested cancelling the August 26th meeting but keeping the July 22nd because Council has many topics to discuss this month.

McDougall said Council can call a special meeting if there are time-sensitive issues to discuss.

Runtz asked councillors if they would like to amend the resolution to only cancel the August 26th meeting. Councillors Tina Bennett and Joe Kolida voted in favour of the amendment, while Runtz and Councillors Glen Frear and Pietro Caputo voted against it. Kolida’s amendment was defeated.

Council voted to cancel both the July 22nd and August 26th meetings. Councillors Bennett and Kolida voted against the resolution.

Emergency training

Council approved holding an Emergency Operations Centre training event on July 15th. According to the staff report, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness reached out to Village staff in early July to offer training to Emergency Operations Centre staff. The ministry will pay for the training and give an overview of emergency management and each staff member’s roles and responsibilities, the report says.

McDougall told Council the timeline for scheduling the training was tight, as the Ministry emailed the Village on July 4th and only had eleven days of availability afterwards.

“They cannot do any training after July 15th because they anticipate being heavy into the fire season,” McDougall added.

She said the Community Hall would be available July 15th, but the Village and Public Works offices would have to close so employees could attend.

Bennett asked if the fire department would be included in the training.

“Not at this time. I did ask about it, and [the Ministry] said no, because the fire department would be boots on the ground in the event of a fire, and they do an awful lot of training anyways,” McDougall said.

Bennett asked if the training would help clarify how staff coordinate who completes which tasks during an emergency. McDougall said coordinating tasks would be part of the training. She added that the Regional District is planning an emergency management training day for McBride and Valemound some time this October.

“I’m just a little confused on why the fire department, or at least the chief, wouldn’t be involved in this training,” Bennett said. “That way, there are no wires crossed as to who’s taking care of what.”

McDougall said again that the Ministry is not including fire departments in its training. Kolida asked if the Village could invite the fire department and RCMP anyways, since the event is free.

McDougall said the Regional District’s October training will involve a larger group, but the Ministry’s July training is specific to Village staff.

“October is after fire season,” Runtz said. “Can we get this clarified?... Can we go back and ask them questions on this? I think those are very valid questions.”

Kolida asked to make a motion instructing staff to ask if emergency responders including the fire department, police and ambulance operators could attend.

Frear asked if the Village could plan on holding the event regardless of whether first responders are allowed to participate, so Council wouldn’t have to hold a second vote after receiving the Ministry’s response. McDougall said she could respond to the Ministry confirming that McBride would like to have a training event, and that the municipality would like to invite local first responders, if possible.

Council approved of holding a training session on June 15th, along with the RCMP, fire department and ambulances if allowed.

Sewage station

Chair of the McBride and District Housing Society Jackie Edwards presented a briefing to Council about building a lift station – a way to transport wastewater – on the site of the Society’s housing development near Horseshoe Lake Road. The station would cost \$300,000 to \$500,000, according to Edwards.

The station is a requirement for building on the Horseshoe Lake site, and it would be able to support adjacent housing developments in the future, Edwards added. The Society is hoping to enter a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Village, which would confirm that the Village is willing to financially contribute to the project as well as own and operate the lift station, according to Edwards.

“Proceeding to an MOU will provide certainty to both parties and demonstrate a shared commitment to the success of the affordable housing project and responsible expansion of public infrastructure in McBride,” Edwards said. “The proposed contributions and assumptions of ownership and operations of the legislation represent a practical and meaningful way for the Village to support the delivery of much-needed affordable housing.”

Runtz thanked Edwards for her presentation. He asked McDougall if she could make a recommendation to draft the MOU, and she suggested a motion saying Council would consider the Society’s request for an MOU.

Kolida pointed out that the Society’s request was a late addition to the agenda and had only been distributed to councillors at the beginning of the meeting.

Edwards said the Society was not asking for a concrete commitment to the MOU, only that the Village draft a letter saying councillors would be willing to enter a discussion about drafting an MOU with the Society.

“I would like to have legal look at it and see if it’s even possible before we do that,” Kolida said, adding that he’d like more time to read the brief Edwards provided to councillors.

“I know it was late. The information didn’t come to me until Friday,” she said. “All I’m asking is for you to look at this, not to go into an MOU

Valemount Council: economic recovery, library donation, dust storms

BY ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

Valemount Council discussed economic recovery efforts, a donation to the library and meeting with BC Hydro to talk about dust storms during the July 8th regular meeting.

Mayor Owen Torgerson adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Council voted to amend the meeting's agenda to add a request from the Valemount Public Library and add one item to the in-camera portion of the meeting. After adopting the amended agenda, Council approved the minutes of the June 24th regular council meeting.

Economic recovery report

In November, the Village contracted consulting firm Strategies North to produce an economic recovery plan which would guide efforts to help local businesses recover from the knock-on effects of last summer's highway closures. The firm's contract ended in May, and while the Village requested more funding from the Ministry of Emergency Management to extend the firm's contract, the request was denied. Strategies North worked pro bono for an extra month to tie up loose ends on the project, according to a Valemount staff report.

The firm shared a close-out report summarizing its work for the Village over the six-month contract. The report says Strategies North and the Village had meetings with 10 B.C. government officials, three Alberta government officials, and eight federal organizations. However, none of these meetings ended with a commitment to provide funds for Valemount's economic recovery efforts.

According to the report, the Columbia Basin Trust has expressed interest in supporting an economic recovery project in Valemount. The report recommends that Village staff continue following up with the Trust to develop and implement a project.

Torgerson thanked Village staff and Strategies North for their work on the economic recovery strategy.

"This was a large endeavour... the instant relationship developed between the contractor and our team was quick, easy and efficient, and I believe they went above and beyond," he said. "Hats off to the entire team at Strategies North for putting their best step forward."

Councillor Hugo Mulyk agreed.

"That report was 130 pages, and I cannot believe how comprehensive, and how much information is held in there," he said.

CAO Anne Yanciw told Council that Strategies North will be facilitating the Community to Community forum between Valemount and Lheidli T'enneh First Nation later this fall.

Payment philosophy

Council approved the Village's new Compensation and Remuneration Philosophy, a document that will guide staff and councillors as they review the Village's staff compensation and council remuneration practices. The document says the Village will work to ensure staff are compensated fairly with benefits and salaries that reflect those in similar municipalities, and that Valemount staff with similar responsibilities are paid equitably.

Public Library donation

Council approved a \$368 grant to the Valemount Public Library to cover the cost of renting the Village's tent for one day. The library will use the event for a free children's event on Friday, July 18th, when the children's performer Pico's Puppet Palace will visit Valemount as part of a tour of libraries in the Northern Central Library Federation. According to Library Director Kira Chalupa's letter to Council, the library's indoor space is not large enough to host the event so they will set the tent up outdoors.

The grant comes from \$4000 in funding which the Village earmarked for municipal donations in the 2025 budget. In March, Council approved a \$485 grant to the Valemount Bear Cubs to cover insurance costs and to rent the Valemount Secondary School field. After money has been granted to the library, there will be \$3,147 left for municipal donations.

Zoning bylaw

Council adopted an amended version of the Village's Zoning Bylaw. Staff updated the bylaw in accordance with new provincial legislation.

The updates include changing the definition of a minor short-term vacation rental to mean an attached or detached accessory dwelling unit or room in the home. A major short-term vacation rental is only permitted in the principal dwelling on the property, rather than in additional dwelling units, under the updated bylaw. Additionally, staff recommend changing the minimum height of fencing around a home from three feet to four feet, and allowing two additional dwelling units per land parcel, whereas the current bylaw only permits one.

Council gave the amended bylaw third reading following a public hearing on May 27th, and staff sent the amended bylaw to the Ministry of Transportation for approval. The ministry approved the bylaw on June 26th, according to the staff report.

Economic development grant

The Village applied to the Northern Development Initiative Trust's 2025 economic development capacity building grant, which provides funding to local governments to hire and pay an economic development officer. The Trust wrote to Council to inform them the grant application had been approved, and the Village will be awarded up to \$26,333 to support wages for the economic development officer.

UBCM meeting schedule

The Union of BC Municipalities is having its annual general meeting in September, where staff and councillors from local governments and First Nations can discuss shared issues and meet with provincial officials. The uUnion sent a notice in its email newsletter that spots to register for the convention have opened, which Torgerson highlighted to councillors.

Torgerson asked for a resolution for staff to book meeting spots for Village councillors and staff who want to attend. Council passed a resolution to book spots for Torgerson and all four councillors at the meeting.

BC Hydro meeting

During the Council reports section of the meeting – when councillors provide summaries of the meetings and events they've attended since the most recent council meeting – Councillor Donnie MacLean said she had a meeting with BC Hydro community liaison Susan Edgell to discuss dust storms. Torgerson and Simpcw First Nation Chief George Lampreau also attended.

Torgerson said during the meeting, Edgell said she would communicate MacLean's concerns about dust to higher-ups at BC Hydro, according to Torgerson. However, she later sent an email encouraging Torgerson and MacLean to meet with BC Hydro representatives at the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) convention in September and raise their concerns then.

Torgerson said BC Hydro has invited Valemount representatives for a meeting at the convention, and suggested passing a resolution to respond to Edgell asking her to meet with the entire Council before the end of summer, and requesting a decision from BC Hydro on how to proceed with dust mitigation before the UBCM convention. He said since BC Hydro released a report on Valemount dust storms in 2021, the village's population has increased and the amount of snowfall in winter has decreased, so the topic needs to be revisited.

MacLean said she also brought up the dust storms during Hydro's annual Columbia system operations update, when the company hosts an online talk and Q&A with Columbia basin residents. During the operations update, Edgell told her they could discuss it over the phone, so MacLean was surprised when Edgell told them to talk about the issue during the UBCM meeting after their phone call.

"She said, 'I will phone you for a frank discussion,' and the frank discussion turned into 'This would be better for the UBCM [meeting]," MacLean said.

Council passed Torgerson's resolution to reply to Edgell with a request to meet again during the summer and ask Hydro to make a decision on how to mitigate dust before the UBCM convention.

Public Comments

Resident Junior Osadchuk said he read most of the economic recovery report included in the meeting agenda and thanked Village councillors and staff for their work on economic recovery.

"You guys did awesome, and those guys [at Strategies North] did awesome, but it just seemed like everybody was passing the buck on it," Osadchuk said of efforts to lobby federal and provincial ministries for economic support.

"I can say with no doubt that we are a pin on their map," Torgerson said. "While we may not see a cent of that 1.5 [million dollars] that we're requesting, at least we are identifying a gap in the economic recovery portion of the emergency management wheel, because it's a gap that's nationwide."

Torgerson added that the team had met with Shadow Minister for Tourism Tony Baldinelli, who is the MP representing Niagara Falls, Ontario. The city hosted hundreds of evacuees from Manitoba in the wake of wildfires that have ravaged the northern parts of the province.

"I just mentioned, 'Warn your businesses to keep their cash registers on [to track expenses for hosting evacuees]," Torgerson said. "There's nothing in it for them in the end. There's no government support for when you're really nice."

Osadchuk agreed that evacuations to different provinces are becoming more common, and said it's a shame that there is no clear way for places that host these evacuees to receive compensation.

In-camera

Torgerson adjourned the open session of Council at 7:25 p.m. Council entered an in-camera meeting for consideration of four items per Section 90 (1) (a) and (d) of the Community Charter to discuss matters related to:

- (a) personal information about an identifiable individual who holds or is being considered for a position as an officer, employee or agent of the municipality or another position appointed by the municipality; and
- (d) the security of the property of the municipality.

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Report: Valemount will need over 100 new housing units by 2030

By Abigail Popple, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter, RMG

Valemount will need 119 housing units to accommodate population growth over the next five years, according to projections from Langley-based company MVH Urban Planning and Design. President of the company, Michael von Hausen, and Senior Planner Jonathan Schmidt presented their findings to Valemount Council in a special meeting on July 10th.

Under B.C. housing legislation, municipalities must adopt a Housing Needs Report every five years, which include projections for housing needs over the next five and 20 years. Additionally, municipalities must have an Official Community Plan (OCP) which includes housing planning policies. The Province is requiring that OCPs are updated by the end of 2025 to ensure five and 20-year housing needs are included in the plans.

According to von Hausen, Valemount has enough vacant land to build the required 119 new units in five years, as well as the estimated 324 units in 20 years.

“You’ve got more than enough land and capacity to fill the housing needs,” he said. “There’s no problem there. In fact, it’s an opportunity.”

He added that because Valemount’s vacant lots would be serviced by the Village’s water and sewage systems, building housing on that land would generate more tax revenue for the Village. However, the Village should make sure new housing addresses local demographics that currently struggle to find housing – seniors and seasonal workers, according to von Hausen.

According to Schmidt, Valemount could build 612 units on subdivided lots alone – that is, on lots which have room for more than one property, or which could include an additional dwelling unit for property owners to rent out.

“You have sufficient land and sufficient policies and regulations that would allow the construction of at least 300-plus homes in your community,” Schmidt said. “The

Province requires that we update the OCP to ensure it enables that number of units.”

This means the Village could include maps highlighting vacant lots that could be developed into housing within the OCP, he added.

While Valemount may have plenty of land to spare, expanding the electricity grid to accommodate more housing units could be difficult, said Mayor Owen Torgerson.

“We have the infrastructure on the ground to support densification ... but [not] without significant upgrades to our inflow of electricity,” Torgerson said. “I don’t think the Province and Ministry of Housing put power into their needs assessment for any municipality, and at \$10,000 a pole, that’s significant for anybody looking to make a buck as a developer.”

Insufficient power was not a problem for municipalities building more housing until recently, von Hausen said. He suggested researching grant opportunities to cover the cost of building a new power station, if necessary.

“The challenge with this new legislation in B.C. is they haven’t included infrastructure considerations for the municipality – schools, support facilities, infrastructure like water,” von Hausen added. “Sure, we can talk about housing, but do we have the social and physical infrastructure to support that housing?”

Schmidt said the Village could include a note at the beginning of the OCP explaining that electrical capacity is a point of concern for Valemount, which may help the Village secure grants from the provincial or federal government to build more power infrastructure.

Council approved adding a note to the OCP and housing needs assessment regarding limits to electrical capacity. According to von Hausen, MVH will have a final draft of the OCP housing policies ready for review by early September, followed by a public information meeting in October.

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Cyclists: when riding your bike on a road, please follow the rules for vehicles including signalling for a turn, obeying traffic signs, and riding in the correct lane of traffic (the right side of the road). Wearing a helmet is important for safety. When walking your bike, please follow rules for pedestrians.

Drivers: please remain alert for cyclists, respect their right-of-way, watch carefully for signalling, don't follow too closely, and be especially aware of young riders.

By following the rules, we can all share the road safely.

Columbia Basin Trust Board Meeting

The Columbia Basin Trust Board welcomes members of the public to their meeting on 4-5pm, July 25, at the Eagles View Room, Valemount Best Western, 1950 Highway 5 S.



Highway 5 Resurfacing

Terus Construction will be grinding and paving Highway 5 between Whiskey Fill Road up to and including the Highway 16 East/West junction. There will be single lane alternating traffic until approximately September 5. Please expect delays, slow down, and obey all signs while travelling through the construction zone, for the safety of both drivers and workers.

Emergency Preparedness

The Village sent a Voyent Alert! test alert on July 16; some app users did not receive the test alert because their app was sleeping. If you are subscribed but did not receive a test alert, open the app to make sure it is active, and follow the directions below to prevent any missed notifications in the future.

How to turn off the "Offload Unused App" feature on **iPhone**:
Go to Settings > Apps > App Store > turn "Offload Unused Apps" off.

How to turn off the "Deep Sleep" feature on **Android**:
Go to Settings > Device Care > Battery > Background usage limits > Never sleeping apps > add an app (+) > select the Voyent app.

FireSmart Updates & Events

Hazard Assessments: As part of our commitment to helping our community prepare for wildfire, the Village offers **free** Home Ignition Zone Assessments to residents. During an assessment, the FireSmart Coordinator will visit your property to evaluate structures and landscapes for potential wildfire vulnerabilities. Afterward, you'll be sent a list of recommendations for simple steps you can take to make your home more wildfire resilient. Email fsc@valemount.ca to book your assessment.

Ongoing: The Village is collaborating with BC Wildfire Service to complete a phased **fuel management project** on Village property along 13th Ave. More details available online (see below).

June to October: find us at the Thursday **Farmer's Markets**, sharing FireSmart information and giving away promotional materials. The local FireSmart Coordinator will be on hand to introduce the **Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan**, chat about its process and goals, and invite residents to provide local knowledge, concerns, and feedback. Come by and learn about what you can do to make your home and community more resilient to wildfire.

Contact Valemount's FireSmart Coordinator, Michel Woodman, at fsc@valemount.ca, and visit valemount.ca > Services > Emergency Management > Wildfire Preparedness & FireSmart for updates and resources.



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McBride Council...Cont'd from P7

immediately. I just wanted you to look at the possibility and feasibility.”

Kolida said he supports the Society but didn’t feel comfortable voting on a motion related to the MOU until Council receives more information.

“We’re talking half a million dollars here,” he said.

Edwards said the Society is including the cost of a lift station in their grant application to BC Housing, so they would be responsible for the installation costs. She offered to ask any more questions to the Society’s civil engineer.

Runtz asked Kolida if he was hoping to amend the motion that Council consider the Society’s request.

“You guys can put whatever on the table, I just hate voting on things that are thrown at me in 45 minutes,” Kolida said. “I need time to review and read and learn.”

Frear said the motion was only to consider the request, not to enter an MOU.

“But do we need a motion to consider when we are going to consider it and get some information on it?” Kolida asked.

Runtz said a letter confirming the Village will consider an MOU would help with the funding application to BC Housing, which the Society is currently working on. Edwards said the Society is only asking for a letter stating they would consider the MOU.

“When I read this, it’s saying, ‘Hey, take it over,’” Kolida said of the brief. “I didn’t really get to read it, that’s my issue. It’s been bang, boom. It’s nice to have things a little ahead of time so you can ask questions and learn.”

“It’s not a commitment to us other than consideration,” said Runtz. “And we certainly want to support this.”

Council voted in support of considering the MOU and writing a letter. Kolida and Bennett voted against the motion.

Cemetery fencing

At Council’s previous meeting, councillors Bennett and Kolida raised concerns about being left out of the loop on Public Works projects, including the cemetery fencing project. Staff had delayed the project to find lower-cost materials for the fence, a decision which Council did not vote on.

Bennett asked if Council could discuss the cemetery fencing project before moving in-camera, since the July 22nd meeting was cancelled.

“It was supposed to be brought to us [during] this meeting,” she said of the project. “It wasn’t introduced as a late item.”

Kolida agreed.

“We’re gonna miss all these meetings, and we got all these projects on the go,” he said.

McDougall said staff did not have enough information to share at the meeting, but Council could have a special meeting when staff have updates ready.

“That’s a project that needs to get going,” Bennett said. “If you’re going to not hold the next meeting in July and then in August, now we’re looking in the fall.”

Runtz said a special meeting will be called when there are updates, so Council may discuss the project before their next regular meeting.

In-camera

Runtz adjourned the open session of Council at 6:55 p.m. Council moved to a closed session to discuss matters related to Section 90 (1) (c) of the Community Charter: (c) labour relations or other employee relations.

Mother-daughter duo retire from McBride insurance company

By ANDREA ARNOLD

Life beyond this first half of 2025 is going to look very different for Rosemary Hruby and her mom Rose Lucius. Having finally made retirement from the insurance world official, the mother and daughter duo are looking forward to new adventures.

Hruby’s journey to building Advantage Insurance began when she realized it was a niche in the community that needed to be filled.

Following her arrival from Texas in January of 1980, Hruby held a few jobs before stepping into the insurance world.

She worked at the gas and service station on Main Street until 1986, helping her husband David out by pumping gas. She then worked for local social services for a year and then as the Village Office Deputy Clerk. It was in this last role that she first served the community’s insurance needs as the ICBC and motor vehicle agent for about five years.

At this point, Hruby realized that the needs of the community were greater than what was being offered. She looked into what she needed to do to be an insurance agent, and was told that she needed to complete four courses in order to branch out. She completed these only to find out that she then needed to work under someone for a few years first.

“I found Rick Frost of Martin, McDermit and Frost Insurance out of Kamloops,” she said. “They agreed to have me operate as a satellite office.”

Two years later, the firm sold. Although she was included in the shift, Hruby said she didn’t feel that the new company would meet the needs of McBride. She found an insurance company that would work with our clients, and Advantage Insurance opened on December 12, 1995.

“Being an insurance agent is not something kids grow up wanting to be,” Hruby said. “I did it to help the community and fill a need. I have enjoyed being able to send people on their way with a smile on their face.”

“I really have enjoyed helping people figure out difficult situations,” she said. “For example, a driver stuck on the side of the road because they forgot their insurance, or it had expired.”

The office not only was a place of work, but it also acted as a community hub. Hruby said people didn’t only come in for insurance purposes, but also to say hi, share some news or join the staff for coffee, or lunch.

“I will miss the people,” she said.

Hruby began feeling the need to retire a few years ago and started looking for someone to take over. Advantage Insurance was sold to Integris in June 2023. It has taken two years for her to step into retirement.

There are a few things she is really looking forward to in this next phase of life. One of the most important things is that she will be able to answer her seven grandkids with yes I can when they ask her to do something.

She also wants to do some traveling as well as tackling projects around her house, her long list of other unfinished projects and is looking forward to having time to host gatherings

Lucius looks to the future

Rose Lucius and her husband Joe bought the building that houses Integris Insurance in the mid 80s.

“We moved to McBride in April 1980, after visiting from Denver the previous July with David and Rosemary,” she said.

They came to view a farm they had seen advertised in the Denver newspaper. That farm did not pan out but they fell in love with the area and found a home on Hinkleman.

After their move, SEARS contacted them and shortly they took over running the SEARS depot from the Kolidas. After bouncing around to a few locations, they

secured the spot on Main Street.

In 1989 they expanded to include a women’s clothing store, The Rose Garden Boutique. Rosemary’s Desk ran out of a side room, and then in 1995 Advantage Insurance was born. Eleven years later, Advantage had grown so much, the Lucius’ closed their businesses and with some renovations, provided their daughter Rosemary with the whole building to use.

Lucius used the next decade to travel with her husband, work their farm and spend time with family.

Following Joe’s passing in 2016, she needed a way to keep busy so she returned to the office, volunteering her time as administrative help.

“When we first moved here, SEARS gave me a way of meeting everybody,” she said. “Everyone picked up packages.”

Rose Garden and Advantage continued to give her a social link into the community.

“I am going to miss seeing all the people who came in,” said Lucius. “Most people who came in said hi, or popped in to visit.”

She has already started working on finding a new spot within the community that fills her social needs and fits her personality. Over the years, she served countless lunches to grandkids, great grandkids and assorted others out of the back room. She says she will miss that, but expects to see some of them show up at her house lunch periodically.

“Guess I’ll have to keep my fridge stocked,” she joked.

In this new phase of retirement, Lucius plans to spend more time with family. She is one of nine kids and has seven sisters that she still visits with as often as possible.

She also hopes she can finally tackle her 45 year old to-do list.



Apple picking is just one of the many things Rosemary Hruby (left) is looking forward to having time to do with her grandkids following her retirement. Rose (right) plans to spend more time working on projects around her house now that her days are not spent in an office. /ANDREA ARNOLD

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Wildfire Awareness & Firefighter Appreciation

Fighting fire with fire How BCWS uses planned ignitions

By ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

The BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) has countless tools in its firefighting arsenal, from aerial crews to bulldozers. But sometimes, a good defence requires a strong offence – controlled ignitions, where BCWS intentionally ignites fires to use up fuels, are one such case.

While seemingly counterintuitive, the strategy can help control bigger fires, and in early July was used on a wildfire near the east shore of Kinbasket Lake, said BCWS Information Officer Pedro Roldan-Delgado.

“Because the terrain [of the Kinbasket fire] was extremely steep, it would be unsafe for our crew members to actually action the fire,” Roldan-Delgado told The Goat in an interview. “We did an ignition to make sure it wouldn’t spread further than where our planned ignition was – we didn’t want it to grow south, east and west.”

The ignition allowed BCWS to control the spread of the fire by establishing control lines – wide dirt paths where fuel is removed from the ground with bulldozers or shovels – around the planned ignition. According to Roldan-Delgado, rocky mountainsides with little fuel provided a natural control line at the Kinbasket fire, so BCWS carried out a planned ignition to burn up remaining fuel between the fire’s natural perimeter and that control line.

“There’s a lot that goes through to plan these ignitions,” he added. “It’s only carried through with skilled, experienced firefighters utilizing fire and weather information to support our decision making on the timing and scale of the planned ignition.”


Ground crews and specialized firefighters communicate with the local fire centre to make these decisions, Roldan-Delgado said. They consider factors like wind and precipitation – if it’s very hot and dry, a planned ignition is too risky, so BCWS will wait for safer conditions, he said.


The Prince George Fire Centre currently has a ban prohibiting fires bigger than half a meter wide and half a meter tall. People stoking campfires should clear fuel and debris near the campfire’s edge and hold off on having a fire if it’s windy, Roldan-Delgado said.

With thunderstorms rolling through the Prince George Fire Centre, Roldan-Delgado reminds residents to report fires to BCWS by dialing *5555 or 1-800-663-5555.

“Always assume we’re not aware of it, give us a call, and report the wildfire,” he said.

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Wildfire Awareness & Firefighter Appreciation

Tips to FireSmart Your Home

Taking action to FireSmart your property will dramatically decrease the risk of wildfire damaging your home. The best part is, it's surprisingly easy to do.

Clean under your stairs to remove any combustible material. Establish a 1.5 metre non-combustible zone around the perimeter of the house and deck.

Clean and maintain gutters and roofs. Keep decks and balconies clear of leaves and debris.

Keep grass and weeds cut below 10 centimetres and remove flammable vegetation.

Have a wildfire evacuation plan and make sure everyone in your household knows what to do.

Download the FireSmart home assessment and do a self-assessment of your home and property.

Hold sheds and other structures (such as watersheds) to the same standard as your home.

Add non-combustible 3 millimetre screens to external vents (except dryer vents).

Woodpiles and other combustible materials (eg. stored vehicles) more than 10-30 metres from home.

Prune trees to create a two-meter clearance from the ground to the lowest branches.

Any combustible fuel source (propane, oil, gas) should be stored on a non-combustible surface.

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Image courtesy of FireSmartBC

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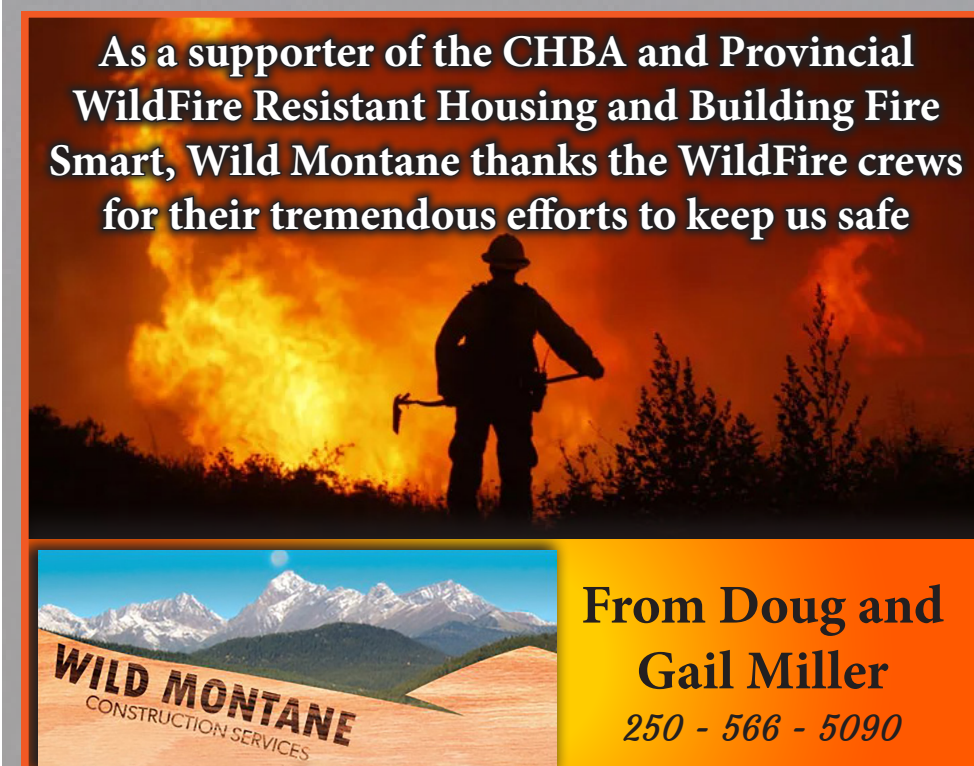
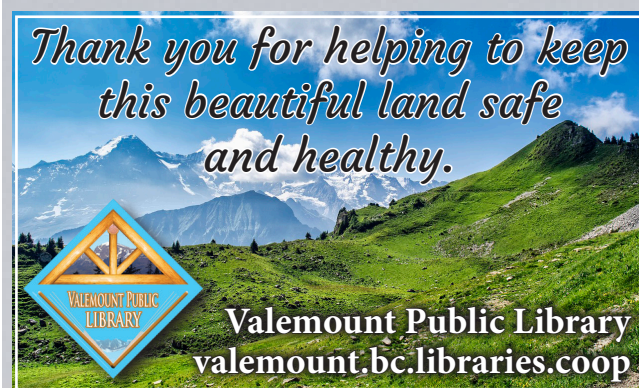
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Wildfire Awareness & Firefighter Appreciation

How to prepare your livestock for emergencies

By ABIGAIL POPPLE, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER, RMG

Preparing your household for wildfires is a daunting task for anyone, and it gets especially complex if you have crops, livestock and employees to worry about. To find out more about how producers and livestock owners can prepare for wildfires, The Goat spoke to representatives with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food as well as the BC Agriculture Council.

Preparation is key

The Ministry's Director of Emergency Management, Graham Knox, emphasizes that preparation is the best defence. He suggests visiting the Province's webpages on emergency preparedness for producers and how to prepare agriculture operations for wildfire.

Both the BC government and industry organizations, such as the BC Cattlemen's Association, have online guides that producers can use to create emergency plans tailored to their operation, Knox said. "The benefit of doing emergency planning is that it can help you for a wide variety of different hazards that might occur," which include flooding and animal disease along with wildfires, Knox said. "By going through the process and thinking of all the things that are required around emergency planning, you're better prepared [and] more confident for whatever eventuality impacts your farm or your animals."

He added that producing a map of your agriculture operation – including information like where drinking water can be found, or where fire hazards like fertilizer are stored – is helpful for emergency responders. When evacuating, some producers leave maps and a copy of their emergency plans in a canister attached to the gate entering their property, according to Knox.

Producers should regularly review their plans and know them inside and out, Knox said. "What's really important is that you don't just build a plan, put it on the shelf, and forget about it," he said. "Family members or staff or employees that work on your farm or ranch, familiarize them with the plan and ensure everyone knows what their roles and responsibilities are."

The next step livestock owners should take is registering their animals with Premises ID, the Province's free, mandatory program that links livestock to a geographic location. Every animal – from bees to cattle to alpacas – should be registered with the program, and producers should update their Premises ID registration every two years, Knox said.

The registration process can be done online or by phone and only takes about 15 to 20 minutes, according to Knox. He said the information is only collected for emergency purposes, and only shared with emergency authorities like BC Wildfire Service and regional districts.

Knowing how many animals are in an evacuated area also helps local governments decide whether to issue temporary access passes, so livestock handlers can re-enter their property to care for animals while under evacuation, he added.

"It helps us support disease control measures, and it can help facilitate rapid evacuation of animals during any natural disaster," Knox said of the program. "It really can help get people back in and out as quickly as possible."

He added that producers should implement FireSmart principles on their operations, and prepare for the economic fallout of emergencies. The Ministry of Agriculture has a number of business risk management programs, such as AgriStability, which can support farmers who face a significant loss of income over the year, he said.

Local governments support local needs

While emergency preparedness is the responsibility of producers themselves, local governments are the first line of defence as emergencies unfold. To help governments navigate emergencies in the context of agricultural operations, the BC Agriculture Council began an initiative to provide emergency services training to people with a background in agriculture. Since the program started last year, the initiative has supported over 20 local governments through dozens of producers who can participate in emergency operations centres, says Ken Nickel, who coordinates the Food Security Emergency Planning and Preparedness Fund with the Council.

"Different communities have different levels of history working with agriculture during emergencies," Nickel told The Goat. "What we are trying to do is capture the past experiences of the experienced local authorities and develop some tools that we then make available to all local authorities and First Nations in the future."

Each region has different needs depending on the types of agricultural operations, livestock and landscape in the area, which is why it's crucial for local governments to think ahead about how to manage emergencies in agricultural regions, Nickel added. The program helps facilitate communication between producers and local authorities during emergencies, which helps in tense situations, he said.

"The Province is responding to the increased number of emergencies caused by climate change... what we have experienced from the agriculture side of things is an increasing number of emergency events and an increasing scale of severity of these events," Nickel said. "We really wanted to promote [producer] preparedness, but also to work better with local authorities and First Nations as they respond to these emergencies."

Aside from a list of agricultural experts trained in emergency management, the program is also producing a series of emergency planning tools like checklists and templates for local governments which will be launched before the program ends in 2026, Nickel said. After the program ends, the Council will continue building the list of agriculture experts, he added.

According to Nickel, the program has had a positive reception from local governments.

"We've had really good participation by local authorities, and they've demonstrated quite a bit of interest in helping us develop these tools," he said. "Everybody has a common objective, which is to successfully deal with an emergency and help people get through it in a way that promotes business continuity, promotes animal welfare, and promotes human safety."



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You are Heroes in Our Community.



Wildfire Awareness & Firefighter Appreciation



The Chu Chua Volunteer Fire Department is a dedicated team composed of members from the Simpcw Nation and the surrounding ranches to the north of the Simpcw community. /SUBMITTED

Chu Chua Fire Dept to bolster Indigenous initial attack program

SUBMITTED BY CHU CHUA VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Chu Chua Volunteer Fire Department continues to be a model of wildfire preparedness and emergency response in the North Thompson Valley, proudly serving our community and surrounding ranch lands. Our team, made up of dedicated volunteers from Chu Chua and nearby communities, remains committed to protecting our people, our territory, and our shared future.

While no significant new equipment has been purchased this year, our existing fleet—especially the Iturri Wildland 3 Bush truck—continues to prove its reliability and effectiveness in wildfire situations. This vehicle has been instrumental in several wildfire responses, helping our team act quickly.

Our department is currently in the process of sourcing a new vehicle to support the growing needs of our Indigenous Initial Attack (IIA) program. This expansion reflects the increasing role that Simpcw

plays in regional wildfire response and leadership in Indigenous-led emergency services. In a show of mutual support among Secwépemc communities, we recently sold one of our bush trucks to Tk emlúps te Secwépemc to help them launch their own IIA crew—strengthening wildfire resilience across the territory.

Now in its fourth year, the Simpcw-led IIA initiative has become a provincial model for Indigenous wildfire response, with trained and experienced personnel ready to respond to wildfire threats across British Columbia. Alongside our volunteer department, the IIA crew continues to demonstrate exceptional coordination, professionalism, and community spirit.

Beyond emergency response, both teams are actively engaged in fuel mitigation and fire prevention work within our territory. These efforts reduce long-term risk and demonstrate our proactive approach to land stewardship and community safety.



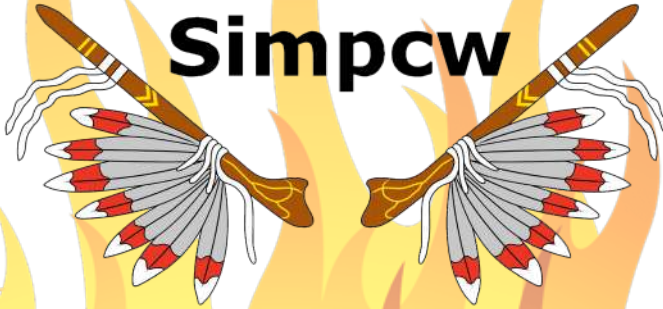
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THANK YOU
to our Indigenous Initial Attack Team as well as the Chu Chua Volunteer Fire Department for all of their dedication and hard work.



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How to spot bad information this wildfire season



Different types of bad information

The Canadian Centre for Cyber Security identifies three key types of bad information: Misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation. Here are the differences.

- **Misinformation:** refers to false information that is not intended to cause harm
- **Disinformation:** refers to false information that is intended to manipulate, cause damage and guide people, organizations and countries in the wrong direction
- **Malinformation:** refers to information that stems from the truth but is often exaggerated in a way that misleads and causes potential harm

Screen shot of a fact box of information from the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security./ NATASHA BULOKOWSKI, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

BY NATASHA BULOWSKI, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Wildfire season is here and if the last few years are any indication, Canadians will spend the summer sorting through a firestorm of disinformation. People searching for good information in times of crisis are up against a slew of broken systems. Social media algorithms promote misinformation and disinformation and bury official sources. Governments at different levels struggle to coordinate information release as quickly as rumours spread. Not every community has local news and there are fewer reporters and more news deserts. Imperfect information systems and the inherent chaos of a crisis allow well-intentioned but false information to spread, like people making false statements and observations about fire behaviour and what buildings have been destroyed. People’s thirst for information during a crisis creates an information vacuum, and right-wing actors and groups are increasingly filling the empty space with conspiracies about arson, government control and environmental terrorism, as previously reported by Canada’s National Observer. Some bad information is easier to spot, like baseless claims that wildfires are caused by arson carried out by environmentalists and government actors, or even space lasers. Alberta Premier Danielle Smith fed the flames of disinformation last summer after the town of Jasper was largely destroyed by wildfires. Smith told talk show host Ryan Jespersen the province would bring in arson investigators when he asked about the role climate change played in the 2024 wildfire season. Climate change, driven primarily by burning fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas, is causing higher temperatures and drier conditions, which exacerbate the frequency and severity of wildfires. Maxime Bernier, the far-right People’s Party of Canada leader, went even further during 2023’s record wildfire year, when he said it outright: “I bet a good portion of the wildfires raging across the country were started by green terrorists who want to give their climate change campaign a little boost.”

Practical tips

Sorting through information on social media is no easy task, especially when politicians are participating in the disinformation, but there are some actions we can take to identify or at least remain skeptical about bad information. People should ask themselves, “Does this feel right? Is this coming from the right place? Does this seem pretty sensational?” said Kevin Skrepnek, manager of community and emergency services at the Thompson-Nicola Regional District and BC Wildfire’s former head information officer. “Is this a screenshot of something, or is this an actual link to something?” Sometimes, old photos are circulated and made to appear recent, so it’s important to think critically about the account or individual that posted an image, what their claims are and whether it’s possible to verify the source of the image. One way to get more information about an image is to do a reverse image search. Sometimes, a simple internet search of the topic at hand combined with the words “fact check” will reveal whether someone has already verified or debunked the information you’re unsure about. The Canadian Centre for Cyber Security also recommends checking the spelling of website domains and social media handles, keeping an eye out for small typos that are used to make a site or social media account look like it belongs to an official or trusted organization.

When conspiracies impact fire response

The most outlandish, viral conspiracies may appear to be confined to the online sphere, but this disinformation can and does have serious impacts on the ground. In 2023, the BC Wildfire Service and police were confronted by a so-called “Convoy of Truth and Freedom,” attempting to gain access to a roadblock while authorities tried to evacuate people and fight the fires in North Shuswap. The agencies responding to fires are “focused on pretty meat and potatoes stuff,” like trying to keep people safe, Skrepnek said — spending effort addressing “Looney Tunes-level” theories makes it harder to get important information out. Skrepnek emphasized that some people, especially in his rural region, ignore evacuation orders and stay behind to tend to their livestock and livelihoods and he can’t fault them for that. However, he said there is a much smaller — though growing — number of people driven by disinformation or distrust of government who resist wildfire evacuation orders on that basis.

He said there were issues during the 2021 White Rock Lake fire, when people ignored an evacuation order or sneaked back in because, in their minds, the wildfire service either wasn’t there or wasn’t doing enough to defend the remaining properties. “That created a whole issue where now you’ve got civilians running around within an evacuation order area trying to fight the fire themselves, getting in the way of the wildfire service in some situations,” Skrepnek said. Getting the right information is key and Skrepnek recommends identifying all the official information channels and bookmarking them so you know where to find updates when a crisis hits. “If your local government or your First Nation or whatever it is, has a subscription-based alerting system, subscribe to that and know that that’s always going to be the right info because it’s coming direct from them,” he said. Skrepnek acknowledged this answer won’t be satisfactory for some people, and government communications won’t always be perfect, “but that is going to be the best information that you can get.” Relying on information that has been verified by the press or various levels of government is all well and good, but for many remote, rural and Indigenous communities the reality is a lot of information — good and bad — circulates on Facebook pages.

When getting info from social media is the only option

People in remote First Nations communities primarily get their information from social media, said Amy Cardinal Christianson, an Indigenous fire specialist and co-author of two books, one of which is on First Nation wildfire evacuations. Some nations are doing a great job of using Facebook and YouTube livestreams for chiefs to give timely, accurate updates to the community, Christianson said. “But lots of times, misinformation is being shared by us, right? By community members who are very concerned and want an answer for a situation, so they see something and immediately post it,” Christianson said. Skrepnek said one citizen-led Facebook group in his region did a good job using a Facebook page to amplify official wildfire information, but said this usually isn’t the case, and people often end up sharing unverified information and causing confusion. Many people have good intentions but still contribute to the spread of inaccurate information, Christianson said. “In the past, what we’ve seen is people will just post like, ‘I heard that so and so’s house burned,’ or ‘this burned,’ or ‘that burned,’ or ‘the fire is here now,’ or ‘the fire jumped the river,’ and people immediately just get very upset about that.” Christianson said a good rule of thumb is not to share anything on Facebook or social media if it’s not from an official source or you haven’t been able to verify it because things can get “wildly” out of control. However, “official” sources might look different for remote communities, she added. “Usually, there’s a contingent of folks in every Indigenous nation that gets evacuated who stay behind, and a lot of that is to do like firefighting or infrastructure protection, to feed dogs or animals that are left behind in the community,” she said. “Those people are often incredibly reliable sources of information for the community.” Critically, these people on the ground are able to dispel rumours and misinformation by confirming what structures have and haven’t been affected or answering other questions, according to Christianson’s work studying the 2011 evacuation of Whitefish Lake First Nation in Alberta. In this case, it’s not always as simple as checking whether the government or firefighting agency has corroborated a report or claim because it’s coming from individuals. But Christianson said there are still ways to help assess the reliability of the source, like asking whether they actually have a responsibility or role in the fire event and response. This can help indicate whether someone is a trustworthy source, she said. Christianson said most people can weed through the mess of online conspiracies blaming government arson and space lasers, but it does start to create a lack of trust, not just in institutions, but in each other. Times of crisis and big events like wildfires can unite communities, she said. “People forget about differences that they might have and other things, because you’re trying to achieve a common goal together, but the second you start throwing in all this disinformation about arson and who’s starting fires and other things like that, it just really complicates the situation.”

Local Backcountry Horseman Chapter receives award

BY ANDREA ARNOLD

The Backcountry Horsemen of BC - Robson Valley Chapter, received the Backcountry Horsemen of BC Outstanding Project Award. This award recognizes the group for the creation of the McIntosh Equestrian Recreation Site/campground and the 42km equine trail network on Belle Mountain.

“To be considered for this award, a project truly needs to be outstanding, exemplify the mission and vision of Backcountry Horsemen, to build/preserve access for equestrians and other users to recreate on public lands,” said Wes Phillips, chapter chair. “The trail is for use not only by horsemen, but available for hiking, dog walking and snowshoeing.”

The project began in 2018 as a way to establish more front country trails in the Robson valley. Network trail clearing and mapping occurred between 2019 and 2023, overlapping with trail sign design and installation that began in 2020.

The Equestrian Recreation Site (campground) is located 13 km west of McBride off Highway 16 west (look for highway signage), and 3 km up McIntosh Road, a well-maintained logging road with many pullouts.

“It can also be accessed by horseback from the mid-mountain section of the trail network,” said MacDonald.

The camp is built alongside the steep McIntosh Creek Canyon in a hemlock forest and visitors are advised to use extreme caution at the canyon edge.

Camping in the 16 unserviced sites is first-come-first served, and free. Of the 16, 11 equine specific sites are large enough to accommodate large rigs, and have individual corrals. All sites are level gravel with picnic tables and firepits. The campground has outhouses, manure pits and piped non-potable horse water. There is a centrally located communal kitchen shelter with a wood stove and outdoor fire ring.

The Belle Mountain area was already known for excellent sledding and cross-country skiing. With the additional 42 km trail network suitable for hiking, snowshoeing, and horseback riding the mountain is now open to year-round recreation enthusiasts.

The trails extend from the river valley to the alpine, with many loop options for shorter excursions.

“The trail system is unique in that it is one of the few equine trails where riders can have access to alpine riding on a day ride,” said MacDonald.

There are four staging sites located at different elevations to accommodate riding preferences and provide different experiences for visitors. These locations are referred to as P1, P2, P3, P4 on the Horse Council of BC's website <https://tinyurl.com/3de5kk6v>.

Although access to the trails and campground is free, the Robson Valley Chapter appreciates donations that go to help with maintaining the trails and campground.

“Contact the Robson Valley Chapter of BCHBC (robsonvalley1@gmail.com) for information or to connect with a member to ride with and show you our beautiful valley,” said MacDonald.



Brian Harder (seen in the back of the photo), president of BCHBC from Aldergrove presented the plaque that will hang in the McBride Visitor Centre. Some members of the Robson Valley of Backcountry Horsemen of BC Chapter attended the presentation. Left to right front row: Dawn Hickerty, Wes Phillips, Eileen MacDonald, Dawn Phillips, and Marty Hickerty. /SUBMITTED

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You are invited to the
Annual Valemount Community Forest BBQ

Brought to you by



Thursday, July 24

5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Centennial Park, 5th Avenue, Valemount

Schedule of Events:

4:00 PM — Farmers' Market at the Visitor Information Centre (VIC)

5:00 PM — BBQ by the Valemount Legion

Welcome from Mayor Owen Torgerson and community representatives

Live music by local musicians

Anniversary cake & refreshments

Time to connect with friends, neighbours and local organizations

Special thanks to our additional sponsors



This event is supported by Columbia Basin Trust as part of its 30th anniversary. It's a chance to celebrate community, collaboration and all the great things happening in Valemount.

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Community Events

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Valemount

MON AUG 11: Join us for Coping with Extreme Heat an informative and supportive session on staying safe and healthy during extreme heat events. We'll watch a helpful webinar together, learn practical tips, share experiences, and connect with others in your community. Stay cool, stay safe, and stay connected! Let's beat the heat together— Monday, August 11, 2025, from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM at the Valemount RVCS office, 1444 5th Avenue, registration is not required. Brought to you by the Seniors Program.

WED Aug 13: Join us for Sprouting Memories – Harvesting Sessions are blooming this August! Starting Wednesday, August 13th to September 3rd 2025. Join us at the Valemount Community Garden, 201 Ash Street, for fun, learning, and connection for caregivers and children aged 0–6. Let's grow together—one seed and smile at a time! Registration is preferred – please contact the office to secure your spot. Brought to you by the Infant Development Program.

THUR Aug 14: Baby Blossoms is back on Thursday, August 14, 2025 with Tiny Tummys: Wholesome Cooking with Orlanda Goodell! This free session, part of our monthly infant care series, offers caregivers of children aged 0–3 practical tips on preparing nutritious meals for growing babies. Join us from 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM at 1444 5th Ave—registration is required, so be sure to sign up early! Brought to you by the Infant Development Program.

Ongoing Valemount

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

Cribbage - Mondays
Join us every Monday at the Golden Years Lodge for a game of cribbage! 1 PM. All welcome.

Drop-in pickleball - Sun, Tues, Thurs
Drop-in pickleball at the Community Hall at noon Sundays, and 8:30am Tuesdays and Thursday.

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

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

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.

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.

Virtual Fitness Classes at Peak Physio:
Barre workouts Tuesday mornings at 7am
Cardio Kickboxing Thursday mornings 7am
We are adding yoga Monday nights at 7:15pm
Above workouts are taught by a virtual instructor but held in our quaint gym space. Limited to 6 participants - pre-registration is advised. Kickboxing limited to 4 people. \$10 per session. Sign up online at www.peakphysiotherapy.janeapp.com or call/text 2650-566-4650

In-Person Fitness Classes at Peak Physio:
High-intensity circuit training Tuesdays 7-8pm and Wednesdays 9-10am. Low-intensity circuit training Fridays 9-10am or Sundays 10-11am. Instructor Laura Smith. Sign up online at www.peakphysiotherapy.janeapp.com

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. ON HOLD UNTIL MID-JUNE.

Family Place Drop In Program - Fridays
9 AM-12PM every Friday in Valemount at 1444 5th Ave. Come connect with other families, access parenting resources, and enjoy fun activities for you and your 0–6-year-old children at RVCS (1444 5th Ave), unless otherwise stated. Registration is not required. For more information, call 250-566-9107 or email events@rvcsbc.org. See activities below:

July 25 - Celebrating Blueberry Month at Centennial Park

Aug 1 – Play Ball Day at Centennial Park

Aug 8 – Bouncy Castles at Centennial Park

Aug 15 – Play Dough Art

Aug 22 – Watercolor-Fun at Centennial Park

Aug 29 – Summer Craft

If it's too cold, rainy or windy we will meet at 1444 5th Ave!

The Valemount Seed Library Mon-Fri
The seed library is available in our lobby during business hours at RVCS Valemount (1444 5th Avenue). Office hours: Monday 10 AM -6 PM and Tuesday to Thursday 8 am-4 pm. Come take free seeds to grow in your garden this summer. By saving seeds, we can maintain genetic diversity, adapt to changing environmental conditions, and save money by not having to purchase new seeds every year. For more information, call 1-844-324-2004 or email events@rvcsbc.org.

The Free Food Farm Stand & Pantry Mon-Fri
The stand and pantry are available for anyone who would like some free, fresh produce. We also accept donations of unprocessed fruits and veggies. The stand is accessible in the front lobby at RVCS Valemount (1444 5th Avenue) and is available to everyone—just help yourself! Emergency top-up food is accessible to our clients and anyone who walks through the door. This initiative is supported by one-time grant funding through United Way BC. For more info, call 1-844-324-2004 or email events@rvcsbc.org.

McBride

Aug 6 – Face Paintingmonthly gathering designed to bring caregivers together in a warm, welcoming space. Share your experiences, gain inspiration, and build a stronger sense of compassion, connection, and community. Tuesday, July 22nd, 2025, from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM at the RVCS office in McBride, 942 3rd Avenue. This month we'll explore the use and benefits of visual schedules, with a look at various formats to support your parenting journey. Coffee, tea, and light snacks provided. Feel free to bring your lunch. Initial registration is required. Brought to you by the CYSN and Family Support Programs.

The Ozalenka Alpine Club would like to offer hiking trips to the community this summer. Below is the tentative plan, subject to change depending on interest and weather conditions. The cost will be \$20/non-member and free for members (contact Elsie Stanley if you'd like to become a member). Max is 10 per trip, so please sign up early if you want a spot.

Either Joy or Sean Prockter from Robson Backcountry Adventures will be the guide for the trip. We will meet at 08:00 in the Canada Post parking lot in McBride and everyone will need to sign a waiver in order to participate (see robsonbackcountryadventures.ca for your reference).

August 9th: Boulder Mountain

Hike up from valley bottom to the alpine on this stunning trail. Elevation gain is significant at 1,200m over 7 kms. There is an opportunity to hike off-trail through some lovely meadows on the way back down from the summit if there's interest. Views of the Goat River Valley and beyond are stunning.

WED AUG 13: Join us for Coping with Extreme Heat an informative and supportive session on staying safe and healthy during extreme heat

events. We'll watch a helpful webinar together, learn practical tips, share experiences, and connect with others in your community. Stay cool, stay safe, and stay connected! Let's beat the heat together— Wednesday, August 13, 2025, from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM at the McBride RVCS office, 942 3rd Avenue, registration is not required. Brought to you by the Seniors Program.

Ongoing McBride

MONs Family Place Drop In Program 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM 9 at RVCS (942 3rd Ave, McBride), unless otherwise stated. Come connect with other families, access parenting resources, and enjoy fun activities for you and your 0–6-year-old children at RVCS (942 3rd Ave), unless otherwise stated. For more information, call 250-569-2266 or email events@rvcsbc.org. See activities below:

July 2 – Play-Dough Time

July 9 – Bouncy Castle Fun

July 16 – Cooking with Tots: Ants on a Log

July 23 – Bug Crafts

July 30 – Water Play (bring dry clothes)

MON's Starting MAR 10: Join our workshop, How To Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk, a seven week program from 7 PM to 8 PM at the McBride Secondary School, 1300 2nd Ave. Learning these skills sets everyone up for success, fostering a harmonious and supportive environment for both you and your children. All supplies and workbooks will be provided. Enhance your communication skills and create a positive impact on your child's development. Registration is required, please contact the office to reserve your spot.

TUES ASL Sign Language Club 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

Dungeons & Dragons - Tuesdays
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!

Children's Learning Series - Tuesdays 3:00pm
starting with a story and snack, each week library staff will host activities under the umbrella of a variety of themes. Geared to ages 9-12. Please call 250-569-2411 or stop in to register children. More info on the website library@mcbridebc.org. April 1 is Games Galore, April 8 is an art collage, April 15 is the viewing and discussing the ground breaking animation techniques in Spider-Man Across the Spider-Verse (families welcome).

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.

Fibre Artists - Wednesdays
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 250 569 2411.

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

Sunshine Stories - Thursdays
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.

McBride Community Market - Fridays
Starts Friday June 20 from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm in the pavilion at Steve Kolida Park. Bring your own table. Space rent is \$10.00 per week. The sale of high risk foods requires a permit from Northern Health. For further information contact Jackie Edwards at 250 569 7101 jackie.c.edwards@gmail.com

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 mins about what we are working on, then we sit silently for an hour to write. Writers are working on a range of things – novels, memoirs, poems, short stories, dissertations. Join us!

New Games Cafe Night – Fridays 6pm
Meet up with others to enjoy board and card games. Suitable for casual players looking for a fun night out to hardcore strategists who love a challenge. Staff are happy to introduce new games at this time.

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

Dunster

SATs Dunster Farmers Market is up and running again for the 45yth year. Join us at Dunster Community Hall every Saturday from 11am to 1pm until the end of September. No fee for vendors. All welcome! We offer a nice lunch of local beef burgers, local veggie burgers, hot dogs, coffee and juice. We usually have veggies and plants, home baking, local crafts and art, and miscellaneous new and used items. For more information, call Pete Amyoony at 250-968-4334.

AUGUST 1-3rd DUNSTER SCHOOL REUNION!
50+ years of students, teachers, parents, and community members who have participated in the Dunster School in any capacity, come and celebrate this historic place over the weekend! All welcome. More details coming soon!

PUZZLES



CROSSWORD

Answers on P21

Across

- 1 Customers like it live!
- 5 One with a beat
- 8 ___ pigeon
- 12 Prince of Wales, e.g.
- 13 Row boat equipment
- 14 Fabled racer
- 15 Point out
- 17 Has a debt to
- 18 Support
- 20 Blessing
- 23 Bring to stage
- 26 It takes ___ to tango!
- 27 Animal trainer
- 29 Sushi offering
- 30 The whole nine ___
- 31 Cirque de Soleil equip-
ment
- 33 Folks
- 35 Road surface
- 36 Trample
- 37 Precipitate
- 39 Talk very quietly
- 42 Phi ___ Kappa
- 45 Hallway
- 49 Incessantly
- 50 Bar drink
- 51 Logical
- 52 Nurture

53 Soda water

54 Green ___ monster

Down

- 1 "The Sweetheart of
Sigma ___"
- 2 Rooster's lady
- 3 Relief
- 4 'Survivor' team
- 5 It's black and it's
mined
- 6 Horse feed
- 7 Fakes it
- 8 Like some music
- 9 Bar topic
- 10 It may follow you
- 11 Agreement word
- 16 Fold-out bed
- 19 Terminates
- 20 Broke bread
- 21 Used a broom
- 22 Alternative energy
type
- 24 Dollars and ___
- 25 Pick up the tab for
- 27 Golf match equalizer
- 28 Garfunkel's first
name
- 30 "Uh-huh"

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15				16					17			
			18					19				
20	21	22					23			24	25	
26					27	28						
29				30						31	32	
	33		34							35		
	36							37	38			
				39			40	41				
42	43	44			45					46	47	48
49					50					51		
52					53					54		

- 32 Taste
- 34 Bounty
- 37 That girl
- 38 Get out of bed
- 40 Chewbacca's buddy
- 41 Get ready for a presentation
- 42 "Wanna ___?"
- 43 First lady in the Bible
- 44 High end of many scales
- 46 Period in time
- 47 A wee hour
- 48 One side in checkers

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

SUDOKU

HOW TO PLAY

Answers on P21

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 P21

Across

- 1. Niger neighbor
- 5. Wild and crazy guy
- 11. Most common in English
- 14. Just ___ should be
- 15. Low tie score
- 16. ___ Lingus (Irish airlines)
- 17. Brecht and Weill musical
- 20. Attacks
- 21. Dwindles
- 22. Imitated
- 23. Freight unit
- 26. Joan of Arc became one
- 29. Outlaw
- 30. Bassoon's cousin
- 31. Military people
- 32. Narc's org.
- 35. Woodstock and Live Aid
- 39. ___ Anne de Beaupré
- 40. Spoiled-rotten kids
- 41. Gasp
- 42. Look after
- 43. Cocktail
- 45. Leading
- 48. Lacking
- 49. Laugh heartily
- 50. Non-conventional writing
- 55. Mary Poppins and My Fair Lady
- 58. Compass direction
- 59. Slanting
- 60. "Young Frankenstein" woman
- 61. "Plaines" leader
- 62. Put down, slangily
- 63. "___ la guerre"

Down

1. Damon of
"Good Will
Hunting"

2. Nastase rival in
the 70s

3. Old Bologna
"bread"

4. Uttered again

5. More dejected

6. Put ___ to
(finish)

7. Depression from
a blow

8. Winter
constellation of the
northern sky

9. One or more

10. New

11. Exercise system

12. Thyme and
sage

13. Demolish

18. Glimpse from
afar

19. Rancho hand

24. First American in space,
first name

25. Pear variety

26. Sounds from Bossy

27. Be adjacent to

28. A learning method

29. De ___ (actual)

31. Embarrassing blunders

32. Expression of annoyance

33. Volcano in Sicily

34. City in Italy

36. Biblical son of Ruth

37. Snack

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
14					15							16		
17					18							19		
20												21		
				22				23	24	25				
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45	46	47						48						
49						50	51					52	53	54
55					56	57								
58					59							60		
61					62							63		

- 38. Intermittent
- 42. Delhi wrap
- 43. Hurt badly
- 44. Last Stuart monarch
- 45. Ready for war
- 46. Dealer represents it
- 47. Lessens the stress
- 48. Mine section
- 51. Sgts., e.g.
- 52. Creepy plant
- 53. Some hosp. graphical records
- 54. Aspiring atty.'s exam
- 56. Lowlife
- 57. "___ recall ..."

Leo season pounces in on kitten paws -- soft, playful and full of potential. The week brings a new moon, an invitation to set intentions around pleasure: how you want to feel at work, in love, in the wild theater of your everyday life. This is the time to prioritize delight. With Pluto stirring behind the scenes, we're reminded that even the lightest jokes are rooted in truth, and the realest connections are often forged through laughter, play and sacred silliness.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Though the solar change activates your fire sign energy, you channel the power subtly, with an unassuming strength, but somehow the low-key approach attracts even more attention. Your calm leadership will be applauded, and invitations follow. You'll be asked to lead, join or partake in fun perks. It's a week of rising.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Guided by heart and grounded fairness, you'll ask for what you're worth this week, not just in jobs and dollars but in everyday exchanges. It's about baseline respect, the way you're treated, heard, included. You'll approach it all without edge or apology -- just a steady, clear sense of value that makes boundary-setting feel like second nature.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). It's easy to connect when everyone is on the same page. But you shine this week in the harder moments -- when worlds don't align, beliefs clash and everyone seems to want something different from what's being offered to them. You're the reason bridges still get built. Humor, listening and one totally unexpected comment from you will unlock the magic.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Your stoicism has a softness to it -- a kindness that doesn't need to name every flaw to be honest. This week, you'll witness a secret or mistake, and your decision to let it pass will mean the world to someone. Your every gracious act helps you too. You contribute to softness that you will also revel in when you need it.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You feel like your wildest, most magnetic self -- curious, flirtatious and incredibly hard to pin down. You're drawn to someone who matches your energy and lets you run free without losing sight of you. You're both chasing something spontaneous. This week ends with laughter in your lungs, wind in your hair and a story you can't wait to tell.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You've known the joy of loyalty that stretches past convenience. This week, someone else will experience it from you -- that unshakable, rare energy that says, "I'm here." No announcement, no ceremony, just being the rock someone needs. Showing up like this reminds you what you're made of -- and that certainty will carry into everything else you do.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Just when you've started to settle into the expected rhythm -- following the script, checking the

boxes -- something shifts. There's an open window this week -- a moment where you can say what you really want. Take it. You've earned the right to desire, to declare, to be bold. Your wish won't be seen as pushy. It will be seen as visionary.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You've known the haunting thought that some mysterious "other" could step into your life and make it work better. That ghost lives in the hallways of all extraordinary people. But there is no "someone else" with your timing, your voice, your way of making things and loving and pulling wild meaning out of chaos. Take on the week knowing that however you do it, it's right.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). A delay can be a gift. A detour can be the best thing that happens in the journey. A wind-up that leads to nothing can still be sweet. The mystery ending or cliff-hanger has its purpose and place as well. The lesson of the week is one of releasing the expectation and accepting whatever form the action (or non-action) takes.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Just like you can't snap your fingers and have a potato appear in your garden, you can't instantly create happiness, love, motivation or peace just because you want to feel them. But you can set the conditions, and by creating a supportive environment you will increase the chances that the emotions you want will naturally emerge.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). What you praise, you reinforce -- in yourself and in culture. If you only reward surface-level cues, you train your attention to chase spectacle instead of substance. This week, you will use your insight to make things better, not just more efficient or controlled. That's how perception becomes kindness, and kindness is a ripple that transforms the world.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). This week, you bring intelligence and grace to interactions. Enjoy yourself in the process. What you wear will matter, and it's time to invest in pieces that support your comfort and project the image that helps you to the goal. Also, you don't need to perform. You're a contributor just by being there. You make someone's day just by showing up.

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS: The power of timing is on your side. Your work will align with admiration, income and repeat opportunities -- all you've wanted. Sure, you're willing to work hard, but you've already proven your grit. It's your turn to move with ease -- maybe because life becomes easier, but also because your relationship to it does. More highlights: New friends bring humor, perspective and adventure. Conversations radically shift your sense of what's possible. You'll sell tickets to what you build. You'll invest in your health, improvement, skills and in yourself with abundant return.



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SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

TOUGHIE ANSWERS

1	M	2	A	3	L	4	I	5	M	6	A	7	D	8	M	9	A	10	N	11	T	12	H	13	E
14	A	15	S	16	I	17	T	18	O	19	N	20	E	21	O	22	N	23	E	24	A	25	E	R	
26	T	27	H	28	R	29	E	30	P	31	E	32	N	33	N	34	Y	35	O	36	P	37	E	R	A
38	T	39	E	40	A	41	R	42	S	43	I	44	N	45	T	46	O	47		48	E	49	B	50	B
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14	A	15	S	16	I	17	T	18	O	19	N	20	E	21	O	22	N	23	E	24	A	25	E	R	
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51		52	A	53	P	54	E	55	D	56		57	C	58	A	59	B	60	O	61	O	62	S	E	
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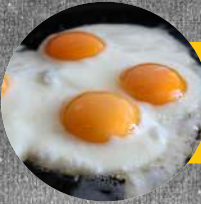
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Valemount Legion Branch 266

Friday dinners 5-8pm
Sunday pancake breakfasts 8-10:30


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

Cranberry Marsh Loop gets an upgrade — and there's more to come

By LAURA KEIL

The Cranberry Marsh / Starratt Wildlife Management Area is a popular trail and wildlife viewing area for locals and visitors alike, but in recent years the southern side of the loop has been plagued with flooding that has rendered it a boggy mess. Recently the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship took on that problem and installed a temporary boardwalk to span the worst areas with a more permanent solution to come.

The Ministry says they and the Nature Trust of B.C. are engaging with conservation partners and Simpcw First Nation on a management plan and expansion of the Wildlife Management Area. Their short-term goal is to build a raised boardwalk but construction requires freezing conditions, so the earliest it could be built is this winter.

The current temporary boardwalk uses fir 2x12 planks on hemlock 6x6 blocks acquired from the local industrial park mill. “We hope to incorporate these materials into the permanent structure design, but this will depend on the designs,” said a Ministry statement.

Why did it take so long?

The trail has been flooded for several years and locals had laid down wooden pallets to try to form a makeshift bridge while the Province and Nature Trust agreed on a

plan.

The Province said it’s taken time to find the cause of the flooding and explore solutions.

“We hoped removing a disintegrating old culvert last year would eliminate blockage contributing to the change in water flow and flooding of the trail,” said a statement from the Ministry. “This helped, but beavers then built a series of dams that have caused the current trail flooding.”

For now, the interim boardwalk provides a good solution to the worst areas, though with all the rain this summer it’s still crucial to have good footwear on this hike!

Other info

Users have also reported nesting hawks dive bombing walkers on the existing raised boardwalk near 17th Ave so beware. As always, bears are frequently sighted along the south side so make lots of noise and carry bear spray.

For a shorter outing that avoids the south side, park at the Best Western and do an in-and-back hike along the dyke, which provides stunning views of the marsh, Canoe Mountain and the Premier Range.

For more information visit hikevalemount.com/cranberry-marshstarratt-wildlife-management-area/



Round out your adventure day with a visit to the Caribou Grill!

Open Thursday-Monday 4:30-9pm

1002 5th Ave, Valemount



Porcupines have extremely poor eyesight with a vision range of only to around 5 feet or less. They do however have excellent sense of smell and hearing which helps them to detect potential threats. This one finally caught my scent at close range and it doesn't care if I see its never brushed teeth. /LEON LORENZ



Valemount RCMP were on scene at a single vehicle incident near Albreda involving this semi early Friday morning. No injuries or fatalities were reported. /PHOTO BY LAURA KEIL

Valemount RCMP respond to semi incident near Albreda

By SPENCER HALL

The Valemount RCMP were on the scene of a single vehicle collision early Friday morning after a semi truck found its way into a ditch near Albreda. Upon arriving at the scene, officers observed a semi truck, which had been travelling south, in the ditch laying on its passenger side. RCMP Media Relation Officer Madonna Saunderson told The Goat the incident occurred south of the Clemina pullout on Highway 5. “There is nothing to suspect any impairment involved and there were no reported injuries,” Saunderson said, adding that the RCMP’s investigation into the incident has since concluded.

It is with deep sadness that we announce the loss of our beloved mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and great-grandmother who passed away peacefully at the age of 88 after a courageous 20-year battle with cancer:



Christa Karin Maxeiner
January 3, 1937-July 10, 2025

Christa was born in Poland and fled to Berlin at an early age with her mother. She completed an education as a physiotherapist after finishing school in Berlin and married Gerhard Maxeiner in 1958. The couple settled in the Wetzlar region, where they raised their two sons.

As a family, they embraced their love of travel, embarking on numerous summer camping adventures throughout southern Europe, including the former Yugoslavia, Italy, and France. Throughout her career, Christa developed a life-long passion as an independent physiotherapist, offering courses in back-pain prevention, physical well-being and Nordic Walking.

Christa and Gerhard fell in love with the Robson Valley after their retirement in 1990. They created a second home at a property they purchased along Bunbury Road near Tête Jaune Cache, where they enjoyed being visited by wildlife, friends and family, and enjoyed making lasting connections with many welcoming people of the area. Christa remained in Canada following Gerhard's passing in 2003. She re-located to the town of Valemount during 2012 and finally to Germany in 2023, prompted by health concerns.

Sincere gratitude is felt by the family to the staff of Haus Königsberg, as well as to Christa's physicians in Canada (Dr. Keyter) and Germany (Dr. Gruendler), for their exceptional care and unwavering support.

The funeral service will be held on Saturday, July 26, 2025 at 11 AM at Klosterkirche Altenberg, Germany.

Forever in our hearts: Jens (Karin), with their three children Jan-Philip, Isabel (Joram) and Rene (Wanda) and their three children; Ralf (Anette) with their two children Philipp and Kevin.

Online condolences can be left and shared at:
<https://www.vrm-trauer.de/traueranzeige/christa-maxeiner/anzeigen>

Visit my website to see all of my featured listings: www.valemountmcbritelistsings.com. A great resource for your property search in the valley.

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3535 Crooked Creek Road

VALEMOUNT

Nestled on a private 10+ acres, this large log home is immaculate and inviting. The main floor boasts a gourmet kitchen, 2 dining areas, and a great room with vaulted ceilings and custom stone and log work. Guests are tucked down the hall in a private wing, while the primary suite upstairs is like no other. Plenty of storage, a hot tub, a detached garage, and manicured grounds round out this one-of-a-kind package.



1233 4th Avenue

VALEMOUNT

This charming home wins you over at first glance. Step inside and you'll find bright, generous rooms and a unique spin on the classic split-level layout. With 3 well appointed bedrooms, a kitchen that's a cook's dream, and a private backyard oasis, this home was built with quality and comfort in mind. This home offers executive-style living without the executive price tag.



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