



SKAHA MATTERS

“Bringing Community Matters To You”

Volume 18 : Issue 2

February 2026

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Coming Together In February

By Myleen Mallach, Owner/Publisher of Skaha Matters

February is a month that often feels like a quiet bridge between winter's deep cold and the promise of spring, yet it is filled with meaning, celebration, and warmth in its own unique way. Though it may be the shortest month of the year, February carries a surprising amount of emotion, tradition, and shared experiences that bring people together despite the snow and chilly air.

One of the most well-known celebrations in February is Valentine's Day. On February 14th, love takes centre stage in all its forms. For some, it means romantic dinners, flowers, and handwritten cards exchanged between partners. For others, it is a chance to celebrate friendship, self-love, or family bonds. Valentine's Day reminds people to pause and express care and appreciation, something that can easily be overlooked in the rush of everyday life. Even small gestures - a kind message or a shared laugh - can make the day feel special. Show your 'love' this Valentine's Day.

In Canada, February is also marked by Family Day, a holiday that encourages people to slow down and spend quality time with loved ones. Falling on the third Monday of the month in many provinces, Family Day is about togetherness rather than gifts or grand plans. Families gather for home-cooked meals, winter walks, skating, skiing, board games, or simply relaxing together. In the heart of winter, Family Day offers a welcome break and a reminder of the importance of connection, support, and shared moments.

Adding to the excitement this February is the thrill of cheering for Canadian athletes at the Olympic Winter Games in Italy. As competitors take to the ice, snow, and slopes, Canadians across the country unite in national pride. Watching the red and white race down ski hills or glide across the ice brings a sense of shared joy and anticipation. The Olympic Winter Games showcase not only athletic excellence, but also dedication, teamwork, and resilience - qualities that inspire viewers of all ages. Even from thousands of kilometers away, cheering for Team Canada creates a feeling of unity and excitement. We have so many incredible athletes that are at the top of their sport and poised to win gold. Let's come together February 6-22 and cheer for our fellow Canadians.

Altogether, February may be cold and brief, but it is rich with love, family, and national pride. Through special moments of Valentine's Day, Family Day, and the Olympic Spirit, this month proves that warmth does not always come from the weather - it comes from people coming together.

Next month marks the 200th issue of Skaha Matters. Thank you to our advertisers and content contributors, as well as our readers, for your continued support since August 2009.

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February Update

By Donegal Wilson, MLA for Boundary-Similkameen

As we move through February, I continue to be reminded of how deeply connected our South Okanagan and Similkameen communities are. Whether I am speaking with residents in Penticton, Osoyoos, Keremeos, Princeton, or the many rural areas in between, the message is consistent. People want practical solutions, clear communication, and a government that listens.

Over the past month, I have been focused on advocating for safer communities and more accountable decision making at the provincial level. Issues like public safety, health care access, and the ongoing fallout from failed government policies continue to come up in conversations with residents. British Columbians deserve clarity and honesty from their government, especially when policies have real impacts on families, businesses, and frontline workers.

I have also been pleased to support and share important local initiatives, including health services that directly benefit residents here in the South Okanagan. Access to screening, early intervention, and community-based supports remains a priority, particularly in rural and smaller communities where services are often harder to reach. Ensuring that people know what resources are available, and that those resources are reliable, matters.

In the Legislature and in my work outside Victoria, I continue to raise concerns about transparency and accountability. When decisions are made without proper consultation or when governments refuse to measure whether policies are actually working, it is local communities that feel the consequences first. I will keep pushing for common sense approaches that respect local voices and recognize the unique realities of rural regions like ours.

February is also a time when many community organizations, volunteers, and service providers are working hard behind the scenes. I want to acknowledge the people who quietly step up every day to support their neighbours, whether through food programs, health services, emergency response, or community events. These efforts are the backbone of our region, especially during the winter months.

As always, my door remains open. Hearing directly from residents helps guide the work I do on your behalf, and I value the conversations that continue to shape my advocacy for Boundary Similkameen.

Thank you for your continued engagement and trust.

Twin Lakes New Year's Day Polar Dip

By Daina Zilans



Happy New Year from Twin Lakes!

When Kevin Dyck put out a request for people to join him for a polar dip at the boat launch in Twin Lake, the Twin Lakes Social Club was very enthusiastic. No, we were not to be "dippers", but we could offer the

dippers and spectators a fire and food for a wiener roast and a crystal-clear lake to skate on for this New Year's Day event.

Kevin had prepared a dipping hole on the north side of the boat launch. Some plungers acclimatized themselves by stripping down an hour or so ahead of time, while others waited until the last minute to do so. Congratulations to Dawn, Kevin, Mau, Liliana, and Claire, the five brave members of our community who took the plunge, while being cheered on by an enthusiastic group of spectators! They received a certificate for participating in the Inaugural Twin Lakes Polar Dip. Some have since repeated their dips, including an evening dip by candlelight.

The attendees and dippers enjoyed warming up by the fire, roasting wieners and Smokies, and drinking some hot apple cider. About a dozen attendees took advantage of the spectacular ice on the lake and skated north, past Cow Point, to the Narrows. Thanks to the volunteers, dippers, and others who came out to this impromptu event! We hope to host the Second Annual event in 2027.



The Twin Lakes Social Club is planning a few more events this year, such as: April 25 ~ Pitch In - roadside cleanup of the Twin Lakes area; and August 29 ~ Dance at Twin Lakes Golf Course, with Kelowna band Uncle Rico. Stay tuned for further updates.

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RCMP Community Report



By Jo Anne Ruppenthal,
Community Policing-Resortative Justice Coordinator

Who Can I Blame??

The most often question I get asked here at our Community Policing Office on Lakeshore Drive begins with, "What are the police doing about ...?? And from there, it goes to whatever problem you can name - be it social, criminal or civil.

How did all of society's woes become the sole responsibility of the police to resolve in the minds of many? Is it because we are one of the few agencies that will answer your call 24/7 and in most cases send someone to see you. In my 38 years of policing, you can only imagine the type of non-police calls I have taken, never mind responded to, because it was easier to respond than to try explain why it was not a police matter. However, when officers are tied up with non-police matters, they are not available to respond to other police priorities that the community as a whole has identified such as thefts, speeding, drug use and sales, and other criminal concerns.

The police cannot address community concerns without the assistance of the community. Principle 7 of Sir Robert Peel's 9 Principles of Policing states ... **"Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence."** In short, police are paid to do full time what everyone else should also be doing. Sir Robert Peel is credited with helping to create the modern concept of policing based on these nine principles of policing in 1800's and they are still very relevant today. So, let's not waste time at pointing fingers and having unreal expectations of each other's role in solving our problems. Let us work together to address concerns and implement viable and lawful solutions. So, if you have any ideas on how we can best do this, come on down and share them with me. I look forward to hearing, "I have an idea how we can deal with ...".

REMEMBER VIABLE AND LAWFUL IDEAS!!

Please reach out to the South Okanagan Similkameen Community Policing Unit whenever you need, by calling either 250-770-5688 or 250-770-5684 or on our Facebook site.



From The Director For RDOS Area "I"

Thank you to the Kaleden residents who joined the RDOS for its annual Town Hall Meeting on January 26th at 6 pm in the hall for a presentation on the Area "I" financials. This was a great opportunity to ask questions and learn about the services that the RDOS provides. If you would like to learn more or provide feedback, please visit rdosregionalconnections.ca.

Subrina Monteith
Director of RDOS Area "I"


If you are looking for ways to get more involved in your community, please consider joining the Kaleden Parks & Recreation Commission. This group meets to discuss projects and service levels at Pioneer Park, 1912 Hotel, KVR Trail, as well as the Kaleden Community Hall. If you're interested in joining, please contact me by email or phone for more information.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me.

Subrina Monteith, Director of RDOS Area "I"
Direct: 250.460.0723 | smonteith@rdos.bc.ca | www.rdos.bc.ca

Kaleden Community Association Update

By Glenda Livolsi

The primary purpose of Kaleden Community Association is to improve the conditions of our community life here in Kaleden. We support and encourage charitable, recreational, and social events in the Twin Lakes, Kaleden and St. Andrews by the Lake areas. We inspire the citizens of Kaleden to attend programs and events offered through various sub-groups, including the Kaleden Seniors, Kaleden Museum, Kaleden Church, Kaleden HUB, Kaleden Fire Department, Kaleden Library and Kaleden School.

All of these groups provide wonderful projects in our community that rely on volunteers. If you have a few hours to volunteer or would like to contribute on a regular basis, these committees would love to hear from you. Kaleden provides a wealth of volunteering opportunities for any age! Volunteering is very rewarding with feelings of joy, boosting your self-esteem, reducing stress, connecting with people in your community and meeting new friends! Many people volunteer because they've received help in the past and want to return the favour. Whether it's a sense of duty or a desire to leave a legacy, giving back can be deeply fulfilling. Most importantly, don't forget that volunteering can be a lot of fun! From special events to creative projects, it's a chance to do something different and meaningful for yourself and your community.

The Kaleden Community Association is also a registered charity with the Canada Revenue Agency. If you would like to make a financial donation to KCA for projects in our community, please contact us at chair@kaledencommunity.com.



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Courtesy of the Kaleden Community Association

Kaleden Irrigation District News

By Bruce Shepherd, KID Trustee

Mixed Messages? As of January 1, the Okanagan watershed's snowpack was 90% of normal. Not bad, but in excess of 100% is needed to overcome four years of water deficits, with more snow than rain required, in order to fully recharge our watershed. The unusually warm temperatures enjoyed up to mid-January don't bode well for this, but things may change over the next three months. Fingers crossed ...

Back And To The Future? As promised in January's column, let's start reviewing the information leading up to KID's upgrade to our water treatment:

104 Years of Serving Kaleden ~ KID was established as an Improvement District in 1922, taking over the combined irrigation and domestic water system constructed in 1910 by the Kaleden Development Company (KDC; more about KID's history will be featured in next month's *Kaleden Museum column*). By the late 1950s, the 60-yr-old infrastructure was deteriorating, and there were water quality issues with the gravity-fed stream system. With the establishment of the provincial *Agricultural and Rural Development Act* (ARDA) in the early 1960s, provincial and federal funds became available. ARDA funded the construction of a new system based on pumping from Skaha Lake, which was completed in 1966. The pumphouse was built on waterfront property purchased from Fred King, and the adjacent KID Office is on property "inherited" from the KDC.

Fast-Forward Seven Decades ... and much of the infrastructure that KID maintains (including a lake intake; a pumphouse with four pumps, totaling 825 HP; 18 km of pipelines; two reservoirs and a pressure tank; three booster stations; over 60 fire hydrants and standpipes; and the office) is aging. In addition, KID must address a provincially-mandated upgrade to water treatment standards. Déjà vu, except that the Province now excludes KID and other Improvement Districts from federal-provincial funding programs, to "encourage" turnover of operations to regional districts or local municipalities. The KID Board remains resistant to such "encouragement", believing that turnover will result in much higher water charges for our ratepayers. KID continues the fight for access to funding programs, so far with little other than sympathy provided.

A 'Deep' Subject ~ As mentioned above, KID switched from a gravity-fed surface water supply to pumping from the lake in 1966. In 2006, that system consisted of a screened intake 130m offshore and 9m deep, with chlorine injected at the intake. Ensuing water quality issues (primarily temperature and odour) prompted extension of the intake to 210m offshore and 24m deep in 2007. This markedly improved water quality (more on this in a coming issue), which also should exempt KID from having to filter water - saving at least \$10,000,000! **NB - Please, NO fishing or anchoring in the vicinity of the pipeline and the intake** - a dragging boat anchor did some damage just last summer.

Did You Know? That over 85% of KID's annual water consumption goes to irrigation.



Kaleden
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Office Hours: 9-1 Mon & Thur | Appt Wed
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Kaleden Volunteer Fire Department



By Jean Dube

Open Burning

Did you know we are in the midst of OPEN BURNING Season? Deadline for burning is midnight April 15, 2026.

Open Burning is an opportunity to clean your property of vegetative debris such as piles of branches, stubble or pruning from trees. Burn Authorization is required for the fire protection areas of Kaleden, Naramata, Okanagan Falls, Anarchist and Willowbrook. Residents are required to complete a Burn Authorization application prior to any burn. There is no fee and no permits are issued. Your request is directed to your Fire Department. The KVFD is reminding residents to review burning regulations on the RDOS website before completing the Burn Authorization application. Apply on line at www.rdos.bc.ca. Once you have applied, there is a 72- hour waiting period.

Burning Authority holders must confirm burning is allowed on the day by checking the Air Quality and Venting index by calling 250.490.4125.

It is important for property owners to consider their neighbours and the environment before burning. Other than open burning, please consider options such as taking material to the landfill or by taking advantage of the Kaleden FireSmart chipping event being held May 2, 2026. More information to be provided in the spring.

Any person who lights, or burns permitted burning material shall:

- Ensure that it is safe to burn and that it will continue to be safe to burn.
- Ensure that burn area has an adequate fuel break completely around it.
- Ensure that the burn area is monitored at all times by a responsible adult.
- Ensure that firefighting hand tools and a water source are available.
- Ensure that the fire is completely out and cold before leaving the fire unattended.
- Ensure that the fire is not ignited before 8 am and is extinguished before 11 pm.
- Ensure that no burning occurs when the forecast is for windy period during or immediately after the burn.

The Fire Chief may extend or reduce the burning season should conditions allow or require it. Please forward any inquiries to the KVFD via email to kaledenfire@rdos.bc.ca.



New To Kaleden?

We would like to welcome you & provide you with a package of community information. Please call 250-460-3387.

British Columbia FireSmart Kaleden FireSmart Tip

By Linda Dahl

We all know what a mild winter we are having. This means the ground and plants will be very dry and potentially flammable as we move into the spring and summer months.

It is imperative that you make the 1.5 meter zone (Immediate Zone) around your home as completely debris free as you can. As you move to Zone 2, continue to remove ANY and ALL flammable debris. This includes wood piles that are close to the house, wood fencing, untreated wood decks, dry grasses and garbage build up. How you manage debris around your home will affect your entire neighbourhood in the event of a wildfire. Time and time again, it is proven that if the Immediate Zone around your home is FireSmart, then saving your home improves significantly.

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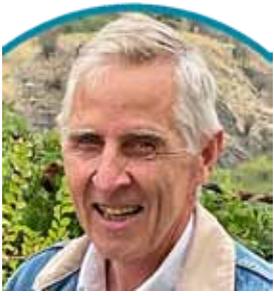
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Matt Taylor
Director for
RDOS Area "D"



From The Director For RDOS Area "D"

2026 Starts With A Lot Going On ~ First there's the budget, then there's major changes at Avery Farms, and there's incorporation. I'll dig into these one at a time.

2026 Budget ~ The Area "D" public information session was well attended on January 13. The primary topics of interest were: the services being converted to RDOS - Vintage Views Sewer, Lakeshore Water and Skaha

Estates Water; the ongoing sewer and water improvements in Okanagan Falls; and the impacts of incorporation on residents in the remainder of Area "D". Knowledgeable staff working in these areas were present, in anticipation of this interest. There was a lot of discussion and most of the questions were answered with a couple being addressed by follow-up email.

While budgets can be 'dry' stuff to look at - some might even call it boring - the presentations themselves are actually quite interesting and help to explain how the RDOS operates. The budget is one of the relatively few ways residents have to control the various services provided by their local government - whether the current regional district or the future municipality. To approve or stop a project, or change the level of service, residents must voice their concerns about the budget allocated to that project or service.

Thanks everyone for coming. It helps to know what people are concerned about!

The 'Pause' At Avery ~ A lot has been said on this, in various forums including Facebook and the coffee shops! First and foremost, this is an emotional and financial blow for everyone concerned: employees, owners and the community at large. The support I've seen and read has been heartwarming, and I expect employees and the owners will appreciate your thoughts.

Next and so that we've all got the same information, the Avery portfolio of assets in Okanagan Falls is presently offered for sale. That includes the hotel and motel properties, the business park and the farm. While the final outcome might be the full sale of all assets, it could also be a financial restructuring, or a partner, or the sale of some but not all assets.

Lastly, these are all great assets. The hotel is iconic, with a separate and thriving business. The motel is a terrific location - the first law of real estate! The business park offers light industrial land that is in short supply throughout the Okanagan. And, the farm or farm building is a large and well-built facility despite some equipment and financial issues.

The farm and business park are significant improvements upon what was there just 5 years ago. At some point, they will be operational, providing employment and economic activity that will support and sustain the community for decades.

A reminder to all, if you like having amenities, restaurants, grocer, services ... Support local businesses!

Incorporation ~ The Province is working towards an Okanagan Falls election held on October 17, 2026 together with other municipalities. Skipping over a lot of important details, the letters patent that legally create the new municipality need to be in place this spring for that election to occur.

The process is difficult - understatement! This is a fact, not an excuse, and it's true for several reasons. The legal authority to incorporate the community lies with the Province, not the RDOS or anyone else. It's not been done for a number of years. Then, there's the Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

(DRIPA) and aspects of the Constitution - and if their impact on the Province's work to incorporate wasn't clear before it's even less clear after recent court rulings. And, there's the possibility of including additional stipulations or requirements, that are seen as an opportunity by some and a disadvantage by others.

I continue to advocate for greater transparency and a defined process. From my perspective, the Province can and should communicate more. Hopefully, they will continue some initial steps in this direction. Next, the process needs improvement to fully inform residents prior to a referendum, and the new municipality shouldn't bear the cost of problems with the Province's process. Further, letters patent shouldn't saddle a new municipality with requirements that exceed those for any other municipality. This will drive business and investment elsewhere. Finally, just because the Province has the authority to rename the community doesn't mean they should do so. Residents have a right to be engaged on changes that impact them, such as the municipality's name.

To close: Everyone working on the incorporation seems proud to say that they want the future municipality to be 'set up for success'. A part of that successful future involves building and supporting a prosperous relationship between the municipality and OIB, similar to that enjoyed by other communities in the Okanagan Valley and their First Nation neighbours.

Progress On The Housing Front ~ Great to see the new building progressing. This 36 unit building will bring the South Skaha Housing Society's capacity to 62 units, with the new units coming available sometime in 2027. Stay tuned for more updates.



Director Information ~ Office hours on the first Tuesday each month are 3-4:30 pm at the RDOS Okanagan Falls Office.

Matt Taylor, Director for RDOS Area "D"

Direct: 778-931-6080 | mtaylor@rdos.bc.ca | www.rdos.bc.ca

OK Falls Parks & Rec Commission

By Bob Daly, Chair

While we are only half way through winter, there is a flurry of planning in preparation for spring, summer and fall for Okanagan Falls Recreation Programs and for Okanagan Falls Parks.

Budget ~ First reading was given by the RDOS Board for the **2026 Budget** and an information meeting was held in OK Falls on January 13. You can view the preliminary Recreation Commission Operation Financial Plan by searching online for "RDOS 2026-2030 Financial Plan Bylaw" then going to "Schedule D Operation Financial Plan," p. 102.

Park Plans for 2026 ~ RDOS Park Staff have given approval for a number of "Friends of OK Falls Parks" volunteer projects. This is the kind of work that is not regularly done by staff, and through the efforts of volunteers contributes to the enhancements of the parks. This year's projects include cleaning and painting light standards in Christie and Kenyon Parks, refinishing park benches in Lions Park, and painting needed areas of the Zen Centre.

For 2026, the Commission has recommended to not take on any new capital projects and focus instead on assessment, maintenance and needed repairs to existing assets. It is important as we transition to a municipal government that the basic elements of our parks are at a high standard, and that a planned maintenance schedule is developed to keep them that way.

Following the request of the Commission, Parks Staff have assessed the condition of Park Lights in Christie and Kenyon Parks, irrigation in all the parks and the condition of Kenyon House.

Happily, all of the Park Lights are in good condition and with some "Friends of OK Falls Parks" volunteer cleaning and painting, they will be like new.

A report was also done on the condition of Kenyon House in order to assess its life expectancy. A number of needed repairs were identified and will be completed, but otherwise the building can expect to provide good service well into the future.

A study of the irrigation systems noted some problems in Kenyon Park, but a further review of irrigation systems in all of the parks is required.

Commission Members 2026 ~ Welcome to Kris Lee who has joined the Commission. Kris has been instrumental in organizing the many Movies in the Park and Gym over the years. Returning Commission members are Allison Symons, Barb Shanks, Judy Garner, Laura Adamson, Kelvin Hall, Mark Beaulieu, Rick Wilson and Bob Daly.

Thank You to Jillian Johnstone for years of service on OK Falls Parks and Recreation Commission. She has decided to step off the Commission and we will surely see her devoted to many other community activities.



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Okanagan Falls Volunteer Fire Department

By Colin Pickell



Our 2026 training schedule is quickly filling up, starting recently with a full weekend of Incident Safety Officer training with the Oliver Fire Department. Every major incident, from a car accident to a house fire, requires us to have an Incident Safety Officer who plays a dedicated, independent role focused solely on responder and public safety during an incident. The training includes understanding and identifying types of fire behaviour, building construction, smoke indications, and how to identify and setup an evacuation zone in the event of a hazardous material spill. Training with neighbouring departments helps us build consistency in the event of mutual aid calls.

In April, one of our members will be attending this year's Wildfire Resiliency and Training Summit, organized by FireSmart and held in Victoria. This summit brings wildfire practitioners from all over BC together for five days of training, keynote speakers, and networking to explore how to make our homes, communities and landscapes where we live more wildfire resilient. Some of us attended last year's summit when it was held in Penticton, and it is a fantastic opportunity for learning and building our wildfire skills.

Of course, our regular Wednesday night practices are back in full swing after a bit of a break at Christmas. We have been fortunate that we can practice outside thanks to the unseasonably warmer weather this winter.



Okanagan Falls Business & Community Association Update

By Marshall MacKinnon

The Okanagan Falls Business & Community Association is continuing to work behind the scenes on some special community events for 2026. If you have any questions, suggestions or would like to volunteer, please send us an email to okanaganfallscommunity@gmail.com. We'd love to hear from you. Stay tuned for updates.

Remember to follow the Okanagan Falls Business & Community Association's new Facebook page! Keep up to date with seasonal events, promotions, what's happening with local businesses, and everything else Okanagan Falls. You can find us by searching for "Okanagan Falls Business Community Association" on Facebook.

Intruder

By Tom Landecker

The dinosaurs were wiped out 65 million years ago by the impact of an outer-space object with the Earth. We don't want to suffer the same fate, so the University of Hawaii has set up four automated telescopes, scanning the sky, three or four times every night, looking for things moving against the background of stars, and tracking their paths through space.

This network is called ATLAS, the Asteroid Terrestrial impact Last Alert System. Asteroids are solar system objects, lumps of rock anywhere in size from a few metres to 1000 kilometres, sometimes called minor planets. Like Earth and the other planets, the asteroids are in orbits around the Sun, almost all between Mars and Jupiter. There are thousands of them, and their orbits usually pose no danger to us. But every now and again they bump into each other, and can then head off in any direction, possibly ours.

ATLAS is also good at detecting comets. Comets belong to the Solar System too, but they're not rocks, they're big, dirty snowballs. They too can be deflected from their usual orbits, and then they travel in to the inner Solar System, and put on their displays for us. All the evidence suggests that the dinosaur extinction was the result of a comet hitting the Earth, at a spot on the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico.

On July 1st, 2025 a telescope in Chile detected something that moved against the background of stars. Named 3I ATLAS, it has turned out to be a comet, but an unusual one: this comet was not from our own Solar System, it came from another star. Why does it have such an odd name? The "3" tells us that it's the third interstellar object detected by ATLAS; the "I" tells us that it's interstellar. 1I was detected in October 2017 and 2I was found in August 2019: interstellar intruders arrive every now and then.

3I ATLAS is hurtling through the Solar System at about 210,000 kilometres per hour. Happily, it won't hit the Earth: it won't come closer than 200 million kilometres, just inside the orbit of Mars. There is no way of tracing it back to its home star, but new data suggests that it is possibly as old as 11 billion years, and has travelled through interstellar space for all that time, picking up speed from encounters with other stars along the way.

New data from the James Webb Space Telescope (from August 2025) show that 3I ATLAS is unlike Solar System comets. The new data reveal water evaporating from the core, as expected of a comet, but also an unusually high amount of Carbon Dioxide. This may be a sign that the intruder comes from a very old star, formed early in the history of the Universe.

ATLAS is doing two jobs, helping protect us from going the way of the dinosaurs, and uncovering fascinating objects, probes of star systems far away.

Interesting websites:

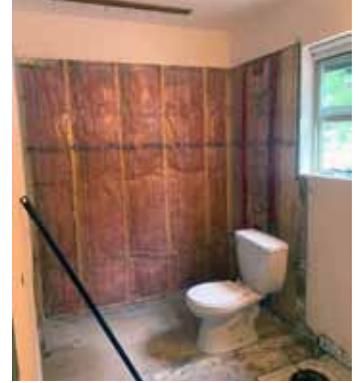
- atlas.fallingstar.com/
- science.nasa.gov/solar-system/comets/3i-atlas/
- chime-experiment.ca

The Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory is operated by the National Research Council Canada and is located at 717 White Lake Road in Kaleden. For more information, please call 250-497-2300.

Let's Finish It ... 10 Years In Business!

By Jay Mallach, Custom Finish Carpenter

Do you have a home renovation project you would like done? "Let's Finish It" has worked on many projects over this past 10 years from Osoyoos to Summerland and around Apex. Below is a recent bathroom renovation for Apex resident Art. He had already purchased most of the materials and wanted to work alongside me, saving hundreds on the project. Plus, I was able to recommend local Apex trades for the electrical and plumbing. Contact me at 250-490-6343 or jaymallach@gmail.com for your free quote today!





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4 Things To Know About Buying & Selling Interprovincially

By Sergej Sinicin of neuHouzz Real Estate Group



It's very rewarding to see clients get excited about moving to the Okanagan, even more so when they're from out-of-province. However, whether you're relocating for work, lifestyle, or family, buying and selling interprovincially adds an extra layer of complexity that many people don't anticipate until they're in the middle of it. If you are considering this type of move, here are 4 key things you should know.



1. You'll Likely Need Not One But Two REALTORS® ~ One of the biggest misconceptions? One agent can handle everything. Even if the REALTOR® would be licensed in both provinces, it would still be very difficult to truly narrow down the fair value of a home when you're not local. As a BC REALTOR®, I understand BC contracts, disclosure requirements, market conditions, and buyer behaviour. I would consider it a real disservice if someone from AB or SK was moving to the Okanagan, and would want me to sell their home. Working with professionals on both ends guarantees better local knowledge, better pricing strategies, and most likely a better sales result.

2. Viewing Homes Will Require A Detailed Strategy ~ When you're buying in another province, you need a different strategy. You can't attend any open houses or drive by listings on a whim. So in the early search stages, it has to become PERFECTLY clear to your REALTOR® what your needs are. And, I'm not only talking about number of bedrooms, bathrooms, etc. No, I need to know every imaginable detail like must-haves, deal-breakers, lifestyles, schooling, transportation, community, preferred, floor plans, etc. This is the only way to prevent getting overwhelmed by endless listings that don't fit.

If a property looks interesting enough, you'll need to schedule a virtual showing where the REALTOR® walks you through the house by video - talking about pros and cons and flagging things that don't show up online like condition issues, layout challenges, or mismatches between the listing and reality. You'll need us to be your eyes and ears beyond what pictures, virtual tours and videos can show you.

Once you found several homes to look at and come down for a visit, make sure to leave yourself some flexible spare time. The agent can set up multiple showings for you in a day, but last minute changes are not uncommon, and property listings may come and go on short notice (don't ask me why I know).

3. Not All Neighbourhoods Are Created Equal ~ Assuming you don't have the means to rent an Airbnb for a month to "experience" a neighbourhood, you may get a romantic view of an area from looking at online sources. But close proximity to schools, grocery stores, and amenities can mean different things in different provinces. It all depends on your frame-of-reference. And because a change in location might also mean a change in lifestyle, you'll need boots-on-the-ground to point you in the right direction.

4. Inspections, Taxes, And Logistics Are Different By Province ~ Each province has its own rules for home inspections, property taxes, land transfer taxes, legal processes, and timelines. What's standard in BC could be completely different in another province. This is where coordination matters.

You'll need a local REALTOR® to help arrange inspections, recommend professionals, and keep everything moving - even if you're thousands of kilometers away. Plus, if you need any

provincial tax or financial planning advice, they should know an accountant who has in-depth knowledge of interprovincial differences.

The Bottom Line ~ Buying and selling interprovincially is no different than any other real estate transaction, but it is more daunting and not something you want to navigate alone. Local guidance, expertise and advice will make the difference between a smooth move or a stressful one. Plus, if you're relocating before your home is sold, a REALTOR® can look after your property, making sure it stays presentable and all systems keep working in good order. This reduces your stress level during an already busy transition.

If you are considering a move to or from BC, I'm always happy to help you understand what to expect before you pack a single box. Reach out to 778-764-1373.



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Women, Menopause & Heart Health

By Dr. Tamara Browne, ND Naturopathic Physician,
Licensed and Registered by The BC Ministry of Health



Menopause is a natural transition in a woman's life which often passes without much notice, but which can cause some uncomfortable symptoms such as hot flashes, mood swings, insomnia, weight gain, dry skin, memory and cognitive difficulties, migraines, and night sweats. Many of these symptoms can be treated safely with natural, risk-free methods including bio-identical menopausal hormone therapy. These replacement hormones are identical to the hormones our bodies produce, and by replacing them, long-term benefits for health and

prevention are possible. Bio-identical hormones act naturally and do not increase your risk of heart disease, osteoporosis, cancer, or dementia. In fact, current evidence-based science demonstrates that, bio-identical hormone therapy contributes to prevention of chronic diseases such as osteoporosis and heart disease. Hormone balance is an important contributor to quality of life for aging women and along with a holistic lifestyle approach, helps to keep women feeling and looking younger and stronger longer.

As far as heart disease goes, we know that this is the number one cause of morbidity and mortality in post-menopausal women. Research strongly indicates that estrogen helps maintain the elasticity of blood vessels, helps maintain a healthy blood pressure, reduces LDL (often referred to as bad) cholesterol, increases HDL (often referred to as good) cholesterol, and positively impacts metabolism, appetite, fat distribution, and energy expenditure. This all supports heart and circulatory health, as well as improving metabolism which adds up to a significant reduction in a woman's risk of developing heart disease.

For decades now, women have been afraid to take menopausal hormones due to misinterpretation of certain studies, lack of adequate research, and the prior use of synthetic or non-human based hormones which were not as safe as the bio-identical hormones we now have available. This has led to a more rapid decline in health plus more rapid aging in post-menopausal women, than would otherwise occur if hormone levels were adequately maintained.

Naturopathic Doctors treat the whole person and employ lifestyle medicine to ensure all aspects of health are addressed in a cohesive manner. Along with hormone therapy, we address diet and nutrition, mental/emotional issues, stress management, sleep patterns, exercise, and other lifestyle factors that contribute to health. We focus on supporting wellness solutions and decreasing obstacles to optimal health. We recognize that each person is a unique individual with unique needs. By spending time with our patients and completing thorough work-ups including physical exams and extensive lab testing, we often can uncover hidden causes of distress that are otherwise missed. Each person is treated as the individual they are, is closely monitored, and is provided targeted therapies unique to their needs. Consulting a Physician knowledgeable in this area will help you decide the best course of action for you. Together, you can create a plan for reducing symptoms, preventing disease, and keeping you safe.

This article is for educational purposes only and is not medical advice, so please consult a licensed health care practitioner for health guidance.



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Creative Wellness Solutions

By Dee-anne Stone, Seniors Wellness Practitioner



February is Heart Health Month, so it is the perfect time to take a closer look at everyday habits that support a strong, healthy heart. Alongside exercise, stress management, and balanced nutrition, many people are curious about natural ways to support healthy blood flow. This is where foods sometimes referred to as “natural blood thinners” often enter the conversation.

Natural blood thinners are foods and spices that may help support healthy circulation by reducing inflammation or preventing excessive blood clotting. They are not medications, but they can be a helpful part of a heart-conscious lifestyle. Some of the most well-known options are already sitting in your kitchen.

Turmeric is one of the most talked-about spices for heart health. Its active compound, curcumin, has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. Since chronic inflammation is linked to heart disease, turmeric may help support overall cardiovascular wellness when used regularly in cooking or beverages. Combining turmeric with black pepper is crucial, because pepper's compound, piperine, boosts the body's absorption of curcumin by up to 2000%.

Ginger is another popular choice. Traditionally used to aid digestion, ginger may also help improve circulation and reduce inflammation. Fresh ginger in teas, soups, or stir-fries is an easy way to include it in your diet.

Cinnamon, especially true cinnamon (Ceylon), has been studied for its potential role in supporting healthy blood sugar and circulation. Stable blood sugar levels are important for heart health, making cinnamon a flavourful addition to heart-friendly meals like oatmeal or smoothies.

While these foods can support heart health, they are not a substitute for medical care. People who take prescription blood thinners, have bleeding conditions, or are scheduled for surgery should speak with a healthcare professional before significantly increasing their intake of these spices.

Heart Health Month is about awareness and small, sustainable changes. By combining a nutritious diet, regular movement, and mindful choices, you can support your heart naturally. Sometimes, the simplest steps - like seasoning your food with intention - can be a meaningful part of caring for your heart, one day at a time.

Creative Wellness Solutions provides a convenient massage with innumerable benefits on a comfortable massage chair. You do not need to climb onto a table or remove clothing and no oils are used. You can choose from a head and face, upper body, or legs and feet massage, or any combination. We are a mobile service, so are able to come to you in your home (\$50 for a 30 minute appointment). Group sessions and gift certificates are also available. Please call Dee-anne at **250-497-5974** to arrange an appointment or to discuss The Grease Cream; which is an amazing, all-natural, cannabis infused pain management alternative that actually works. Be sure to check out our website at www.CreativeWellnessSolutions.com for more information about our services, The Grease Cream and where you can read any past articles you may have missed.



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Ask Cheryl

By Cheryl L. Snyder, RTC, MRT, CBT

Anonymous Asks:

Dear Cheryl, I wrote this question to your column a few months ago, but never sent it. I'm wondering if you could tell me more about the poster I've seen around town that talks about your specialty in grief. I hope it's not too nosy or personal to ask about your experience. I'm asking, because I'm trying to find a good fit for me. I'm not doing very well.

Cheryl Responds:

Thank you for trusting me with such an honest and thoughtful question. It's not nosy at all to want to understand who you might be opening up to, especially when you're struggling. Finding the right fit matters, particularly when grief is involved.

The poster you've seen reflects an area of work I hold with deep respect, care and the darkest of life experiences in my own life. Grief isn't only about death. It can come from the loss of health, relationships, identity, safety, or the life we thought we were going to have. Many people don't realize they're carrying grief - they just know something feels heavy, painful, or unsettled.

My focus on grief comes from both professional training and lived experience. Over the years, I've supported many people through loss, trauma, and major life transitions, and I've also done my own grief work. That combination has shaped how I show up in this work: grounded, compassionate, and respectful of each person's pace.

My deepest darkness in my life came to me nine years ago when I lost my 26 year old daughter, Lyndsey. With all the trials, tribulations, trauma, it is the hardest experience I've had to transform through. It is a continuous ongoing journey to my own wellness. Harder to understand and never to compare is another's grief. We transform in our own time with our own modalities of healing that are presented to us along the way.

There is no timeline or “right way” to grieve. When someone comes to see me, my priority is creating a safe space where their experience is honoured - without rushing, fixing, or minimizing what they're feeling.

If you're not doing well right now, please know you don't have to carry that alone. Reaching out doesn't require certainty or having the right words. A first conversation is simply that - a conversation - and it's okay to take your time deciding what feels right for you.

I look forward to meeting you. And once again, thank you to everyone with all the questions and lovely remarks. I hope you are all enjoying the “Ask Cheryl” column as much as I love writing it. Blessings to you all!

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UNISUS Announcement

Submitted Press Release

UNISUS Officially Sanctioned by Soccer BC to place teams, Announces High Performance Team Tryouts for Spring 2026

UNISUS is proud to announce that it is now officially sanctioned through the Central Okanagan Youth Soccer Association (COYSA), operating under the rules and standards of BC Soccer. This milestone marks an exciting step forward for high performance youth soccer development in the South Okanagan.

In association with the Everton International Academy Affiliate Program, UNISUS brings professional soccer management and internationally recognized training methodology to the region, creating a focused development pathway for players seeking a high performing soccer environment.

UNISUS is pleased to announce the UNISUS Giants Football Club (UGFC) will be holding team tryouts for the Spring 2026 season for U9-U18 (born between 2008-2017) teams. These teams are designed for players who are motivated, committed, and eager to develop within a structured, performance-focused program.

Tryout date options: Saturday, March 7 ~ 10 am - 2 pm; Tuesday, March 10 ~ 4:30-6:30 pm; Thursday, March 12 ~ 4:30-6:30 pm; and Saturday, March 14 ~ 10 am - 2 pm.

Program Highlights: Everton International Academy training methodology with a strong focus on long term player development; three-four training sessions per week during the week, depending on age, team and skill level, plus competitive play on weekends; and optional team travel packages will be available for teams travelling longer distances for tournaments.

UGFC is positioned as a high performance offering, providing a clear and purposeful pathway for families seeking quality training, consistency, and player growth.

"We are very excited to offer to our community a program that combines the training methodology developed by an English Premier League club with the structure and professional management of a leading education institution. We believe a combination of these elements will provide an effective and sustainable platform for long-term player development." - Peter Chu, Executive Director - UNISUS

Additional program details will be shared directly with registered families ahead of tryouts. For more information and to register for tryouts, please visit www.unisus.ca/soccer-teams-registration.



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sexy laundry
Michele Riml

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Starring **Jill Fey** and **Jason Lane**

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The Cannery Stage 1475 Fairview Rd. Penticton
TICKETS: ADULTS \$35, STUDENTS AND SENIORS \$33 QUESTIONS: 250-462-6428
Tickets: www.manyhatstheatre.com

Sexy Laundry

By Cheryl Gill, Many Hats Theatre Company Publicist

Many Hats Theatre Company is proud to present "Sexy Laundry" by Michele Riml. Many Hats originally performed this show way back in 2008 and it was so popular we're bringing it back with a whole new cast. Directed by Jane Pilkey and starring Many Hats favourites Jill Fey and Jason Lane this show is sure to sell out!

Henry and Alice have had a good life. They've been married 25 years, raised three kids, have a house in a great neighbourhood, and have good friends, but lately their sizzle has begun to fizzle! Armed with "Sex for Dummies" and booked into a swanky hotel, Alice is determined to get them past the physical plateau of love handles, receding hairlines and their mundane life.

This hilarious romp will have you laughing out of your seats, as Alice works hard to unleash her inner vixen and Henry works just as hard at maintaining his comfortable life. This quaint story about finding lost passion is sure to tug at the heartstrings of the most indifferent partner.

PLEASE NOTE: This show contains adult themes and language and is not suitable for all audiences.

Sexy Laundry runs February 6 - March 1 at the Many Hats Theatre stage in the Cannery Trade Centre. On Friday and Saturday evenings, the show will start at 7:30 pm (doors open at 7:00) and on Sundays, there will be a matinee starting a 2:00 pm (doors open at 1:30). Tickets are \$35 for adults, \$33 for seniors/students. They are available at www.manyhatstheatre.com or 250-462-6428.

When The Body Says No!

By Trish Hoy, RPN, Homeopathic Practitioner

Have you ever noticed repetitive patterns in your life? Ever wonder how to interrupt to end them? Whether it's relationships with hurtful themes or continual patterns of accidents or allowing boundaries to be disrespected, there can be consequences. Even in fast paced lifestyles, there can be a cost to our bodies if we disregard the stressful warning signs. The cost is emotional and physical disease.

During childhood, we are taught by adults and older siblings, including friends, how to behave in the world. Whether we are unintentionally or intentionally hurt by others, or our needs are not met by the adults, along with misunderstandings, can create false beliefs, leading to repetitive unhealthy behaviour patterns. Then, we become stuck! Think of it this way ... a pearl diver adds a grain of sand to an oyster, causing the oyster's defence system to become irritated. The oyster is able to create layers of nacre, a mineral protein substance to form a protective sac that builds into a pearl over time. In our lives, stress equates the sand, creating a pearl (the false idea/belief). What comes from the lesson when we listen to our bodies? The trick is to become aware of the unhealthy patterns that causes us stress, and learn how to interrupt the cycle, either before or after disease sets in.

It is possible to permanently interrupt unhealthy behaviour patterns to prevent or change the outcome. First, create space in your day to notice what you are doing and how others treat you. Slow down. Ask your body; what do you want to tell me? Really listen ... perhaps start to address issues with family, friends or co-workers. Read some self-help books or listen to pod casts.

There are several levels of homeopathy that can assist with increasing awareness and consciousness. Homeopathy applied acutely in a first aid situation interrupts the impact of the accident preventing permanent shock and injury to our vital force. It's a way helping our cells and subconscious to let go of the incident. The next level is clearing our trauma line from current situation to the depth of development in the womb. Another deeper level are Miasms, which are complex chronic organic diseases. Still deeper; false beliefs and false ideas, including our everyday beliefs and spirituality. Homeopathic remedies assist with ending the unwanted patterns. However, tree and flower essences help to comfort and reassure the person emotionally while melting painful memories, leaving the person the ability to change the unwanted belief and behaviour patterns. How is your body saying no?

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Water For Blood Tips

By June Kwok, Chinese Treatment Specialist

You will find that a lot of oriental people drink hot tea and warm water. Most of their foods are chosen, because of the positive effects they have on health. Their culture encourages this kind of behaviour. The stomach is warm within our body and it responds to the ingestion of cold food and drink in a negative fashion. If you take a cold shower, then you will begin to understand what the stomach feels like when cold liquids are ingested.

Upon waking in the morning, we advise our friends to drink at least two cups of warm water (after it has been boiled) to clean up the inside of the body. It is best to not consume too much liquid before going to sleep. Keeping a covered glass of water beside the bed is encouraged to provide moisture for the heart and blood, if we wake during the night. We call it 'life water', because it helps the heart.

A lot of people dream after eating just before going to sleep. Late night food promotes weight gain. Sleeping within two hours of eating can be most harmful. This is due to the fact that the stomach will still be working while you sleep. Anything working 24 hours every day without rest will eventually wear out. This will manifest as poor stomach health.

It is important to observe our urine as a measurement of our well-being. We can get an indication of our wellness through the colour that is present. Light yellow indicates good health throughout the day and that proper hydration is being practiced. Dark yellow is okay after waking, but it indicates inadequate hydration if present during the day. Excessive bubbles can be a sign of high blood sugar.

We encourage everyone to consume at least six cups of warm water each day and to finish eating at least four hours before going to sleep. There are many factors which can have a negative impact on our health, so let's follow these simple rules to start on our journey to wellness.

Contact Special Chinese Alternate Treatment Clinic for Pain, Stress & More. Free 5 minute consultation advice inside Angel Place Restaurant in Okanagan Falls at 1030 Main St. Call June Kwok at 250-486-2199 today!

Kaleden Branch: 101 Linden Avenue - 250-497-8066

New Hours: Tuesday 1-5 pm / Thursday 1-8 pm / **Friday 12-4 pm**

At the end of January, we wished farewell to Judy, who has been a part of the Okanagan Regional Library for 25 years! Her short year spent in Kaleden has been impactful and she will be greatly missed. **Good luck and best wishes on your retirement, Judy!** If, in the seemingly absent winter, you're yearning for spring and thinking about **how to plan your garden** this year, we have an amazing selection of books to help inspire your choices. We even have several of them on display; from water conscious gardening, to planning a butterfly garden.



Preschool Storytime on Tuesdays from 10-10:45 am starting on February 10 is a great family activity to share in the mornings with your little ones. We explore rhythm, counting, colours and more! Stay and play with our toys and books that are always on hand in the branch. From puzzles, and colouring pages, to Lego and board books, we have a variety of engaging materials to enjoy while you visit.



Submitted by Rachael Dowden, Kaleden Community Librarian

OK Falls Branch: 101 - 850 Railway Lane - 250-497-5886

Tuesday 10 am - 6 pm / Wednesday 10 am - 4 pm

Friday 10 am - 5 pm / Saturday 10 am - 2 pm

Some Exciting News From Your Library! Say hello to our shiny new printer, ready to tackle your everyday tasks. Whether you need black-and-white prints, photocopies, or scanning to email, we've got you covered. Come visit us to learn more!

Tech Talk - One on One: Tuesdays from 3-5 pm. Tech Troubles? We can help! Got a burning tech question? Whether you are a curious beginner or a seasoned techie, this is the space to ask anything and learn everything from new cell phones to old PCs. This is a FREE program sponsored by Desert Sun Counselling. Please contact the Okanagan Falls Library at 250-497-5886 to make an appointment.

Book Club: Wednesday, February 18 from 1-2 pm. Indulge in your love of books and conversation. The Okanagan Falls Book Club is the perfect place to dive into new stories, meet wonderful people, and share in thoughtful discussion. We gather on the 3rd Wednesday of every month and would love for you to join us. For all the details on how to get started, simply contact the Okanagan Falls Library.

Community Craft Corner: Wednesdays from 12-3:45 pm. Find your focus, find your people. Bring your current project - whether it's knitting, sketching, journaling, or building miniatures - and enjoy the gentle, creative energy of a shared space. Conversation flows as easily as the thread and yarn, in our welcoming and relaxed environment.

Family Story Time: Saturday, February 21 from 9:30-10:00 am.

Family Story Time at the Library - Where stories come alive! We'll dive into enchanting stories, sing along to interactive tunes, and bring tales to life with fun felt boards. Afterwards, stay and play and connect with other local families.

Okanagan Falls Library Reading Olympics: Come into the library and pick up your activity sheets for the Reading Olympics. Challenge yourself by reading and completing fun activities. The more you complete the more chances to enter for the grand prize. Plus, receive your very own gold medal.

Check out our **Events Calendar** at orl.bc.ca/okanagan-falls for a sneak peek on upcoming and current events.

Submitted by Artessa Wiker, Okanagan Falls Community Librarian



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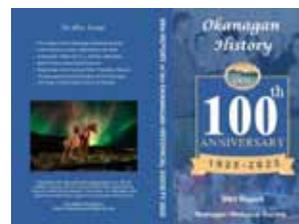


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2026 Heritage Week

By Karen Collins, OHS Penticton Branch President



The Penticton Branch of the Okanagan Historical Society will be hosting a 2026 Heritage Week event at Cherry Lane Shopping Centre. The theme this year is "Stir the Pot: Food brings us together". The OHS will be joined by other non-profit organizations including the South

Okanagan Genealogical Society and the SS Sicamous Society. There will be historical books for sale, table displays, artifacts from private collections and volunteers who will share their knowledge of local heritage and much more. We encourage everyone to join us Saturday, February 14 from 9:30-5:30 and Sunday, February 15 from 11-5.

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Highlights From Kaleden Elementary School

By Principal Jessa Arcuri

January brought students back from the holidays feeling refreshed and excited for all that 2026 has in store. In the first week back, students were treated to a fantastic performance of the Charlie Brown show by Princess Margaret Secondary School. Not only was it fun and engaging, but it also gave our students a wonderful glimpse into how older students use acting, music, and stage production to bring stories to life. It was a great reminder of the creativity and talent within our community.

February is bursting with fun events at Kaleden Elementary. Our Grade 4, 5, and 6 basketball teams are in full swing, and both the boys and girls teams are gearing up for a great month of games and teamwork. Pink Shirt Day will take place on Wednesday, February 26th, and students will be diving into conversations about kindness, empathy, and how each of us can help create a bully-free school community throughout the month.

We are also excited to welcome Bobby Bovenzi, who will be teaching our students African drum rhythm and beat. Throughout February, our Grade 3, 4, 5, and 6 students are looking forward to cross-country skiing at Nickel Plate. To wrap up the month, the whole school is excited for a trip to Apex for a day of tubing on Friday, February 27th. A huge thank-you to our amazing PAC for helping make these adventures possible.

Kindergarten registration for September 2026 is now open, with easy online registration available.



Kaleden Quilters & Crafters Invitation

By Vivian King

We are offering **Free Quilting Classes for Beginners** with the Kaleden Quilters and Crafters. All material is provided (you can choose your colours from our supply), plus rulers, cutters and patterns. If you have your own sewing machine, you can bring it. We do have a few sewing machines to use.

The **Winter Session runs every Wednesday from January 7 through February 25** from 1-4 pm in the Kaleden Community Hall. The cost is \$20/person or drop-in for \$4/day. Coffee and tea are always available. Ladies of all skill levels are invited to join us for an afternoon with other quilters and crafters. We would love you to join us! Let us know if you are interested, or for more information, please call 250-497-1164 or email viv20king@gmail.com.

School Trustee Report For SD67

By Karen Botsford, School Trustee

This report was written on January 19th prior to two committee and two board meetings.

Princess Margaret's Production *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown* ~ It was such a delight to see Charlie Brown, Lucy, Schroeder, Snoopy, Linus, Woodstock and Company and be reminded of all their shenanigans. There was laughter, tears and many lessons embedded in the presentation. The cast was terrific and really embodied their characters. Elementary students attended the show at the Cleland Theatre and had the opportunity to see first-hand SD67 performing arts in action. I continue to be impressed by the caliber of production, and the number of students involved including stage crew, sound, lighting, painting and set design. Thank you to Director Lori Grant and Choreographer Mhaire O'Shea and parents and staff for their dedication supporting our students!

Trustee Academy ~ Our mission is *Empowering all Learners to Thrive* and that includes trustees. The Academy is an annual event hosted by the BC School Trustees Association. It is an opportunity for trustees from every school district to come together for professional development. I wanted to highlight the keynote speaker's presentation. Farah Mohamed, Senator, Senate of Canada, spoke on the topic Sustainable Futures and the Power of Youth for Social and Governance Initiatives. She has spent 30 years working to improve the lives of Canadians, including youth. Former CEO of the King's Trust and the Malala Fund, the theme of her presentation was the essential role of school trustees as stewards of public education in a rapidly changing world. A few takeaways from her presentation:

- Education is the anchor in this divisive time, and we are the architects of the future.
- It is important to develop student skills - AI, empathy, ethical reasoning, and speaking skills - social interactions.
- We need to attend to student mental health - anxiety.
- Connections matter, belonging matters; we need to support students in networking and making connections.
- As trustees, we need to see our service as an opportunity to shape generations and strengthen democracy.
- We need to model good governance and nurture diverse perspectives.

Her presentation was very uplifting and engaging and set the tone for the conference.

The BCSTA has developed a new Trustee Learning Series in collaboration with Superintendents, Secretary-Treasurers, BCSTA, and ministry staff. Participation in these learning opportunities will continue to foster stronger cohesive governance boards focused on student success.

For more information, please contact Karen Botsford, School Trustee for SD67, by sending an email to kbotsford@sd67.bc.ca.

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*Celebrating
40 Years of Service!*



**Health, Harmony, and a
Great Sense of Humour!**

Jaynie Molloy BSc. Hon. CH.
110 Linden Avenue, Kaleden

Highlights From Okanagan Falls Elementary School

By Principal Katie Poole

What a Beautiful January it was! Students at OKFE were thrilled to be back at school and jump right into exciting activities! We kicked off the new year with Lacrosse lessons led by the Penticton Minor Lacrosse Association, which has been supplemented by RDOS programs to help promote the sport. Students also enjoyed ice skating, cooking with Teacher Jenny, and Division 3 began raising salmon eggs that will be released later in the year ... exciting hands-on experiences.

We are happy to announce that **Kindergarten Registration is now open**. Children born in 2021, who are now five years old are invited to register. We are also pleased to share that **before-school care** will be available next year, along with **bus transportation from the Skaha Estates and St. Andrew's areas**. Please contact the school office for registration instructions for both programs. We warmly welcome students from these areas and look forward to having you join our school community!

An **Open House for new and prospective students** will be held on **March 11**. Please watch for more details in the coming weeks. Our **StrongStart program** is open on **Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 8:30-11:30 am**. This free early learning program supports young children, while giving parents and caregivers an opportunity to connect with others in the community. Please stop by the office if you are interested in participating.

February is shaping up to be another exciting month at OKFE! We will kick things off with a snow day at Apex! Thanks to the generous support of our PAC, students will enjoy a day of tubing or skiing/snowboarding. A big thank you to all the volunteers who will be joining us. We are also excited to welcome Science World later this month, snowshoeing, to celebrate Family Literacy Week with engaging activities, a literacy visit from the Penticton Vees, a Superhero Night, and include gymnastics as part of our physical education curriculum.

So much learning, laughter, and adventure ... what a great way to start the year at OKFE!



School Trustee Report For SD53

By Sholeh Pickell, School Trustee

By the time this article comes out, students will have completed half the school year and have switched gears into the second half of the school year. For me this is hitting especially hard as my youngest is in his final grade 12 year. He will soon be off on his own adventures, leaving his dad and me as empty nesters. I have treasured this time in my life parenting my boys and watching them grow. This truly feels bittersweet.

At the board table, we are making plans for public engagement on our upcoming school year budget. This year, things may look a bit different as we will be transitioning with a new Secretary Treasurer. We have hired Miranda Burdock and are excited to work with her. She brings a wealth of knowledge and diverse experiences that will compliment our small district very well. With that said, I would like to acknowledge our outgoing Secretary Treasurer, Subra Paliappa. Subra has been a dedicated and capable member of our senior management team. I have personally worked closely with Subra in my role as Finance and Facilities Chair, as well as in my capacity as Branch President. His guidance and support as I learn these positions has been invaluable to me. Subra decided to retire and will be finished with our district in February. We wish him all the best in his retirement years.

The students at Southern Okanagan Secondary School are hard at work rehearsing for the upcoming musical "Rock of Ages" on March 5, 6, and 7. The performances are next level with a live band, choreography, as well as great costumes, singing and acting. If you have a chance to catch a show, you won't regret it. Tickets are now available on the Venables Theatre website.

For more information, please contact Sholeh Pickell, School Trustee for SD53, by emailing to spickell@sd53.bc.ca.

Okanagan Falls PAC Update

By Kari Hill, PAC Chair

Movie Night with RDOS ~ Join us for a fun, family-friendly Movie Night with RDOS on **Saturday, February 7 at 6 pm!** We'll be showing DC Super Pets, a great pick for kids (and grown-ups too). Bring the family and enjoy a cozy night out in the community.

Meat Draw at the Legion ~ Our next PAC Meat Draw will be held on **Saturday, February 21** at the Legion. Come say hello, enjoy the fun, and maybe head home with dinner!

Thanks to our Community ~ Thanks to the incredible support and donations from our community, PAC was able to cover Lacrosse for students in January, as well as a school-wide field trip to Apex for tubing. Opportunities like these are made possible, because of the continued generosity of our community.

Looking Ahead ~ Stay tuned for more updates on the exciting things our students are doing, and for details on upcoming spring fundraisers. You'll be seeing PAC volunteers out and about in the community again soon! Thank you for continuing to support Okanagan Falls Elementary PAC and our students.

Okanagan Quilters

By Barb Shanks

Okanagan Quilters meets every Thursday from 9:30 am - 2:00 pm from September to June in the Okanagan Falls United Church Hall (rear entrance). All quilters and crafters of all abilities are welcome to join. Coffee and tea are supplied. Yearly dues are \$50 or drop-in is \$5. For more information, contact Barb Shanks at 250-488-8174 or email barb.shanks@gmail.com. We would love you to join us!



**OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 53**

NOTICE OF KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

January 12 - March 13, 2026

1. Children who will be five years old by December 31, 2026, may begin their first year of Primary (Full Day Kindergarten) in September 2026. These will be children who were born in 2021.

Parents or guardians may register these new students from Monday, January 12 to Friday, March 13, 2026 at the following schools:

Cawston Primary	250-485-4434	8:30 am - 2:30 pm
Okanagan Falls Elementary	250-497-5414	8:30 am - 2:30 pm
Oliver Elementary	250-498-3468	8:30 am - 2:30 pm
Tuc-el-Nuit Elementary	250-498-3415	8:30 am - 2:30 pm
Osoyoos Elementary	250-485-4444	8:30 am - 2:30 pm
YouLearn	250-498-4597	8:30 am - 3:30 pm

2. **Please bring your child's birth certificate and medical card with you, as well as proof of residency.** Should you require further details, please contact your local school.
3. Parents may defer the entry of their child into Kindergarten for one year, but registration must occur in the following school year.
4. Early registration assists the district with plans for September 2026. Also, Kindergarten spaces in a school may be limited and placement is done on a first come, first serve basis.



**OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 53**

**PARENTS OF GRADE 1 TO 12 STUDENTS
REGISTERING OR REQUESTING A CHANGE OF
SCHOOL SEPTEMBER 2026**

Parents or guardians may enroll their child in an educational program at any school in our district, as outlined in Section 74.1 of the School Act, and providing there is space available in the respective grade. Registrations prior to June 1, 2026 will be accepted on a first come, first served and availability basis. Beginning June 2, 2026, registrations will be accepted in the following priority order as per section 74.6 of the School Act:

- a catchment area child who, in the previous school year, attended the school at which the educational program is made available;
- a catchment area child;
- a non-catchment area child;
- a non-school district child.

For further information, please contact your local school's principal.



Okanagan Falls

Game on! With Coach E!

An action-packed after-school program for kids ages 6 - 12. Each week is filled with exciting games and activities that promote teamwork, skill development, and sportsmanship.

Instructor: Ernestina

Okanagan Falls Community Centre Gymnasium

Thursdays, 2:30 - 3:30 pm

February 12 - March 5

Fee: \$35

Registration required.



Meet Coach E

By Nancy Wigley, Recreation Coordinator



Ernestina - better known as Coach E!, as the kids love to call her - has been bringing her after-school programs and gymnastics expertise to RDOS Recreation for several years.

Coach E has a passion and commitment to creating a fun, inclusive, and supportive environment where children can build confidence, coordination, and a lifelong love of physical activity. Her unique teaching style focuses on fundamental movement skills, problem-solving, teamwork, and personal growth.



When she's not delivering wonderful programs, Coach E enjoys staying active in the community and expanding her knowledge as an educator and coach.

To register for Game On! after-school program, Youth/Teen Night on February 6, or to explore more recreation opportunities, please visit rec.rdos.bc.ca.

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Kaleden Seniors Committee Update

By Karla Avendaño, KSC Coordinator

We started the year with a bang! Last month's Bingo was a resounding success, with more than seventy people showing up with smiles on their faces to enjoy a bowl of chili and a game of Bingo at the Kaleden Community Hall. A big thank you to Judie Johnson, our Bingo caller, and to everyone who attended.



Join us this month on February 20 for an exciting World Café with guest Rob Friberg. We'll be talking about sustainability and climate change. Bring your questions and be ready to participate in this interactive, conversation-style event. See the poster to the right for more details.

To receive emails about upcoming events, please email us at kaledenseniors@gmail.com.

KSC
KALEDEN SENIORS COMMITTEE

Come Join Us
Sustainability and Climate Change World Cafe
With Rob Friberg

Feb 20 | 12 - 2pm

📍 Kaleden Community Hall

This interactive workshop brings community members together for open conversations around tables, encouraging curiosity and exploration. Bring your questions, experiences, and perspectives on these topics.

Lunch provided by donation
Win door prizes!

Come share ideas, listen, and connect with neighbours in a relaxed, welcoming setting.

Occasional Help Needed

By The Kaleden HUB Group

The Kaleden HUB is made up of community volunteers that have an interest in helping others. We provide rides for people getting to town for appointments from time to time and the occasional meal is delivered for those in need. We try and welcome new people to the community with an information folder, and we assist people with small projects and the odd snow removal if needed.

Completing small projects and snow removal is an area that we reach out into the community for further help. If you are someone who would like to be called on once in a while to help us out, that would be fantastic. Please call 250-460-3387, if you would like to be on the list for the occasional call out.



Need Medical Equipment?

The HUB would like to remind local residents that medical equipment is available to borrow. There are crutches, walkers, hospital beds, raised toilet seats and other helpful items one might need. If you are looking for this type of equipment for the long or short term, please call the HUB at 250-460-3387.

Movie Night
for Parents and Professionals

Sunday March 1 - 7:30pm

Spark the healing journey to transform your family...
seen The Film

Kaleden Community Church (443 Lakehill Rd)
\$10 per person or by donation. Free Popcorn!
For more information: connect@space2flourish.ca

Sponsored by Space2Flourish and Kaleden Community Church

Kaleden Museum & Archives

By Mike Gane

This current series of articles covers the history of Kaleden's Pioneer Park. Below is Part 5 and the final part in this series.



During the early years, volunteers covered almost every labour need, with work parties generating community participation, but there was one important exception. The BC government introduced a summer employment program, under which they subsidized the wages of students engaged in community projects. For a period of some seven years, until the job description was changed, we had one local youth (male or female) keeping the park in shape during the summer holidays. Their work included such mundane tasks as weeding, cleaning, and mowing, but they also supervised children's activities and were given the opportunity to be assistant instructors in the sailing classes which were held each summer during those same years. The young people who served in that position proved to be great role models.

Over the intervening years, improvements have been made. Dan Finlayson installed work-saving automatic sprinklers in 1992 and has spent countless hours assuring that they are operating efficiently. Twice a single individual has taken on the responsibility of installing the children's playground. In the 1980s, it was Alan Tucker who set up the original equipment and just in the last few years Doug Robinson completely modernized and enlarged this much used facet of our park. As recently as 2008, a major addition was constructed in the form of a covered picnic area (gazebo), plus a new sidewalk was installed and a number of new picnic tables have been added.

In 2009, Kaleden's Centennial year, the "Trees for Tomorrow" grant made it possible for addition of many trees and shrubs to enhance both the beach and tennis court area and around the old hotel site. Today the park stands, not only as a tribute to the men and women who pioneered in this community, but to the enterprise of its citizens over the century.

Improvements to the park by RDOS in more recent years:

- 2009 - Irrigation at the Park and Hotel sites upgraded.
- 2010 - Tennis court lights were added.
- 2016 - The accessible washroom renovation was completed for \$9,000 and this also included lighting in the washrooms.
- 2016/2017 - Park planning and base survey work for Pioneer Hotel and Public lands in between - \$8,000.
- 2018-2020 - The parking lot, access and boat launch upgrade - \$645,000.
- 2022 - The septic system was replaced - \$66,000.
- 2023/2024 - The south end of the park pathways, landscaping, and irrigation - \$116,000.
- 2024 - South Beach enhancements - \$60,000.
- 2025 - The Tennis court project is underway with a budget of \$302,000.

Through KCA and others, we have had park furniture, bike repair stand, water fountains and a few electrical projects (lighting at multiuse court, Gazebo electrical) added to the park as well.

There are many pictures of the building of the washrooms, tennis court, irrigation and planting that the museum unfortunately does not have. If you happen to have any of these pictures, the museum would love to have them.

If you wish to donate items to the Kaleden Museum, please contact Mike Gane at 250-497-5674.



Elks Lodge Oliver #267

By Dee-anne Stone, Secretary

We are a volunteer organization of men and women serving our community. All welcome!

February 1 ~ Elks District 4 Provincial Qualifier dart tournament 10:00 am. Register by 9:30 am. Must be an Elks member in good standing.

February 8 ~ Super Bowl Sunday! Plus, the Meat Draw at 3:00 hosted by OES Special Ed., and darts at 2:00.

February 14 ~ Valentine's Day Dart Shoot. Bring your partner for a lovely night of Chicken Cordon Bleu dinner and darts. Dinner at 6:00, Darts at 7:00. \$40/couple. Pre-registration required.

February 21 ~ 1st Annual Hobby & Model Train Show and Swap Meet. 10-5 upstairs in the hall. Hosted by Oliver Lions. Admission: Under 6 Free, Youth (6-16) \$2, Adults \$5. Call Dan 604-845-0230.

February 22 ~ The Fugitives band will be performing upstairs in the hall from 12:30-3:00 pm. Tickets \$15 at the door.

Open ~ Tuesday to Sunday from 1:00 pm to closing.

Meat Draw ~ Every Sunday at 3:00 pm. Meat provided by Belich's AG Foods. February 8 hosted by OES Special Ed., and February 22 hosted by OES PAC.

Breakfast ~ 2nd and 4th Sundays from 8:30-11:00 am. Bacon, eggs, sausage, home fries, pancakes, toast, coffee and juice all for only \$10.

Darts ~ Drop-in darts toeline Sundays at 2:00 pm and Wednesdays at 5:30 pm. Come early to sign up.

Mahjong ~ Wednesdays at 1:00 pm.

General Meeting ~ Tuesday, February 10 at 7:00 pm. Second Tuesday of every month.

Hall Rental ~ We have a large hall with a kitchen available for rent. Email for inquiries.

Contact ~ Phone: 250-498-3808

Email: oliverelkslodge267@gmail.com

Address: 477 Bank Avenue, Oliver

Facebook: Oliver Elks Lodge #267



Need A Ride?

If you live in the Kaleden Area and need a ride, please call 250-460-3387.

Okanagan Falls Seniors Activity Society

By Donna Taylor

February is Heart Month!

We are located at 1128 Willow Street in Okanagan Falls. The local bus stop is right across the street from our front doors.

Check out our website at www.okfallsseniorscenter.ca. Follow us on Facebook at "Okanagan Falls Seniors Center".

Activities in February 2026:

- Canasta** ~ Mondays at 10 am
- Crafts & Coffee** ~ Mondays at 1 pm
- Evening Pool** ~ Mondays at 6 pm
- Tuesday Bingo** ~ Tuesdays - February 3, 10 & 17 at 1 pm
- Evening Pool** ~ Tuesdays at 5:30 pm
- Mexican Train Dominos** ~ Wednesdays at 1 pm
- Afternoon Pool** ~ Thursdays at 1 pm
- Bridge** ~ Thursdays at 1 pm
- Cribbage** ~ Thursdays at 7 pm
- Line Dancing** ~ Fridays at 1 pm
- General Meeting** ~ Monday, February 2 at 1 pm - Ground Hog Day
- Pancake Breakfast** ~ Saturday, February 7 from 8-10 am
- Country Music Jamboree** ~ Sundays February 8 & 22 at 1 pm
- Drop-in Bingo** ~ Saturday, February 21 from 1-4 pm
- Pot Luck Dinner** ~ Saturday, February 28 at 5 pm
- Scrabble** ~ On hold for now - looking for players
- Carpet Bowling** ~ On hold
- Theatre Group** ~ On hold for now - looking for players
- Lending Library & Puzzles** ~ For members when hall is in use
- Booking Agent** ~ Please call Heather at 250-497-1171.



Are you over 50? Just \$25/yr to join!
Enjoy activities. Meet new people. Get out and have FUN!
 Become a member of the OK Falls Seniors Society!
 For more information, call 250.497.8199 or 250-462-5233.



South Skaha Housing Society Update

By Michael Livingstone, SSHS Chair

South Skaha Place - Phase 2 Construction Update

Construction on Phase 2 of South Skaha Place continues to move forward as planned, and visible progress is being made on site. In the coming weeks, work will advance to the suspended slab for the first floor, which will form the base for the first level of apartments. The ground floor is designed to include parking, building entrances, the elevator lobby, office space, and other essential service areas. As construction progresses, we would like to clarify that the application process for Phase 2 will differ from that of Phase 1. Tenant applications and waiting lists will open much closer to the project's completion date. We will make a public announcement when the application system is ready to accept names for the waiting list.

Phase 2 will include a mix of subsidized units and market-rent units. BC Housing will manage the waiting list for subsidized units, while information on market-rent units will be shared locally when available. At this time, it is still too early to provide a firm date for when applications will open, but updates will be shared as timelines become clearer.

We appreciate the community's continued interest and patience as this important housing project moves ahead, helping to meet the growing need for affordable housing in Okanagan Falls.

Okanagan Falls Helping Hand Update

By Patty Neuner

The New Year is under way and we have started to work together on our next Christmas Hamper project. This is an important time of year for our volunteer team as we re-group, review our plans and schedules and work together to support our community relationships. Also, we continue to provide emergency assistance to Okanagan Falls residents that may need a helping hand.

The Okanagan Falls Helping Hand is a registered charitable organization and your financial support throughout the year is so important to us. Donations can be sent to Okanagan Falls Helping Hand at P.O. Box 640, Okanagan Falls, BC V0H 1R0 or e-transfer to helpinghandsokfalls@gmail.com. For your convenience, we also have the donation option to "Tap" using your Visa or Debit. Tax slips will be issued for donations of \$20 or more.

If you are interested, we invite you to join us at 4:30 pm on February 19th. We meet on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Okanagan Falls Community Church (1356 McLean Creek Road) from September to May. If you have any questions, please call us at 778-559-2412 and leave a message. Your call will be returned.



Providing Christmas Hampers For Those In Need

Emergency Food Hampers can be made available from Okanagan Falls Helping Hand throughout the year with proper qualifications.

To apply, please call **778-559-2412** and leave a message.
Your call will be returned.

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Okanagan Falls Lions Update

By Bob Wilson, Past President

What can we say about this winter, perhaps we should say nothing. It may stay the way it's been so far, unlike a large part of the country which is attempting to emulate a large freezer. I know we need the moisture normally provided by the snowpack and we're really not doing that badly so far - lots of winter to go! Long range forecasts indicate a wet spring, so we may catch up then.

The beginning of the year is fairly quiet for the Lions Club until Easter, when we have the Big Hunt for eggs, stuffies and prizes. The club had its first meeting of 2026 on January 12 with some members missing and some showing up that we hadn't seen for a while, discussions were had, and some plans are being considered for the coming year's activities.

School breakfasts at Okanagan Falls Elementary are ongoing and reportedly doing fine with upwards of 30 children having 'breakie' with us. Thanks again to all the club members and volunteers who sacrifice sleep-in time to be there.

Sad news regarding a former member of the Lions Club, long time Okanagan Falls resident, Barbara Few passed away, following her husband Rod's demise 7 months ago. The Few's participated in the Legion and Ladies Auxiliary, with Rod being Sgt at Arms for many years. Barbara was part of the Women's Institute, Heritage Society and the Bandshell Committee, as well as a past member of our club. We will remember them.

That's about all I have for this month, except Robbie Burns Day was January 25 and Valentine's Day is still ahead on the 14th.

A little trivia ... "February" was originally "februa" in Roman times and was the last month of the year and included around the 15th day "a cleansing ritual" to signify the putting away of yet another "annum". That's it for now. See you next month. Keep well & safe.

Blood, it's in you to give! The next Blood Donor Clinics will be held February 9, 10 & 11 at the Penticton Senior Drop In Centre from 1:30-5:30 pm. The Canadian Blood Services needs both donors and volunteers, visit www.blood.ca or call 1-888-236-6283.

The Okanagan Falls Lions Club meets the second Monday each month at 7 pm starting in January upstairs in the Okanagan Falls Legion. Come and join us and see what we are all about. If you have any questions, please call 778-439-2275. Visit www.e-clubhouse.org/sites/okfalls/ or www.facebook.com/okanaganfallslionsclub.

OK Falls Heritage & Museum Society

By Connie White, Curator/Board Secretary

We cannot believe it's February already. We have our **Annual General Meeting on February 10** and we are happy to report that the 2025 Board Members have agreed to stand for re-election. In addition to regular AGM business, we will highlight to our members various projects, some of which we are looking for sponsors. Sponsors would be recognized with signage at each new exhibit.

Our Thrift Shop has just undergone an interior renovation making the space much brighter! Come on by and have a look!

As we gear up for a busy season, we ask you to mark your calendars for **Saturday, May 9**. This is our **Community Day Open House** and the museum will be open free! We will also have a BBQ, family games and a special Mother's Day craft for the kids! This was a very successful event last year and we want to build on this success! We hope to see many of our community members join us. All are welcome and you don't have to be a member to enjoy this event!

Although the museum is closed for the season, we are happy to bring through groups or individuals for tours.

CatMatch



Meet Oakley

I was born to a wild cat momma that thought if we lived in a lumber yard we could have a great home! But my siblings and I found it noisy and chaotic, so we hopped into the

strange little restaurant, locally known as the TRAP, that kept appearing and now we are living the good life! I am still adjusting to the indoor life, but I love it! And, the room service is great! Come see me and my sister at the great Bed and Breakfast called Total Pet in Kelowna!

Visit alleycatsalliance.org for more information.



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Branch 227
Okanagan Falls

The Royal Canadian Legion Branch #227

By Bev Van Uden

Big News - Legions in 2026 are 100 years old! The first Legion was in St. James, MB, which is now part of Winnipeg, MB. There are over 1350 branches throughout the country. In 1960, Queen Elizabeth II granted the Legion the word "Royal" and Canada's Governor General remains the viceregal patron of the Royal Canadian Legion to this day. Members and volunteers have been instrumental to its great success. Events will be happening throughout the year, so stay tuned.

If you have never been a Legion Member, now is a great time to join. You will receive both 2026 and 2027 for the price of one year! Come to the branch to sign up and for more information.

2026 Memberships Are Due ~ They can be paid that the bar.

OPEN Monday-Saturday from 2 pm to closing. Open Sundays at 11 am for pool. Check out the game. Everyone welcome!

Shuffleboard ~ Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2 pm.

Meat Draws - Fridays at 5 pm & Saturdays at 3 pm ~ Thanks to Belich's AG Foods! All profits are donated to charities.

Drop-in Darts ~ Saturdays at 2 pm. Registration at 1:30 pm.

Super Bowl Sunday on February 8 ~ Come watch the game on the big screen. Chili and a bun will be served.

Karaoke on Saturday, February 14 ~ Come join in the fun. Taco Salad Bowl will be served.

Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, February 15 from 8-10 am ~ Adults \$10, Kids \$5 and under 3 years is free!

General Meeting on Tuesday, February 17 at 7 pm ~ Always the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Volunteers ~ Would you like to volunteer? Drop by the Legion and let us know.

Bottle Returns ~ Drop off cans and bottles by the garage door at the Legion. Thank you.

For Updates ~ Call the branch at 250-497-8338, check the board outside, or check our Facebook page at "Royal Cdn Legion - Branch 227 Okanagan Falls BC" or our Instagram at "Veterans227".

We are a Little Legion with a Big Heart!



South Okanagan Similkameen Community Connections Volunteer Centre Update

By Laura Turnbull, Board Chairperson

February is Heart Month. For the South Okanagan Similkameen Community Connections Volunteer Centre, it is “Be Kind to Your Heart Month”, with a special workshop being held in Penticton on Wednesday, February 4 at 1:30 pm at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church.

Featuring Dr. Tom Ashton and Rev. Laura Turnbull as guest presenters, this timely workshop will offer ideas and suggestions on heart health, the link between spiritual health and heart health, and the value of meditation. This event is open to all, although pre-registration is requested at 1-888-576-5661.

One of the well-studied ways of being kind to your heart is through volunteering. Research has shown that persons who regularly volunteer have lower heart rates and blood pressure than the non-volunteers of comparable age and activity level population studied.

Friendships formed while volunteering are often lifelong. The social aspect of volunteering cannot be underestimated. One notices many groups of friends gathered for coffee at one of the many coffee shops after a shift of volunteering. This regular social gathering is sometimes valued as much or more as the time with the volunteer commitment.

Anecdotally, I have heard volunteers say that they have kept weight under control due to volunteering. If they were not engaged with their volunteer activity, they would be home snacking. Although I have not seen studies, the rationale makes sense.

I have a friend who takes a homebound senior for regular walks. She claims that both her new friend and herself have been able to increase the distance walked and that they both feel better emotionally and physically. They have found a way to be kind to their hearts.

If you are looking for a way to volunteer and be kind to your heart, please contact Subrina Monteith, our Executive Director, at 1-888-576-5667 or email at info@volunteercentre.info or check our website at www.volunteercentre.info.

May February be the month you are kind to your heart. Consider volunteering!



Who needs fireworks? Photo taken by Grant Temple on December 30, 2025.



Trail Of The Okanagans

By Mary Trainer

Trail Etiquette

Walking or cycling the Trail of the Okanagans route is meant to be a pleasant experience for people of all ages and abilities. Different users have different expectations of what that experience should be. To help make it enjoyable and safe, here are a few tips to keep in mind.

- Be informed about the route before you go.
- Tell someone where you’re going and your route.
- Respect trail closure signs, landowners & agricultural activities.
- Anticipate that there will be other trail users. A friendly greeting is always appropriate, and lets others know of your presence.
- Trails BC’s *Trail User’s Code of Ethics* says: when encountering others on the trail, the most mobile usually yields the right of way, but use common sense to determine who can move out the way most easily. Ideally, cyclists yield to everyone.
- Make your way on the right side of the trail, and pass others on their left. If you’re on a bike, ring your bell to announce your presence or intention to pass.
- Cycle at a safe speed.
- Keep dogs leashed and away from waterways. Pick up after your dog.
- Stay on the trail to avoid disturbing native plants and other vegetation.
- Pack out garbage.
- Carry extra food and clothing.
- Admire wildlife, and let them be.
- Cyclists can help reduce damage to trails by avoiding skidding and sliding.
- Stay off trails in very wet conditions, so that tire ruts don’t create conditions for erosion.

LOCAL CHURCH DIRECTORY

Kaleden Community Church

Sunday Worship at 10 am ~ in-person and online

Movie Night on March 1 at 7:30 pm ~ “Seen The Film” for parents and professionals. Email connect@space2flourish.ca for more info. Visit kaledenchurch.ca for updates and the link to our live worship. 443 Lakehill Rd. | kaledenchurch@gmail.com | 250-497-5995

Okanagan Falls Community Church

Sunday Worship Service & Children’s Teen Church at 11 am

With Pastor Jon Manlove - regular services from Jan 4th onwards.
Ladies Bible Study ~ Tuesdays at 10 am
Worship services recorded at OKFCC.net. Everyone is welcome!
1356 McLean Creek Rd, Okanagan Falls | 250-497-5131

Okanagan Falls United Church

Sunday Service at 9 am ~ Speakers: February 1 - Rev. Paul James; February 8 - Rev. Liz Bowyer; February 15 - Rev. Laura Turnbull; and February 22 - Rev. Dr. Donald Schmidt. Coffee fellowship following the services. More info available at okfallsunited.ca.
1108 Willow St, Okanagan Falls | 250-497-1171 or 250-460-2560

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Service

Sunday Mass at 11 am ~ All services held in St. Barbara’s Church. 1039 Willow St | Father Gabriel Chinnaperiannan | 250-494-3110

St. Barbara’s Anglican Church

Sunday Service at 9:30 am ~ Join Rev. Rick Paulin on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. Morning Prayer on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. Everyone is welcome! Email for more information. 1039 Willow St, Okanagan Falls | st.barbaraanglican@gmail.com



Flowers Or Fish Heads?



Send yours to skahamatters@telus.net

Your full name and location area is required on any submission.

(Please Note: Some discretion on content inclusion may be involved.)

Flowers to the Okanagan Falls Seniors Activity Society, who hosted a great Christmas Dinner for its members and their guests on December 13. The Society provided turkey, stuffing, gravy and mashed potatoes, while members provided some great vegetable dishes and desserts. Entertainment was provided by Kelly and we all played Music Bingo until about 10:30 pm, which made for a great end to a fun night!
~ From John P. of Okanagan Falls

Flowers to Colleen who cleaned up all the flower barrels, baskets and planters beautifully. **Flowers** to Annalise for brightening the corner of Main Street and 7th Avenue, as people entered town and for decorating the light standards in Christie Memorial Park.
~ From Judy G. of Okanagan Falls

Flowers to Donna for meticulously picking up all the litter along both sides of McLean Creek Road for a very long distance, and on more than one occasion. Her garbage bag was filled to the top; walkers along that stretch of road greatly appreciate your thoughtfulness.
~ From Don & Linda K. of Okanagan Falls

Flowers to Annalise of the Black Pearl Resort for the beautiful Christmas Bows on the Christie and Kenyon Parks lights. It's nice touches like this that highlight our beautiful parks.
~ From Okanagan Falls Parks & Recreation Commission

Recovery For Everyone

By Van Hill

What? A Recovery Meeting ~ This is a secular meeting based on smartrecovery.org and AA agnostic. Smart has many tools that are based in CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) and techniques which can help individuals recognize some of the thinking/feeling traps that may have unreasonable levels of control over their behaviors. We also utilize the book "The Proactive 12 Steps" for recovery discussion.

When & Where? ~ Wednesday evenings at 7 pm at 216 Hastings Avenue, Penticton (Heritage Train Station). Doorbell at front. For more information, please contact Van Hill at 250.300.5222.



*Nobody makes a part that looks like that.
Are you sure it came off your car and not
your washing machine?*

Credible Cremation Services

Sensible Prices for Practical People

Basic Cremation Only - Other charges apply
 \$1240.00 - Penticton area
 \$1440.00 - Kelowna area

250.493.3912

Pre-Need ~ Lesley@crediblecremation.ca
 At-Need ~ Robin@crediblecremation.ca

110-1960 Barnes St, Penticton, BC V2A 4C3




Lesley H. Luff
Robin M. Earle

Pre-Planning For The Inevitable

By Lesley H. Luff, Okanagan Falls & Osoyoos

A gentle reminder to those that are thinking about making their pre-arrangements. The process is very simple. First, you need to contact Lesley@crediblecremation.ca and ask for a Quote. Next, you will be asked to complete a Vital Statistics form. Then, we will open a Life Insurance policy with Tru-Stage Life of Canada, where your money will remain until the time of your death. Credible Cremation Services does *not* hold any pre-need funds.

There are several benefits to pre-paying for your final arrangements. **Pre-Planning** - allows you the advantage of time. Time to discuss your final wishes with your family. Time to make the choices that best fit your needs and your budget.

Pre-Planning - locks in today's prices insulating you from future rate increases.

Pre-Planning - offers peace of mind knowing that your family will not have to make difficult and emotional decisions on your behalf. Payment can be made by Visa, Master Card, Bank Draft or Certified Cheque.

Credible Cremation Services is fully licensed by the Province of BC and cremations are completed at our on-site Crematorium.

"Sensible Pricing for Practical People"

Credible Cremation Services

110-1960 Barnes Street, Penticton V2A 4C3

250-493-3912 - Lesley Pre-Need & Robin At-Need

Greetings From Mexico!

By Diane Chatfield

Vi and I are out discovering new destinations for our clients this month. Vi is exploring the charms of Manzanillo, while I am visiting beautiful Isla Mujeres. We'll be reviewing local properties and experiencing the area firsthand to ensure the best recommendations for our clients.

As always, we're happy to help with all your travel plans. Just keep in mind that our response times may be a little slower while we're on the road exploring new destinations for you.

Diane: 250-488-6818 or dchatfield@tpi.ca

Vi: 250-488-1096 or vicareasey@shaw.ca

ReliableTravel.ca

250-488-9313





Vi Creasey
vicareasey@shaw.ca

Diane Chatfield
dchatfield@tpi.ca

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ROBIN LAYNE & THE RHYTHM MAKERS

"DEEP DANCE VIBES SUITABLE FOR ANY CROWD."



SUNDAY FEBRUARY 15 @ 7:30

BALLET KELOWNA'S VIVIDUS: FULL OF LIFE



THURSDAY FEBRUARY 19 @ 7:30

VENABLES
THEATRE

VENABLESTHEATRE.CA



Okanagan Falls

Youth and Teens



Youth/Teen Night - Challenge

Zone!

Get ready to team up with Coach E. for a monthly extravaganza of action-packed games for ages 10 and up! It's the ultimate arena for sportsmanship, fun, and a dash of healthy competition. And yes, snacks are on the menu!

Instructor: Ernestina

Okanagan Falls Community Centre

Fraturdays, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

February 6 & March 6



Fee: \$5 drop-in fee at the door



Valentine's Dinner Friday, February 13th

VISIT WWW.SYLRANCH.COM TO RESERVE

**\$89 PER PERSON
(\$75 FOR MEMBERS)**

AVAILABLE BY RESERVATION ONLY.

A VALENTINE'S DAY TO REMEMBER!
BEGIN THE EVENING WITH A SPLASH OF SPARKLING.

ENJOY A 3-COURSE CULINARY JOURNEY,
ACCOMPANIED BY YOUR CHOICE OF WINE.

SEE YA LATER RANCH

TASTINGS & LUNCH
THURS - SUN, 11-4PM

2575 Green Lake Rd.
Okanagan Falls (250) 408-9091
Come see our new tasting room!



NK'MIP
{ INKAMEEP }
CELLARS

SWEETHEARTS DINNER

Saturday, February 14th

6:00pm - Reservations required

Featuring an inspired 4 course dinner prepared by Chef Shawn Cheer, paired perfectly with Nk'Mip Cellars Award Winning Wines, this will be an evening to cherish.

\$125 per person
Inclusive of wine parings, tax & gratuity.



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1400 RACHER CREEK RD. | OSOYOOS BC