



SKAHA MATTERS

“Bringing Community Matters To You”

Volume 17 : Issue 12

December 2025

Your FREE Monthly
Community News!



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You Are Invited To “The Memory Tree”

By Myleen Mallach, Owner/Publisher of Skaha Matters

As the Holidays approach, many of us find ourselves wanting to pay tribute to a passed loved one in a special and memorable way. We have all experienced loss to some degree at some point in our lives, but some of us have experienced and still experience a devastating loss due to extenuating circumstances that are hard to process and overcome. As a result, the Holiday Season can become a very difficult and stressful time of year.

“The Memory Tree” at St. Andrews by the Lake Golf Resort will once again provide the perfect venue to join with like-minded community members at the start of this Holiday Season. You are invited to join event organizers Stan and Laurie on **Sunday, November 30 from 4:30-6:30 pm**. Last year, they held this event for the first time and 80 people came. This year, they want to open it up to more local residents and ensure everyone can join in.

Blank wooden hearts will be provided for you to write a personal message to your loved one. Then, you can hang it on the 14 foot tree on the first tee box. If you have another special memorable ornament you'd like to hang on the tree, you are welcome to do so. The tree is sponsored by St. Andrews by the Lake Golf Resort and The Falls Barber & Shave Shop. Thank you for your support!

The tree will be fully lit up at 5:30 pm, followed by singing “Silent Night” together. You can say something or nothing at all. You can come and go, or you can come and stay to enjoy the festivities around the outdoor fire pits with a shared understanding between those attending. There will be Christmas baking, coffee, tea, hot chocolate and hot apple cider all complimentary inside the club house provided by local families.

If you have any questions, contact either Stan at coachsymes31@shaw.ca or Laurie at laurinadougan2300@gmail.com.



Okanagan Falls

OKANAGAN FALLS COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 14, 2025

1:30 - 3:30 pm
Okanagan Falls Recreation Centre
1141 Cedar Street, Okanagan Falls

Enjoy a photo booth, face painting, games, treats, and crafts.
Evan the Juggler at 2:30 pm.

“Light up the Falls” 3:30 - 5:00 pm
Okanagan Falls Shopping Plaza
A special guest delivery at 3:30 pm.
Tree lighting at 4:30 pm.
Complimentary Hot Chocolate from Rise & Shine.

FREE event, everyone welcome

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The Strength Of Community As We Head Into The Holiday Season

By Donegal Wilson, MLA for Boundary-Similkameen

As December settles into the Boundary-Similkameen, the rhythm of our communities begins to shift. The last of the fall colours fade, the first dustings of snow appear on the mountain tops, and we start turning our attention toward the holiday season - a season rooted in connection, generosity, and the traditions that make each of our towns and valleys unique.

One of the greatest strengths of rural British Columbia is our sense of community. Whether we live in Okanagan Falls, Keremeos, Rock Creek, Grand Forks, Greenwood, Oliver, Hedley, or in any of the neighbourhoods and valleys in between, we share a common thread: we show up for one another. We check in on our neighbours. We celebrate together, and we support each other through challenges. That is what makes this region so special.

This time of year brings countless opportunities to strengthen those connections. Christmas markets, craft fairs, concerts, parades of lights, charity drives, fundraisers, community dinners, and volunteer-led events are beginning to fill our calendars. These gatherings aren't just festive - they reflect the heart of who we are. They bring us together, lift spirits, and keep our communities vibrant and resilient.

As you plan for the holidays, I encourage everyone to **shop local and support local businesses**. Our small businesses are owned and staffed by our friends, family members, and neighbours. Every dollar spent at a local shop, market, winery, farm stand, or artisan table stays in our region. It helps keep storefronts open, supports local jobs, and strengthens the sense of place that defines the Boundary-Similkameen.

When we choose to shop local, we aren't just buying a product, we are investing in the future of our communities. We are helping young entrepreneurs get their start, supporting long-time businesses that anchor our main streets, and ensuring that rural communities remain strong, connected, and full of opportunity. These choices matter, especially in a year when so many small businesses continue to face challenges.

As the Legislature continues its fall sitting, I also want to share a brief message I delivered recently in Victoria - one that speaks directly to who we are as rural British Columbians. In my five-minute statement, I highlighted the vital role that forestry continues to play across our province. For generations, forestry has been one of the economic pillars of our region. I know that communities like Okanagan Falls no longer feel its direct economic benefit the way they once did. Many mills are gone, contractors have moved on, and the industry looks very different than it did even a decade ago. But I firmly believe this sector remains integral to our future - not only for jobs, but for the balanced resource-based economy that sustains rural BC.

My message to government was clear: stop looking for someone else to blame. Focus on the future of forestry by working on the things within their control. Support responsible management. Clear the backlog. Empower the people on the ground who know this industry best. Be bold not only in external negotiations, but within their own policies. Fight for us - and for the communities who rely on forestry to survive and thrive.

You can view my full Question Period exchange and read past updates on my website at www.donegalwilsonmla.ca, where I post statements, letters, and press releases related to this issue. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me.

Wishing each of you a warm, safe, and joy-filled start to the holiday season.



RCMP Community Report



By Jo Anne Ruppenthal,
Community Policing-Resortative Justice Coordinator

Connecting

As we go gently into the end of 2025, I am often reminded on how fast life can go by; especially when we are distracted by the stress of family pressures, work, and living or loving someone with a mental health issue, whether that be addiction, neurodiversity, or our own mental health issues.

Being aware of your stressors is so important, as the demand for all the events that December brings can deter you from what is truly important. It's different for everyone, but I think connecting with others is a universal importance that runs through in all communities, cultures, and environments.

How do you stay connected? How do you not isolate yourself, when you have no one close to you? How do you make yourself a priority, when everyone else wants more things from you?

I think the first step is to identify what makes you feel connected; without identifying it, you won't be able to realize it when it happens. The second step is to figure out how to make that connection happen; there are a ton of volunteer programs out in the community that you can quickly Google, call, or visit. You can also look at some free or inexpensive courses that you can take, either in person or online that will help you build skills to create that connection with other people. Finally, the third step is to recognize that you are enough and that you deserve others to see all these great qualities and you need to share them with people other than yourself.

I guess my point is that December is a wonderful month to enjoy all the community events and family gatherings. But if you don't have any connection with people already, I think it's time to change that because isolating and not being truly "present" in what is going on, will only pull you away from the life you are meant to have.

Happy holidays and enjoy good mental health. See you next year! 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.

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Merry Christmas from the KJ's Crew!
Holiday Closure is December 23 through January 5.

5121 9th Avenue, Okanagan Falls Any inquiries, email kjcoffeebar@gmail.com 778.515.6502



From The Director For RDOS Area "I"

Winter is quickly approaching, so if you notice roads that need attention for snow clearing, please contact AIM by calling 1-866-222-4204 or by using the online form at www.aim-roads.ca. Don't assume others have called, as that is often why there is a delay in responding to road conditions.

Subrina Monteith
Director of RDOS Area "I"
OKANAGAN-SIMULAKANEEN

I have had a few conversations about chimney smoke impacting neighbours. Please ensure that the maintenance of your chimney is complete with meeting industry standards, as well as the material that you are burning is not garbage or painted wood products.

A next step request to conduct a study of Highway 97 in Kaleden has been advocated with the Ministry of Transportation. This study will highlight the required safety upgrades to continue to make the highway safer for all users. Stay tuned.

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season filled with peace and joy. 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

 *All new website for all things Kaleden!*
www.KaledenCommunity.com
Courtesy of the Kaleden Community Association



Kaleden FireSmart Tip

By Linda Dahl

Kaleden FireSmart took the FireSmart Education program to the Grade 4-6 kids at Kaleden Elementary School. It was great to see the kids respond to Fire Science and to understand how they could make a difference in helping around their own homes.



The FireSmart crew was also busy on November 15th helping with the Pancake Breakfast at KVFD. There was also an opportunity during this time for residents to view ideas about the FireSmart Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan. This plan will be completed by the end of December. Information on the CWRP will continue to come to the community.



Kaleden Volunteer Fire Department



By Jean Dube

Fall Chimney Maintenance and Proper Inspection is a MUST!

As the cooler weather arrives, fireplaces, wood stoves and pellet stoves will be used frequently. It is the home-owner's responsibility to ensure **SAFETY and AIR QUALITY** while burning.

Wood burning is not a private matter. Excessive smoke emitting from a home chimney is a public health hazard (PM2.5) and a potential fire hazard. PM2.5 refers to fine particulate matter that are particles in the air which can pose a serious health risk. These particulates are a complex mixture of soot, smoke, dust and liquid droplets that can be inhaled deep into the lungs. If you choose to burn wood, you have a mandatory responsibility to your neighbours and to local safety standards.

- WETT Inspection Is NON-NEGOTIABLE** ~ Before you light any fire this season, confirm your system is safe and efficient. That It protects your home and your neighbours. **It is a MUST.**
 - WETT Certification:** You must have your wood-burning appliance inspected by a professional WETT (Wood Energy Technology Transfer) certified inspector. This ensures your stove, chimney, and venting system meet current safety codes and are operating correctly to minimize fire risk and pollution.
 - Creosote Control:** Get your chimney professionally cleaned **annually** to eliminate flammable creosote buildup.
- Only Burn Wood That Is DRY** ~ Wet or unseasoned wood is the single biggest cause of excessive smoke and unnecessary pollution.
 - 20% Moisture Maximum:** Only burn wood that has been split and dried for at least six months, with a moisture content of 20% or less. If it sizzles, it is dangerous, inefficient, and polluting. **DO NOT BURN IT.**
 - NO TRASH:** It is illegal and dangerous to burn household garbage, plastics, treated wood, or scrap lumber. The result is toxic fumes and increased smoke production.
- Thick Smoke Visibility Is A Failure** ~ If you see thick, white or dark smoke after the first 15 minutes of ignition, you are burning incorrectly.
 - Open Your Damper:** A smouldering fire is a polluting fire. Maintain sufficient airflow (keep the damper open enough) to ensure a hot, clean burn. A hot fire means minimal, almost invisible exhaust.
 - Monitor Your Stack:** Step outside and check your chimney. If it is smoking heavily, you are generating harmful PM2.5 and creating an air nuisance. **Adjust your air supply immediately.**

We are asking all responsible residents to adhere to these standards for the Health and Safety of all.

Wishing everyone a Safe and Wonderful Holiday Season.

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Kaleden Irrigation District News

By Bruce Shepherd, KID Trustee

Bon Voyage, Cheryl! ~ After almost 38 years with KID, November 3 was KID Administrator Cheryl Halla's last day serving the Kaleden Community. KID staff and Trustees gathered to wish her well in retirement, and presented her with a farewell gift of an original encaustic painting of the 1912 Hotel, done by Kaleden artist Jane Bland.



And Welcome Aboard, Lynn! ~ There's a (sort of) new face behind the KID counter.



Lynn Shead actually joined KID last January 2025, job-shadowing Cheryl Halla. Lynn has some 20 years' experience in office administration and accounts.

Send Us Lots of Snow, Santa (but mainly up in the mountains, please and thanks!) ~ The Okanagan Basin Water Board's November Report expressed concern that 2025 was the third consecutive year that the Okanagan was in drought status, a troubling trend for us and the region.

Best Wishes for the Holidays from KID Staff!



L-R: Operations Manager Mike Snair, Operations Paul Oaks, Administration Cheryl Halla (retired) and Administration Lynn Shead.

Office Hours: 9-1 Mon & Thur | Appt Wed
 119 Ponderosa Ave | 250.497.5407
 kaledenirrigation@gmail.com
 www.kaledenirrigation.org

Kaleden Community Association Update

By Glenda Livolsi

December is a busy time with Christmas approaching and people gathering with family and friends. May your holidays sparkle with joy, love and laughter amongst friends and family. People have already hung their lights, maybe put up a Christmas tree, listened to Christmas carols while baking their favourite Christmas cookies ... yummy!

Speaking of gathering with family and friends ... did you know that you can rent the Kaleden Community Hall? A perfect place to host birthday parties, celebrations, family gatherings, weddings, reunions and memorial services. It's affordable with hourly and daily rates, and Kaleden residents receive a 25% discount! Bookings require 14 days' notice. To book or ask for more information, please call 250-497-8188 Monday to Friday during business hours or visit rdos.bc.ca/community-services/regional-recreation/event-bookings.

From all the directors of Kaleden Community Association (Pinky, Randy, Neal, Glenda, Rita, Jaynie, Eryn, Frits and Rick), we would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas. Best wishes for a joyous Christmas filled with love, happiness, and prosperity!

RISE AND SHINE!

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From The Director For RDOS Area “D”

Christmas Is Coming ~ It's that time of year! The Okanagan Falls Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) Winter Market (November 22) marked the start of the Christmas season - and as usual they packed the Community Recreation Centre. Other craft sales occurred earlier too, at the Seniors Centre and the Legion. Delicious treats and amazing crafts and other items, all at a reasonable price and all supporting

Matt Taylor
Director for
RDOS Area “D”



the community. As well, a full range of baked goods were available at the Okanagan Falls Museum & Heritage Society's "Bakers Dozen" Christmas Bake Sale on November 29th, and "Photos with Santa" were available as well.



Looking ahead there's more to come! The Christmas movie "Elf" will be shown December 12th, hosted by the PAC and RDOS. The Community Recreation Centre doors open and fun starts at 6:30 and movie at 7:30. Then, on December 14th a "Community Christmas" event is hosted by RDOS. This runs from 1:30-3:30 pm at the Community Recreation Centre and is always great entertainment for people of all ages. Then, at the Okanagan Falls Shopping Plaza its "Light Up the Falls" hosted by the Okanagan Falls Business & Community Association. This event runs from 3:30-5:00 pm. The Fire Department is bringing a special guest around 3:30 pm and the 'Light Up' is around 4:30 pm. That's a lot going on for a town this size!

Remember, for those in need or wanting to donate, please call our Okanagan Falls Helping Hand at 778-559-2412.

Lest We Forget ~ A large crowd quietly paid their respects this past Remembrance Day at an event hosted by the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #227. With roughly 450-500 in attendance this was - in my opinion - another example of Okanagan Falls 'punching above its weight'. Having attended Remembrance Day services in many cities across Canada, the respect and appreciation shown in this town for this event always amazes me - and makes me feel good!

Community Meetings ~ There have been several meetings with residents, focused on specific services or communities within Area "D". Meetings like these are really important for 2-way sharing of information.

First was a "Coffee Chat" for Upper Carmi, which was well attended by residents. A variety of issues were discussed with additional information brought forward either by RDOS or by residents. Some of these may be discussed further in the future and others may be directed to other governments.

Next was a meeting with residents who have led discussions over the past several years about 'converting' 3 services to the RDOS, e.g. Vintage Views Waste Water (sewer), Lakeshore Waterworks

(water) and Skaha Estates Improvement (water). By January 1, 2026 all 3 of these systems will have converted to the RDOS and efforts are shifting from the conversion decision and process, to actually operating, maintaining and upgrading each of these systems. And then, there was a meeting with residents attending the Heritage Hills Community Association's Annual General Meeting. Points of interest here related to utility rates and how they will increase in step with the gradual 'draw down' of funds borrowed for necessary upgrades, everyone's interest in removing restrictions on building permits in some of these areas, and the impact of incorporation upon the remainder of Area "D" (below).

Thanks to all residents for coming out and contributing to a better understanding of the issues being faced throughout Area "D". Thanks also to RDOS Chief Administrative Officer Jim Zaffino for attending all of these events - and many others throughout the RDOS - and being a part of the exchange of information between RDOS and its residents.

Interesting Fact: The community of Upper Carmi - only accessible from Area "D" by going through Penticton and up Carmi Avenue or by coming down from FSR201 - is a part of Electoral Area "D". Other communities also in Area "D" are located on the east side of Vaseux Lake, the east side of Skaha Lake, Okanagan Falls, and a string of homes along Green Lake Road across the river from the town.

Area "D" Remainder ~ "What happens to the rest of us?" is a question frequently heard from many Area "D" residents in communities outside of the municipality being incorporated at Okanagan Falls. The short answer is, "No significant impacts are expected".

Looking more closely, residents in these communities will still have all the same services - delivered by the RDOS as at present, or by the new municipality. For example, the 'curbside collection' service will continue to be provided to these communities by the RDOS. In contrast, the 'fire protection' service is expected to be delivered by the new municipality, with responsibility for service delivery to the same homes as before. The same situation occurs near other municipalities that have existed for decades or more, with some homes in an Electoral Area receiving a service from the nearby municipality rather than the Regional District. For example, and again looking at the fire service, there are homes outside of Oliver town limits that are within the fire service area that is serviced by the Oliver Fire Department.

Also unchanged, these communities outside of the new Okanagan Falls incorporation footprint will continue to be in Electoral Area "D". As such, residents in these communities will elect an Electoral Area Director who will represent them to the RDOS Board of Directors. The only difference is that the Director will represent the approximately 800 homes that are outside of Okanagan Falls, and will not represent any homes within Okanagan Falls.

The Budget ~ Formally known as the "2026-2030 Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen Financial Plan", the Board reviewed a 1,200 page draft including schedules in two separate 1-day workshops in late November. First reading will be held on January 8th, and the final 3rd reading is scheduled for March 5th. The budget is the means by which residents control services, through comments to staff and their Director over the next few months, and ultimately the Board's approval. A budget presentation for Area "D" will be held in Okanagan Falls on January 13th. I encourage you to attend if you have an interest in a particular service.

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

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays Everyone!

Matt Taylor, Director for RDOS Area "D"

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

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Okanagan Falls Business & Community Association Update

By Marshall MacKinnon

Our "Fall in Love with the Falls" Halloween Trick or Treat event at the Okanagan Falls Shopping Plaza was a spooky great time. Children filled their bags with candy, while adults enjoyed some tasting coupons from Lakeboat Vineyard & Winery, Meyer Family Vineyards, Nighthawk Vineyards, Noble Ridge Vineyard & Winery, and Stag's Hollow Winery. Our Pumpkin Carving Contest had some scary creative entries by our Okanagan Falls Elementary School students. The top 3 finishers each received a gift bag surprise.

The Okanagan Falls Business & Community Association is happy to host our "Light Up the Falls" at the Okanagan Falls Shopping Plaza. Join us on **Sunday, December 14 from 3:30-5:00pm**. Don't miss our special guest arriving around 3:30pm, followed by 6 large trees that will light up the night sky at 4:30pm in a Christmas spectacle to celebrate the holidays! Enjoy hot chocolate and baked good provided by Rise & Shine Coffee House. We are currently looking for sponsors for 3 more trees. Sponsorships are \$300 each, which includes all of the lights and an opportunity to advertise your local business. If you're interested in sponsoring our event, please send an email to okanaganfallscommunity@gmail.com. Let's show some local, Christmas spirit and "Light Up the Falls"!

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.

If you have any questions, suggestions or would like to volunteer, please send us an email to okanaganfallscommunity@gmail.com.

OK Falls Parks & Rec Commission

By Bob Daly, Chair

As we approach the end of 2025, Okanagan Falls Parks and Recreation would like to share with you some of the highlights and some of the challenges of the year.

On the challenging side, an outdated RDOS bylaw for the creation of Parks and Recreation Commissions has created a bit of confusion and misunderstanding regarding the role of the Commission. For the last two years, the bylaw has been under review and during that time many of the previous duties of the Commission have been questioned or ignored leading to a feeling of "disconnect" between the Commission and RDOS Staff. The Commission has requested and expects to play a part in the revision of the bylaw.

Outweighing the challenges have been the many highlights this year, including many successful recreation programs and events, a wonderful job by Parks Staff in keeping the parks clean and looking beautiful, the many enhancements by "Friends of OK Falls Parks" whose attention to details helped raise the parks to a high level, the generosity of donors providing bicycle racks and a bicycle repair station and the support of "Okanagan Falls Connects - A Gathering and Celebration of Okanagan Falls Volunteers".

Okanagan Falls Parks and Recreation Commission has enjoyed working on your behalf this year and looks forward to another fruitful year ahead in 2026.

We wish you all a Wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Winter approaches Okanagan Falls Parks.

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Okanagan Falls Volunteer Fire Department



By Colin Pickell

As we approach the end of 2025, I'd like to take a moment and reflect on what was an important year in our firehall. This year marked a major milestone for us, as we celebrated our 75th Anniversary as a fire department. It was a chance to look back with gratitude at all of the people who have stepped forward over the years to serve our community, and we wanted to bring everyone together to be recognized. So, in September, we threw a big 'ol party that brought our community out, including alumni and neighbours, for a day filled with music, memories, and a few brave souls getting wet in our dunk tank. Thanks to everyone who attended!

We welcomed four new recruits in 2025, all of whom have recently completed their First Responder training and will soon begin live-fire training at the Oliver training grounds. Nine of our regular members also advanced their skills through live-fire training at Penticton's training grounds, moving closer to becoming interior-certified firefighters.

Training remained a core focus this year, including a full-day auto extrication practice with Willowbrook fire department and many hall - and field - based scenarios. Operationally, we responded to mutual aid calls from all of our neighbours, including a wildfire in Willowbrook, a structure fire in Oliver, and a grassfire in Kaleden. We are grateful for their support and partnership and know they will respond if and when we need to put out the call for assistance.

We experienced change as well, bidding farewell to three long-serving members - including one who moved on to a career position with Kamloops Fire Rescue - and we thank them all for their dedicated service. We also saw change within our leadership ranks, as Chief Fred Dobransky stepped back from his role in October and Randy Stoltz accepted a new Deputy Chief role with the intention of moving into the Interim Fire Chief role in early 2026. The interim designation is in consideration of the incorporation of Okanagan Falls. Tony Iannella, RDOS Protective Services Coordinator, has accepted the temporary role of Interim Fire Chief to assist the leadership team.

All in all, it was a very busy and rewarding year for the members of your Okanagan Falls Volunteer Fire Department, and we look forward to continuing to serve our community with integrity and dedication in 2026. From our firehall family to yours, we wish everyone a safe, healthy, and happy holiday season.



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What's Different From Last Year (And When To Jump In)

By Sergej Sinicin of neuHouzz Real Estate Group



If last year felt sluggish, this year has been more of a measured march. In the Okanagan, the market has shifted from the frothy, seller-dominant conditions in 2022 to a steadier, more balanced environment with favoritism towards buyers. In 2025, the sales volume, number of listings, and number of new listings have all gone up across the Okanagan. More importantly, we've seen a higher variety in listings. Condos and townhouses have come to market, while desirable single-family homes in some Okanagan areas remained scarce. This is the type of shift that opens windows for buyers without flushing sellers out of the market.



What this means for buyers

The current market offers choices and creates leverage for buyers who are patient and targeted.

- **If low risk and long-term ownership matters:** buy when the home checks your lifestyle boxes (e.g. school, commute, views) and your financing is secure. Prices are stabilizing and it's better to own through the next real estate cycle than to wait for it.
- **If you want best value:** watch inventory spikes. More listings = more negotiation power. Community reports and local MLS updates are your friend and I monitor these daily.
- **If you're rate-sensitive:** mortgage rates are expected to stay stable, which could widen buying windows. BUT - don't wait for the absolute bottom! Lock in a sensible pre-approval rate and then let me set an alert for properties that match your must-haves.

What this means for sellers

Many homes are selling close to list price in competitive sub-markets, when priced appropriately for the local market. But, the era of offers over asking price is definitely gone. Local weekly reports show that on average buyers are securing homes at roughly mid-to-high 90% of asking price - which is a sign of balance rather than frenzy.

- Sellers who are ready to price their property realistically and present their property well, will get strong offers.
- Smart sellers can decide to play the seasons: spring brings more selection; fall and winter brings motivated buyers.
- If you're making a lateral move (and not leaving the country), now is likely not the moment to try and time the markets.

Conclusion

For well-informed buyers and sellers, there are still lots of opportunities to achieve your real estate goals. Thinking of buying? Tell me the neighbourhood and price range you're watching, and I'll prepare a no-pressure market snapshot so you can decide with confidence. I can also help track neighbourhood-level supply, days-on-market patterns, and market shifts so you don't have to, and put together a plan to execute offers that stand out without overpaying. Thinking of selling? I can provide a hyper-local read on inventory, recent comparable sales, and a boots-on-the-ground perspective, so you can make a confident real estate decision.

As your local expert and founder of the neuHouzz Real Estate Group, I wish everyone an amazing end to 2025. Enjoy the holidays, and let me know how I can help you build the next episode in your life. Call 778-764-1373.

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

By Jay Mallach, Custom Finish Carpenter

"Let's Finish It" has worked on many projects over this past 10 years from Osoyoos to Summerland and around Apex Mountain. Projects have ranged from kitchen and bathroom renovations to flooring, baseboard and casing to replacing drywall and mudding to building outdoor decks and pergolas to hanging doors and installing windows to custom made furniture. Some clients like to work alongside me, some clients prefer tasks for themselves to complete, while other clients simply want to watch and learn. I enjoy the process of transforming a space into the client's vision.

Below is a recent bathroom renovation for Mary, an Upper Carmi resident. Her bathroom was old and dated, as shown in the top left photo below. I gutted the bathroom down to the studs, lined up a plumber and an electrician, installed heated floors and custom tile, replaced the bathtub, toilet and vanity, as well as the lighting. Mary was extremely pleased with her finished bathroom, along with the bonus that I always guarantee my work.



Have you been wishing for a refresh in your kitchen or bathroom? Do you have a home renovation project started and can't seem to get it finished? Do you lack time, knowledge, or simply need a little assistance with the next step? Or, are you fed up and just want the project done? Not to worry, "Let's Finish It" can assist to whatever level of assistance you need. Contact Jay at 250-490-6343 or jaymallach@gmail.com for your free quote today.

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Anti-Aging & Health Benefits Of Intravenous & Oral Glutathione Therapy

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



Glutathione (GSH) is the body's major systemic anti-toxin, antioxidant, and free-radical scavenger. In fact, the ratio of reduced Glutathione to oxidized Glutathione is one of the most accurate indicators of cellular health. This makes this valuable peptide vital for protecting cells from damage, as well as for detoxifying biotoxins and toxic heavy metals. The liver has the highest concentration of GSH in the body, which makes sense since the liver is the most important organ of detoxification in the

body. Unfortunately, with aging, nutrient deficiencies, toxicities, and infections, GSH can be drastically reduced, leaving the body vulnerable to the ill effects of damaging substances. Oral GSH is very poorly absorbed; therefore, the most effective method of increasing GSH levels is to have a medical professional inject it intravenously, or to take it in a liposomal oral form that absorbs well.

Intravenous GSH has proven effective in the treatment of hyper-coagulating blood disorders, liver disease, and anemia. It plays a critical role in toxic metal transport, storage, and metabolism; therefore, acting to clear these harmful toxins from the body. With accurate testing, toxic metals are found to be elevated in most people today. They contribute to many chronic degenerative diseases, particularly heart disease, neurological disease, and inflammatory conditions. GSH also safely removes biotoxins from the body via the liver.

Although GSH is vital to liver detoxification, it also acts as the major detoxifier of the kidneys, lungs, intestines, and all other organs systems in the body. It is vital to immune function and stimulates both B and T-cell growth and proliferation, which act to protect the body from invading micro-organisms and toxins. GSH moderates the immune system helping to regulate both an over stimulated immune system (allergy, asthma, eczema, auto-immunity, etc.) and an under stimulated or sluggish one (chronic infections, fatigue, fever, etc.). Further, many neurological conditions have shown benefit with optimization of body glutathione levels.

Other methods of increasing GSH levels include eating a higher protein, lower carbohydrate diet, consuming bioactive goat or bovine whey protein regularly, and by increasing tissue levels of zinc, magnesium, selenium, vitamin E, carnosine, B-vitamins, milk thistle, alpha-lipoic-acid, N-acetyl-cysteine, and melatonin. GSH tissue levels are depleted by petrochemicals, Tylenol (acetaminophen), alcohol, environmental toxins, household chemicals, toxic metals, and infections.

Intravenous GSH is administered from daily to once monthly depending on the patient's condition and the severity of illness. It is often administered along with IV phosphatidylcholine in a treatment called Phospholipid Exchange to further enhance detoxification and cellular revitalization.

Ensure you are following the advice from a licensed medical professional prior to embarking on any treatment protocol. This article is for informational purposes only and should not be considered medical advice.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!! May this season bring much love, health, and joy into your life. Heartfelt wishes to you and all of your loved ones for a wonderful Christmas and inspiring New Year.



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Okanagan Falls

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Ask Cheryl

By Cheryl L. Snyder, RTC, MRT, CBP

Anonymous To: Ask Cheryl

Dear Cheryl,

My partner and I both want to grow, but sometimes we compete to see who's working harder than the other. I wonder why this happens? We love each other, but it feels like we're not always on the same page. How do we navigate this? We might need a Coles version ... hahaha.

Thank you for your question Anonymous.

Firstly, Relationships Phewww ... I'm unsure if I'll fit this all in one column. lol. I'm happy you suggested the Coles version!

Healing is not always equal, nor does it unfold at the same pace for both partners. One person may find a particular layer of healing incredibly challenging, while the other moves through their own work more easily. Neither is wrong. Neither is failing. It simply means you are two human beings with two different histories, needs, and emotional landscapes.

Sometimes one partner is ready to expand before the other. Sometimes one person is holding old wounds more tightly. And, sometimes the relationship itself becomes the very place where healing finally begins.

I often say, "relationships are a very large space". They hold our hopes, fears, patterns, expectations, and our unconscious programming. The dynamic we had with a parent or caregiver can influence how we show up with a partner years later. When two people understand this, compassion grows, communication deepens, and a healthier bond becomes possible. In relationships, the most important tool I teach is "forgiveness". It's the gift!

I currently support several couples in my clinic. Most begin individually, so each person can explore their own inner world without bias or judgment. Then, when they're ready, we bring the work together. This gives the relationship a stronger foundation and stops the cycle of reacting from old wounds. NOTE: I love pre-marital couples counselling, it's EPIC! It's common societal 'norms' that we only seek help when we're in distress, when counselling and receiving tools for connection are available in the happy connected times as well.

Getting to know yourself is the cornerstone of all healthy relationships. Working on a journey of love, connection, and awareness supports your evolution - and your partner's. This way, you both learn to recognize when you are being pulled into old traps or emotional patterns. Our egos can be strong-willed and may lead us down rabbit holes of disconnection, but awareness brings us back.

I'm grateful you reached out. Healing, whether individual, relational, or both, is some of the most important work you'll ever do. And, it's work worth doing.

Thank you for your heartfelt question, Anonymous. I look forward to supporting you further on your journey. Thank you for booking, so we can get started sooner than later. What a great way to finish the year and start a brand new 2026.

As we enter the final month of 2025, I wish to extend my most sincere gratitude for all the emails, phone calls, texts, office visits, walking meditations and acknowledgement of the important work that goes on within Your Wellness Journey. My desire and prayer is that more will be open to come and "SIT" in conscious conversation to heal body, mind and spirit with me in 2026. Please don't stay in your suffering, reach out. Perhaps it's time to ask, "How can I see this differently?"

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and thank you from my heart to (ALL) yours!

CHERYL SNYDER

- Registered Therapeutic Counselor
- Registered Grief Counselor
- Registered Addictions Specialist

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Book Online at Your Wellness Journey

- 250-574-8972
- cherylsnyderccc@gmail.com | yourwellnessjourney.net
- yourwellnessjourney.janeapp.com



Welcome Linsea O'Shae!

By Nancy Wigley, Recreation Coordinator

RDOS Recreation is excited to introduce Linsea O'Shae to our instructor team in Okanagan Falls! Linsea is a certified yoga teacher, administrative professional by day, and dynamic fitness instructor by night.

A proud Navy veteran, former kickboxer, and mom of three, Linsea brings energy, humour, and a drill-sergeant edge to her **fusion fitness classes**, blending fat-burning cardio with strength training. Her **yoga sessions** offer an authentic, intuitive experience with music and poses that build strength, balance, and inner calm.



Linsea's goal? To inspire you to reach your health and fitness potential - while having fun!

To register for Tone & Sculpt, Deep Stretch, or to learn more about our winter recreation programs, please visit rec.rdos.bc.ca.

RDOS Play RECREATION

RDOS OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN

WINTER Recreation Guide

JANUARY - MARCH 2026

AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING
DECEMBER 11, 2025

REGISTRATION OPENS
DECEMBER 18, 2025

rec@rdos.bc.ca

[@rdosrecreation](https://www.instagram.com/rdosrecreation)

rec.rdos.bc.ca

The Art Of Making Whole

By Trish Hoy

The Art of Making Whole is a living concept rooted deep within the healing practice of Homeopathy. It means to observe and heal the whole being; body-mind-spirit using a combination of intellect and intuition. Homeopathy is rooted in herbalism, but profoundly branched into a non-crude form of treatment using the energy from plants, minerals, bacteria, etc., by creating 'mother tinctures'. Due to the energetic transformation, the remedies cause no harm to body-mind-spirit, and no interference with medications.

The remedies are individually formulated to address unique trauma histories. Trauma causes an impact on the psyche, physical body and life force becoming stuck, causing a spirit of disease to form. This can be the cause of repetitious worrying thoughts, unresolved grief or depression or a feeling of being lost without purpose. Negative emotions can create disease, which impacts the physical body and life forces gradually weakening us. When homeopathic, tree or flower essences are prescribed, these living energy spirits dislodge and heal the impact of the trauma, leaving the person, increasing more whole again.

I too have experienced the healing power of plants, crediting them with transforming my health including recovering from cancer. Throughout my counselling career as a psychiatric nurse, it has been difficult to watch my clients unintentionally repeat negative emotions and thoughts leading to destructive behaviour often feeling frustrated, because the cycle never ends. I started to ask, "what is the answer?" Years later, I'm now beginning a new purpose using Homeopathy to help people along their healing path.



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South Skaha Housing Society Update

By Michael Livingstone, SSHS Chair

Construction has officially begun on the South Skaha Housing Society's second affordable housing project in Okanagan Falls, approved under BC Housing's Community Housing Fund.

This new development will provide **36 affordable rental units**, offering a mix of studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom homes. These units are designed to support a wide range of residents - individuals, couples, families, and seniors - with rental options that include **market units, rent-g geared-to-income units, and deep-subsidy units**, ensuring accessibility for households with varying financial needs.

The building has been planned with **energy efficiency and sustainability** in mind, meeting BC Housing Design Guidelines to reduce environmental impact and support long-term affordability.

South Skaha Housing Society is pleased to be working with **Greyback Construction** and **Atcorr Development Consulting** on this exciting project, which is anticipated to be completed by **March 2027**.

This project is an important step forward in addressing the growing housing needs in Okanagan Falls and supporting a vibrant, inclusive community.

Creative Wellness Solutions

By Dee-anne Stone, Seniors Wellness Practitioner



Massage therapy can be an effective, supportive treatment for people dealing with tendonitis, a condition caused by irritation or inflammation of a tendon. Although tendonitis can occur anywhere in the body, it most often affects the elbows, shoulders, knees, wrists, and heels - areas that work hard during repetitive motions. When a tendon becomes overworked, tiny micro-tears develop, which lead to pain, stiffness, and reduced mobility. Massage can help address several of the underlying contributors to these symptoms, offering both relief and improved function.

One of the primary benefits of massage for tendonitis is increased circulation. When a therapist applies gentle, targeted pressure to the surrounding muscles and soft tissues, blood flow to the affected area improves. This enhanced circulation brings in oxygen and nutrients that support healing, while helping remove metabolic waste products that can build up and contribute to inflammation. Better blood flow can speed recovery and reduce the overall level of irritation in the tendon.

Massage also helps release muscle tension in the tissues surrounding the injured tendon. Often, when a tendon is inflamed, the nearby muscles tighten in response, creating even more strain on the area. Techniques such as myofascial release, effleurage, and cross-fiber friction can loosen tight muscles, improve range of motion, and reduce the mechanical stress placed on the tendon during movement.

Another important aspect of massage is its effect on the nervous system. Tendonitis frequently leads to protective guarding - where the body tenses up to shield the painful area. Massage encourages relaxation, decreases pain sensitivity, and interrupts the cycle of tension and inflammation. This can make everyday movements more comfortable and support a more natural healing process.

While massage is not a stand-alone cure for tendonitis, it can be an excellent complementary therapy when combined with rest, stretching, and proper activity modification. For many people, incorporating massage into their recovery plan can lead to faster healing, improved mobility, and meaningful relief from persistent discomfort.

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.



Creative Wellness Solutions
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www.CreativeWellnessSolutions.com

Kaleden Branch: 101 Linden Avenue - 250-497-8066
Tuesday 1-5 pm / Thursday 1-8 pm / Friday 1-5 pm

It's December, the turn of year has arrived, and unlike the lucky creatures who get to hibernate until the first buds of spring appear, most of us are gearing up for a busy season of festive holiday activities.

The last delivery of holds for the departing year will be on Wednesday, December 17, so be sure to order enough reading materials to tide you over the Christmas closure. The Kaleden Library will be **closed from Saturday, December 20 to Thursday, January 1**, reopening on Friday, January 2 from 1-4 pm.

Food donations for the **Kaleden Cares Program** are welcomed and will be accepted at the library right up to Christmas closure.

PROGRAMS (ALL AGES):

Crafters of all ages are invited to take and make a set of beautiful **Printed Vintage Postcards**, ready to embellish with glitter and display wherever a touch of holiday sparkle is needed (*while supplies last!*).

Anyone wanting a quiet pursuit amid the hustle and bustle of cookie baking, present shopping and light string untangling can pick up a colouring page from the library for an entry into our annual **Gingerbread House Kit Colouring Contest**. If you win, you can have a lovely time building a gingery masterpiece, as well as creating special memories with family or friends. Your colouring sheet must be returned by **Tuesday, December 16** to be eligible.

For Jigsaw puzzle enthusiasts wanting a new challenge to work on when it's too cold for outdoor adventures, we have a colouring contest just for you! When you return your colouring sheet by **Tuesday, December 16**, you will be in the running to win a brand-new puzzle to pore over and piece together patiently!

Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and a healthy and Happy New Year to one and all from Judy, Cara and Laila!

Submitted by Judy Komar, Kaleden Community Librarian



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.

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.

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

REMINDER: The Okanagan Falls Library will be **closed from December 21, 2025 until January 2, 2026**.

A Prehistoric Christmas: Saturday, December 6, 11 am - 1:30 pm. Step back in time this holiday season and join us for a MAMMOTH Christmas Celebration! Get ready for a journey back in time. Starting at 11 am, Bob the Fossil Guy will be here for a special presentation. Afterwards, stay for some roaring fun with Dino-Mite crafts, tasty treats and prehistoric activities.

Friends of the Library Book & Bake Sale: Saturday, December 6 from 10 am - 2 pm. Books to Read & Treats to Eat! Join us at Belich's AG Foods for a Holiday Bake & Book Sale in support of the Okanagan Falls Library! Discover your next favourite read and enjoy some sweet treats. All proceeds are used for library programs. Hosted by the Friends of the Library.

Friends of the Library's Silent Auction: Held November 19 - December 17. The Friends of the Okanagan Falls Library invite you to a special fundraising event that promises something for everyone! Get ready to browse, bid, and bring home something wonderful. This is your chance to find that perfect gift or a special treat for yourself, while supporting the local library.

Teck 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. To make an appointment, please contact the Okanagan Falls Library at 250-497-5886.

Book Club: Wednesday, December 18 from 1-2 pm. This month, we're discussing "Spark on Light" by Jodi Picoult or "What Strange Paradise" by Omar El Akkad. New members are always welcome! For details on how to join, contact the Okanagan Falls Library.

Family Story Time: Saturday, December 13 from 9:30 am - 10 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.

Lego Club: Every Tuesday from 4-5:30 pm and Every Saturday from 10 am - 1:30 pm. Create, make and play. Dive into the hands of creativity where imaginations rule. And the more you explore, the more rewards you earn.

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

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Submitted by Artessa Wiker, Okanagan Falls Community Librarian



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**Monthly
Deadline
Between
15-20th**

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!

Home

By Tom Landecker

Imagine that you are given the task of making a plan of your house. That's not very difficult. You take a measuring tape, you walk from room to room, and you draw up a plan. Job done.

Now imagine that you have the same task, but you aren't allowed to leave your armchair. You still have the measuring tape, and with a lot of bending and stretching you can make quite a good drawing of your chair. You can stretch the tape across the floor, and measure the distance to the walls, so you might manage a passable drawing of the room you are in. The room may have two doors, and through those you catch a glimpse of the next room. Your drawing of that room is based on a few facts, and some guesswork. You're left wishing for something that will let you see through the walls.

That's very much the situation astronomers were in when they tried to make a drawing of the Milky Way. There are no solid walls blocking our view, but in a lot of directions light gathering telescopes can't see very far. What's blocking our view? Tiny dark particles, that are the debris of dead stars. Astronomers name for this stuff is "dust". It's everywhere in the space between the stars, in some directions just a little, in other directions so much that all we see is blackness. That's why it's difficult to make a map of our house, the Milky Way.

That was the situation seventy years ago. Then the new science of radio astronomy came along, and suddenly we could see through the dust. Light waves are blocked by the tiny dust particles, but radio waves don't notice the dust, and travel right through. Suddenly, we could make a good plan of our home, the Milk Way. The Milky Way is home to about 100 billion stars. The Sun is a typical star, neither the smallest, nor the largest, just a middle-of-the-road star. From the outside, the Milky Way would look like a pancake, flat and round, with a bulge in the middle. From edge to edge, it's about 100 thousand light years across. Most of the stars that our eyes can pick out on a clear, dark night are within a few thousand light years of us, we're seeing less than one percent of the Milky Way.

Now come back to your armchair. Although you can't see through the walls of your house, you can see out the window. Similarly, in a lot of directions our telescopes can see things beyond our Milky Way home. We can see other similar star systems, some quite like our Milky Way. The nearest is two million light years away. We call those star systems "galaxies". The Milky Way is a galaxy, and the Universe holds countless other galaxies. Some are bigger, some are smaller. Our home, the Milky Way is just a middle-of-the-road galaxy, our Sun a middle-of-the-road star. We're very normal.

Interesting websites:

- www.universetoday.com/articles/astronomers-see-through-the-milky-ways-dust-to-track-where-radiation-is-coming-from-at-the-center-of-the-galaxy
- www.skao.int/en/resources/what-radio-astronomy
- 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.



KALEDENHUB

for knowing and responding to individual and family need in the community

If you live in the Kaleden area and have needs, please call the HUB. Our frozen meals (mostly soup) are available immediately. We can also provide grocery shopping - Please allow a few days advance notice.

HUB NUMBER: 250-460-3387

Highlights From Kaleden Elementary School

By Principal Jessa Arcuri

November began with student-led conferences, a cornerstone of our approach to empowering learners. These conferences gave students the chance to reflect on their progress, celebrate their strengths, and set personal goals for the remainder of the term. Parents and teachers were able to witness firsthand the confidence and ownership students are developing in their learning journeys.

A special thank you goes to Mrs. Eyre and Mrs. Mercer for organizing the Scholastic Book Fair. Their dedication not only brought excitement to the school halls, but also raised funds to purchase new books for our library. These additions will enrich our collection and ensure students continue to have access to diverse and engaging reading materials.

Mid-month, Kaleden staff and students joined schools across Canada in observing Remembrance Day. It was a time to pause, reflect, and honour those who have served and continue to serve for our country's freedom. Thank you to the grade 3/4 students who shared a heartfelt poem about peace and the grade 5/6 students who closed the ceremony with a candle lighting, symbolizing hope and remembrance. The presence of the Okanagan Falls Legion Veterans made the ceremony deeply personal and memorable, reminding us of the sacrifices made and the importance of gratitude.

Volleyball season wrapped up with the Kaleden team (grades 4-6) playing their final game against Trout Creek Elementary. From catching and throwing to serving, bumping, setting, and rallying, the team showed tremendous growth, teamwork, and school spirit. Thank you to Jessica Green and Michelle Making for helping Mrs. Arcuri coach this energetic and amazing group of kids.

Students also explored snowboarding through the *Little Rider's* program, practicing balance and learning about friction with indoor snowboards. Many are now excited to take their skills to the slopes!

The month concluded with a whole-school harvest lunch. Lindsay Tice, a Kaleden PAC member, prepared homemade pumpkin soup for everyone. This was the first time staff and students gathered to enjoy the Okanagan harvest together - a true celebration of community.



School Trustee Report For SD67

By Karen Botsford, School Trustee

As of November 20th, we continue to enjoy a mild and beautiful fall! December will surely bring us some winter weather. What we do know is it is always a busy month for families and schools. Embrace the activities!

Remembrance Day ~ This past month, I attended Remembrance Day assemblies at West Bench and Naramata Elementary Schools, and the Ceremony held on November 11 at the Cenotaph in Manitou Park. The School Act requires all schools to have Remembrance Day assemblies, ensuring we do not forget the courage and sacrifice of those who served and are serving our country. I was impressed with the student presentations and the students' engagement, while honouring the solemn nature of the assembly. A highlight for me was guest speaker Corporal Justin George, who addressed the West Bench students and answered questions about his military service.

Accolades for PACS ~ A year ago, I wrote about the great work Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) do to support schools. That work continues and I am impressed by the increased attendance at meetings. There is an influx of new parents who are contributing. I appreciate the enthusiasm and the many activities and fundraisers being planned and executed. Kaleden Elementary held a Halloween Dance in October and Naramata Elementary held a Harvest Soup night (ingredients provided by their school garden) on November 20 with area chefs competing for the coveted Golden Ladle. Both events raised significant funds, while providing a family-friendly evening.

New Initiative Career Education ~ The district has a very robust Career Education Program and has launched Career Connections, a new virtual series providing students with monthly opportunities to connect with local professionals from a variety of career fields. Each 30-minute lunch hour session features a short presentation and Q&A. This initiative has been well received.

New Child Care Facility ~ On November 3, the Board toured the newest childcare facility at Skaha Lake Elementary. What a beautiful space! The YMCA is expected to have operations underway this month. The next facility to open will be at Summerland Elementary in February. When it opens, all elementary schools will have daycare facilities. In addition, the district has leased space at Parkway to child-care provider Pitter Patter Learning Centre.

Superintendent's Report ~ I encourage you to read The Superintendent's Report on the district website. Uploaded after our board meetings each month, they contain updates related to the district strategic plan. In October, the report highlighted the following goals; Student Success, Child Care and Early Learning, Truth and Reconciliation, Futures and Career Development, and Relationships and Belonging.

This is a wonderful time of year when there are lots of festive activities in schools. Thank you to the staff for their dedication during this busy time and to parents/caregivers who provide support to our learners.

I wish you all the very best of the season!

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

Kaleden Elementary PAC Update

By Trena Fisher, PAC Chair

As our students gear up for the holiday season, the Kaleden PAC is excited to share what's happening at the school this December! We warmly invite families and the community to join us for our **Annual Christmas Concert on Tuesday, December 16th**. Doors open at 5:30 pm, and the show begins at 6:00 pm. It's always a wonderful evening filled with music, laughter, and holiday spirit.

We will also be hosting our **Annual PAC Bake Sale**. One of our biggest fundraisers of the year. If you're able, we gratefully welcome donations of baked goods dropped off at the school. Every contribution helps support activities, resources, and special experiences for our students throughout the year.

We're thrilled to celebrate this festive season together and wish everyone a safe, joyful, and very Merry Christmas!



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

Season's Greetings From Your Trusted Travel Agency

By Diane Chatfield

As twinkling lights illuminate our cities and festive cheer fills the air, we at Reliable Travel take a moment to pause, reflect, and celebrate the wonderful journeys we've shared with you this year.

From sun-soaked beaches to snow-dusted mountaintops, from bustling cities to tranquil hideaways, 2025 has been a year of unforgettable adventures - and we are deeply grateful to have been part of your travel stories. Each itinerary planned, every passport stamped, and every memory made has been a reminder of why we love what we do.

This holiday season, we extend our warmest wishes to you and your loved ones. May your Christmas be filled with joy, peace, and the spirit of discovery. Whether you're celebrating at home or exploring new horizons, we hope your days are merry and bright.

As we look ahead to a new year, we're excited to continue guiding you toward new destinations, new experiences, and new dreams. Thank you for trusting us to bring your travel visions to life.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
Here's to more adventures in 2026.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Nov 28th Advent Log Centerpiece Workshop \$60 pp
- Dec 4th Christmas Wreath Workshop \$75 pp
- Dec 18th Gingerbread Cookie Decorating \$40 pp (Kids free!)

All events include a glass of See Ya Later Wine, A delicious charcuterie spread, materials and instruction. Limited spaces available.

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Highlights From Okanagan Falls Elementary School

By Principal Katie Poole

As December arrives at Okanagan Falls Elementary, the halls are filled with excitement as students and staff come together to celebrate the holiday season and reflect on the year's accomplishments. From festive classroom activities to community projects, this month is filled with warmth, generosity, and joy.

The month kicks off with our district volleyball tournament. Go Falcons! Thank you Ms. Raines and Mrs. Petry for coaching! We will also have our giving week, Christmas Concert and our Annual Pancake Breakfast, with the jolly old man himself!

We would like to thank the Okanagan Falls Lion's Club, Belich's AG Foods, our PAC, and Rocky and Susi Bedard for all of their help with our Christmas festivities and to the Falls Market for their donation of a new sound system to make our Christmas Concert and future arts events such a great success! We would also like to thank the Okanagan Falls Legion's Colour Guard for attending our Remembrance Day assembly in November.

We wish you all a very memorable holiday filled with warmth, love and restful moments.



Okanagan Falls PAC Update

By Kari Hill, PAC Chair

A huge thank you to The DIG (Drop In Gym) for providing this month's PAC snacks! Our meetings are a little tastier, thanks to you.

We're thrilled to share that our Winter/Christmas Market was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who came out, shopped local, and helped make the day such a festive community highlight.

A very special thank you to all the families and businesses who donated toward our raffle baskets. You know who you are - and you're incredibly special to us!

Come see us at the Okanagan Falls Legion! Our next **PAC Meat Draw is on Saturday, December 6th at 3 pm**. Join the fun and maybe head home with dinner!

Movie Night with RDOS is on Friday, December 12th! We're showing "Elf" - a favourite for kids (and secretly, adults too!). Doors open at 6:30 pm for games and activities. This is a family-friendly community event, so bring the kiddos, bring the joy, and enjoy popcorn by donation!

Keep an eye out for PAC volunteers at various local Christmas events. We'll be **selling 50/50 tickets** leading up to the **draw on the evening of December 18th**, right after the School Christmas Concert. Tickets can also be purchased at the Elementary School front office during school hours.

Wishing everyone a warm, bright, and joyful December in Okanagan Falls!



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School Trustee Report For SD53

By Sholeh Pickell, School Trustee

Hard to believe we are nearing the halfway mark of the school year. I am looking forward to my eldest visiting from university on his winter break.

In this article, are a few initiatives around our district that I haven't previously highlighted. The student-led Indigenous Education Council held its first meeting of the school year on October 2nd at the School Board Annex in Oliver. Following that initial meeting, the Okanagan Similkameen District proudly hosted the first-ever Thompson Okanagan Indigenous Education Council Conference on November 19th at Spirit Ridge in Osoyoos. The landmark event brought together Indigenous Education Council voting members from across the region for a day of collaborative learning, knowledge sharing, and capacity building. The conference was designed to strengthen advocacy for Indigenous learners by fostering meaningful dialogue and regional partnerships rooted in cultural understanding and educational equity.

Earlier in November, our district hosted literacy expert Adrienne Gear for 2 days of professional development. The sessions were attended by K-9 teachers, and the focus was on non-fiction reading strategies. The topics for each day were intentionally structured to support teachers who are using the district's new Non-Fiction Reading Assessment. The district is also focusing on providing opportunities for elementary and secondary teachers to work together to support the academic transition of students from grade 7 to grade 8. Over 30 teachers participated, and as always, Adrienne's sessions were very well received.

Also in the fall, our district enhanced support for Ministry-identified Children and Youth in Care through the implementation of individualized Student Monitoring Plans. These plans now serve as a foundation for personalized meetings involving each student's school support team and the Director of Student Support Services. The support team works to identify and address each student's academic and social-emotional needs, ensuring ongoing support and regular review. The shared goal of the support team is to foster the conditions for each student to achieve their greatest potential for success. This is a population of students that has been underserved due to the need and rights of confidentiality; however, our district has been working diligently to overcome this barrier and support these students who have historically fallen through the cracks.

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

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.

Need More Information? ~ This is a peer led support group for addiction recovery. Our starting point is abstinence. We feel that abstinence, based on what is known, provides the BEST odds of long term success. Our aim is to run a meeting that is inclusive and respectful for everyone. Join us to find out if abstinence is for you. For more information, please contact Van Hill at 250.300.5222.

FAMILY SHOWTIME
A Zaniac Christmas With Alex Zerbe
Tickets only \$10
Get ready to laugh, gasp, and feel the holiday cheer!
Sat Dec 6 @ 2:00

COMFORT & JOY
A Ken Lavigne Christmas
Tired of Christmas concerts that feel like stale fruitcake?
Come unwrap an evening with Ken Lavigne!
Sat Dec 6 @ 7:30

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VENABLESTHEATRE.CA

Beginner & Experienced Dance Lessons

By Brian Udal, DVIDA Master Instructor

Survive & Thrive call to dance. Through my experience of 21 years of teaching, students just want to have fun and be comfortable on the dance floor with as few lessons as possible. They want to be on the dance floor arm in arm and enjoying the experience of connection while moving to the music. Mission accomplished. Keep reading.

I guarantee that after 7 lessons you and your partner will be dancing to the MUSIC of Rumba, Cha Cha, Foxtrot and Slow Waltz. You will learn approximately 8 solid patterns that are "One Size Fits All" that are applicable to those dance styles. You will learn some basic swing as well. You will learn the necessary lead and follow skills, listening skills, foot work, connection and so much more.

Experienced dancers can join the next level for more fun patterns to add to your arsenal of cool moves. We will study more Latin, Swing and Ballroom.

Classes:

Tuesdays ~ February 3 - March 17 for Next Level (Bronze 2)

Thursdays ~ February 5 - March 19 for Beginner (Bronze 1)

Fee is \$175 per couple. 1 hour classes start at 7 pm. Christmas Gift Certificates are now available. Lessons are in Summerland. Call today and secure your place on the dance floor.

Call Brian Udal, DVIDA Master Instructor, at **604.220.6256** (cell) or email brians.dance.class@gmail.com. www.briansdanceclass.ca

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Kaleden Museum & Archives

By Mike Gane

This current series of articles covers the history of Kaleden's Pioneer Park. Below is Part 3 of this series.



The community saying goodbye to the Packinghouse.

There was little time for rejoicing, however, as two developments threatened to scuttle the efforts. The major problem surfaced when tenders for demolition were received. It had been taken for granted that the salvaged materials would be valuable enough to cover the costs of demolishing the building and cleaning up the site. Indeed, a couple of the tenders met those criteria, but they were from small companies who could not provide a performance bond. As a contrast, the highest bid by an established company demanded a payment of \$76,850 in addition to all the salvaged material. This was finally resolved by direct negotiation with Triple N Construction, a Penticton firm, pointing out the amazing quality of the lumber available in the 1930s, with 4 by 12 beams spanning as much as 30 feet, being completely knot free. It ended costing the committee \$3,000 in addition to salvaged material, but that was manageable.

The second problem involved taxation. As a park, it was not subject to taxation, and it had been purchased in December of 1985. However, because of provincial regulations and what was termed the "quashing period", the sale was not finalized until the spring of 1986, which gave the taxation department time to submit a bill for nearly \$16,000. This problem was finally overcome with the help of MLAs Ivan Messmer and Jim Hewitt, but not until May 7, 1987.



Left Above L-R: Clem Battey - longest serving Manager, Bill King - longest serving President. and Jud Findlay - longest serving Employee. Right Above: In 1986, as demolition began, these three "Oldtimers" were on hand to give the Packinghouse an affectionate handoff.

Tune in next month for Part 4 of the Kaleden Pioneer Park series.

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

Unique Nests On View On KVR

By Wendy Stewart, South Okanagan Naturalists' Club

A group of bright orange and black birds fly from their winter homes in Mexico and Southern California each spring to a special place along Skaha Lake. On the Kettle Valley Railway (KVR) walking and biking route below Kaleden, Bullock's Orioles have found a spot to build their intricate, hanging nests and hatch a family. There is a stretch of KVR, just south of Sickle Point, where at least 12 Oriole nests are currently visible in trees beside Skaha Lake. These hanging nests look like a sock dangling from a branch. The birds build the nests using fibres like grass and twine to weave and sew the nest together and firmly attach it to branches in a leafy tree. The nest is lined with soft materials like feathers, animal wool and cotton from cottonwood trees to create a pouch with a narrow opening. It's often hard to even see an Oriole nest, because they are so well hidden in leafy trees to protect them from predators. When the leaves are gone in fall and winter, the nests are revealed, hanging expertly from branches for many years. The birds do not reuse the nests, but recycle materials from previous nests to create new ones in the spring.



A recent Bullock's Oriole nest can now be seen along the KVR near Sickle Point.

The nests are just one of the things you can see along this section of the KVR at this time of year. You access the route through a pass-through gate at the north end of Alder Avenue in lower Kaleden. This is a wonderful walk on packed earth that takes you past tall grasses, majestic pine trees, willow bushes and many other plants. If you walk quietly and stop occasionally, you'll hear and see beautiful birds in those trees and bushes, like gorgeous Western Bluebirds. Look for these small blue birds with a reddish chest posing on a fence or on top of a bush. There have been Trumpeter Swans on Skaha Lake near Sickle Point recently. There are usually Common Loons swimming on the lake as well. Black-capped Chickadees are fun to hear and see - their call sometimes sounds like 'cheeseburger'. There are Nuthatch in the pine trees. Listen and you can sometimes hear these busy little birds tapping the trees. They're actually digging in the bark for small insects or hanging upside down on a branch, working on a cone.

Come next spring, members of the South Okanagan Naturalists' Club will be back to check the Bullock's Oriole nests. If you'd like to learn more about walks to see and hear birds in the area, visit the club's website at southokanaganature.com.



Members of the South Okanagan Naturalists' Club on the lookout for swans and loons on Skaha Lake recently.

Kaleden Seniors Committee Update

By Karla Avendaño, KSC Coordinator

Last month, we hosted a successful 6th Annual Progressive Kaleden Winter Market. The excitement was in the air, and the festive spirit was evident at every location around Kaleden. Vendors poured their hearts and passion into displaying their products with creativity and hard work, bringing that community spirit that makes the Kaleden Winter Market so special. A heartfelt thank you to all of our shoppers for exploring all the stops, supporting local makers, and adding so much joy to the atmosphere. We are grateful for each one of you.



Save the date: December 5th for our Annual Wreath Making at Linden Gardens from 5-7 pm. Come and join us for an evening of festivities, community and fun. Remember to bring clippers, wire, a ring for the wreath, and decorations of your choice. Please bring an apple to share. Drinks for sale (cash only). Donations for Kaleden Cares will be accepted at the door.

Next month: Bingo! More information coming soon. To receive our newsletter, email us at kaledenseniors@gmail.com.

The Kaleden Seniors Committee wishes you a peaceful Christmas and happy holidays.



Branch 227
Okanagan Falls

The Royal Canadian Legion Branch #227

By Bev Van Uden

Legions In The Community ~ As a cornerstone of the community across the country, we provide the central service and support to veterans, youth and those in need.

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

Shuffleboard ~ Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2 pm. Check it out!

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.

General Meeting ~ Tuesday, December 16 at 7 pm. Always the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Pancake Breakfast with Santa ~ Sunday, December 21 from 8-10 am. Adults \$10, Kids \$5 and under 3 years is free!

New York New Years Eve Tickets On Sale ~ \$40 ticket includes buffet. Cocktails from 4-5 pm and Buffet Dinner from 5-6 pm. Live music by Feather River Band starting at 6 pm.

Membership ~ Time to renew your membership. 2026 is \$55. Members cards or stickers are at the Branch. Please ask the bartender.

Volunteers ~ Would you like to volunteer? Drop by the Legion and let us know. Its a great way to give back to your community and the Legion, plus meet new friends.

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!



Okanagan Falls Lions Update

By Bob Wilson, Past President

Another month has passed by and here we are heading for Christmas once again, then off to a New Year. We can only hope that things will improve around this old world of ours before we lose that which we've gained over the centuries. Isn't it curious that most of our advances in medicine and science are due to wartime research projects? Is that what we are motivated by? There are many references to light in history, not the light we see, but the enlightenment that we need to advance as a species instead of trying to wipe ourselves out.

Well, enough of my rambling on. It's just that one gets to thinking and ...

The Lions Club met for our last meeting of this year on November 10. We had a presentation by Lion Colleen regarding the December Bird Count and the involvement of students in our community to accompany birders to get the numbers and enjoy a get-together afterwards - a community activity to encourage interest in nature. More to follow on the results next time.

Lion Kyle talked and gave out samples of Christmas goodies that the club could use as a Christmas project - let's do it!

The School Breakfast Program carries on 3 times a week as usual and they had a fun time on Halloween. Currently, there are 30+ children having breakfast with us on those mornings. Thanks to all the people who get up early and continue this worthwhile activity.

We have 500 pairs of eyeglasses ready to ship and we will be gathering more before Christmas to add to the count. Thanks to all who drop off their no longer needed eyewear and to the optical centres for saving them for us.

Oh yes, a big thanks to Myleen at Skaha Matters for her ongoing community service and dedication.

Everyone have a Great Holiday Season! See you in the New Year! Blood, it's in you to give! The next Blood Donor Clinics will be held December 15, 16 & 17 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/okanaganfallsionsclub.

OK Falls Heritage & Museum Society

By Connie White, Curator/Board Secretary

Is it really December already? We've been busy at Heritage Place with our "Photos with Santa" event held on November 29th. We hope you were able to visit us and create some lasting memories.

We are now in the process of gearing up for our next season at the Museum. If you have any historical photos, items or stories related to Okanagan Falls, please contact our Curator at okfallscurator@gmail.com. We would like to be able to incorporate them into an exhibit or story. How can you help our Society you ask?

1. Grounds maintenance and weeding is a big job, so if anyone would like to volunteer their time, please get a hold of us via our website or through the Thrift Shop.
2. Buy a brick paver! Put your name or quote on it or buy one for someone as a Christmas gift - what a legacy! More details at the Thrift Shop or by contacting us.
3. Make a tax deductible cash donation.

We have loads of exciting ideas with regard to the progression of the Museum, but we cannot make them a reality if funds don't allow. Stop by the Thrift Shop and you will see we have some Christmas decor available for purchase. We also have gently used clothing, books and puzzles. The shop will close December 21st to January 14th for Christmas Break, so try to come see us before then.

We wish you all a Happy Holiday Season and thank this great community for their continued support.

CatMatch



Meet Richard

AlleyCATS tries to find a match for every cat in our care. Even the ones with issues. We are currently looking for a home for Richard, a beautiful tabby and white neutered male of 8 years of age. Richard has some gastrointestinal issues and is on medicine that he will probably have to take for the rest of his life. He is very friendly, playful and a talker! If you would like to learn more about Richard, please email alleycatsalliance@gmail.com and leave your phone number, so we can contact you.



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**Wishing Everyone a Merry Christmas
and a Safe & Happy New Year!**

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From Linda at our New Location

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Okanagan Falls Seniors Activity Society

By Donna Taylor

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

Thank you vendors and public for a successful Christmas Craft Sale. Congratulations to Helen and Leslie on winning the baskets.

Our **Christmas Dinner** will be held on **Saturday, December 13th**. Tickets are on sale! \$10 for members and \$15 for non members. Music Bingo to follow after dinner. There are lots of door prizes!

Our **Christmas Bingos** will be held on **Tuesday, December 16th** and **Saturday, December 20th**. There are lots of chocolates to win!

Our 2026 Memberships are now available - still only \$25 each!

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

Please Note: There will be **NO activities** from **December 21-27**.

Activities in December 2025:

Canasta ~ Mondays at 10 am - Not on Holidays!

Evening Pool ~ Mondays & Wednesdays at 6 pm
~ Tuesdays at 5:30 pm

Tuesday Bingo ~ Tuesdays - December 2, 9 & 16 at 1 pm

Morning Crafts & Coffee ~ Wednesdays at 10 am

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, December 1 at 1 pm

Pancake Breakfast ~ Saturday, December 6 from 8-10 am

Christmas Dinner ~ Saturday, December 13 at 5:30 pm

Country Music Jamboree ~ Sundays December 14 & 28 at 1 pm

Drop-in Bingo ~ Saturday, December 20 at 1 pm

Carpet Bowling ~ On hold for now - looking for players

Scrabble ~ 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.



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Helping Hand Update

By Patty Neuner

Our Christmas Hamper Campaign is going strong, and we are so thankful for the support of this wonderful community. With your donation, no matter what size, we can make it possible to provide Christmas food hampers to those individuals within Okanagan Falls experiencing food insecurity, and to ensure the children in our community have a gift this Christmas.

Donations can be made by:

- Mailing a cheque to: Okanagan Falls Helping Hand, P.O. Box 640, Okanagan Falls, BC V0H 1R0
- Send e-transfers to helpinghandsokfalls@gmail.com. Please provide your address in the comment/message section.
- Look for our Helping Hand donation tins and pink donation bins at locations around town for non-perishable donations.
- Attend the "Fill the Van for the Helping Hand" at Belich's AG Foods on **Saturday, December 6th from 10 am to 2 pm**.

For your convenience, Belich's AG Foods have created 'grab and go' donation bags containing our most needed items. We also have the donation option to "Tap" using your Visa or debit card.

We are always looking for volunteers to join in the fun. If you are interested in volunteering or assisting with our Christmas Hamper campaign, please contact us at **778-559-2412**. Your call will be returned. Starting in January, we regularly meet at 4:30 pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month at Okanagan Falls Community Church.

Please don't forget! The hamper registration form attached below must be received by **Saturday, December 6th** and all hampers will be picked up in person on **Wednesday, December 17th**.

Merry Christmas and thank you very much for your ongoing support. It is greatly appreciated!

2025 Okanagan Falls Helping Hand

Christmas Hamper Registration Form

For Residents of Okanagan Falls Only

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Street Address: _____

of Adults: _____ # Kids under 18: _____

Boys Ages: _____ Boys Sizes: _____

Girls Ages: _____ Girls Sizes: _____

**Registration Deadline:
Saturday, December 6, 2025**

Forms can be dropped off at:

- Okanagan Falls Pharmasave
- Belich's AG Foods
- Emailed to helpinghandsokfalls@gmail.com

**Hamper pick up is Wednesday, December 17 from 1-4 pm
at Okanagan Falls Community Church.**

Identification showing Okanagan Falls residence required for pick-up.



Trail Of The Okanagans

By James Pepper and Mary Trainer

Creating a cycling and walking trail through sylvx Nation Territory requires more than planning and funding. It requires respect for the land, the tmixw, and the ancestors who have travelled these routes for thousands of years. This is not simply a matter of recreation or convenience, but one of responsibility and relationship. Any trail development through this area must begin with understanding that these lands hold deep cultural, spiritual, and environmental significance to the sylvx people.

The idea of linking communities along a 125 kilometre trail from the United States border to the Bennett Bridge in Kelowna has generated much interest across the region. Many groups have expressed support for what is called the Trail of the Okanagans. From the snpink'tn perspective, however, any such initiative must be guided by proper respect for Indigenous jurisdiction and values, and must not come at the expense of the health and integrity of the land.

The section from Summerland to Penticton, an 8.8 kilometre stretch along the former Kettle Valley Railway corridor is owned by the snpink'tn Indian Band as a fee simple parcel, it is private land and remains closed to the general public. Despite the many No Trespassing signs, thousands of cyclists and hikers continue to enter each year, potentially without realizing they are crossing into Indigenous lands. This unauthorized use causes erosion, sinkholes, and damage to old trestle structures, and off road vehicle activity and natural rockfalls make the area unsafe. Repairing and upgrading this section would require a large capital expense and, more importantly, a long term commitment to maintenance, compliance, and enforcement. Without these, any development would only lead to further harm to the land and to the safety of those who travel it.

The 4.6 kilometre stretch from Wright's Beach to Banbury Green along the west side of Skaha Lake, adjacent to reserve lands, faces similar challenges. It is also wholly owned by the snpink'tn Indian Band and rockfall hazards, illegal camping, and dumping continue to affect both the safety and the spirit of this place. For snpink'tn, these impacts are not just physical but cultural, as they reflect an ongoing lack of respect for the land and for the people who continue to care for it.

Another portion of interest lies between Wright's Beach and the Channel Parkway, next to the southern boundary of the airport. This 0.85 kilometre section would require safety improvements before any public access could be considered. Options could include moving Transport Canada's fence inward or creating a boardwalk.

The snpink'tn Indian Band has not yet decided what will be done with this portion of the old railbed. There are several reasons for this. Ongoing illegal activities such as dumping and trespassing have caused damage to the area, and repairs are needed to make the trail safe for any future use. At present, the resources and funding required to support a long term maintenance plan are not in place. The No Trespassing signs are not a reflection of unwillingness, but of responsibility. snpink'tn must ensure the safety of both the land and the people who use it. Without the necessary repairs and a sustainable plan for maintenance, it would not be prudent to open the area to public access.

snpink'tn hopes to build respectful and lasting relationships with government partners, trail organizations, and local communities to identify a shared path forward. The goal is to develop an approach that balances public interest with the protection of culturally significant lands, environmental care, and public safety. For this to happen, long term collaboration and shared responsibility are

essential. The band does not receive tax dollars, and it cannot be expected to manage the costs of a regional trail system on its own. Through partnership and shared investment, there is an opportunity to create a process that is both fair and sustainable, one that ensures this trail, if developed, reflects mutual respect and collective care for the land.

As noted by James Pepper, Director of the sɔxw'tɔxtɔm Department, there is an urgent need to build this collective momentum grounded in respect and understanding. Bringing together representatives from the BC Ministry of Transportation and Transit, the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen, the City of Penticton, the District of Summerland, tourism associations, the Trans Canada Trail Network, political leaders, and the band itself could create a path toward genuine collaboration.

If approached in the right spirit, this work could result in a trail that follows an ancient route used for over 6,000 years, one that reconnects First Nations and other South Okanagan communities in a good way and contributes to reconciliation through shared stewardship of the land.

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LOCAL CHURCH DIRECTORY

Kaleden Community Church

Sunday Worship at 10 am ~ Join us either in-person or on-line for Special Advent Contemplative Services during December.

Kaleden Cares ~ December 17 is the final day to drop off any non-perishable food items to the church, school or library. If you know of a local family needing help with food this Christmas, contact KCC.

Christmas Eve Service ~ Sunday, December 24 at 6:30 pm
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 Church at 11 am
Nov 30, Dec 7, 14 & 21 - Advent Services with Pastor Jon Manlove
December 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 6:30 pm
December 28 - Communion Sunday at 11 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: Dec 7 Advent 2 - Rev. Dr. Donald Schmidt; Dec 14 Advent 3 - Rev. Dr. Donald Schmidt; Dec 21 Advent 4 - Rev. Paul James; Dec 24 Christmas Eve Service at 4:30 pm - Rev. Laura Turnbull; and No service on Dec 28. Coffee fellowship following the services. More info at okfallsunited.ca.
1108 Willow St, Okanagan Falls | 250-497-1171 or 250-460-2560

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Service

Sunday Mass ~ All services held in St. Barbara's Church.
December 7, 21 and 28 - Mass will be at 11 am
December 13, 24 and 31 - Mass will be at 2:30 pm
1039 Willow St | Father Gabriel Chinnaperiannan | 250-494-3110

St. Barbara's Anglican Church

Services In December ~ Our service schedule has changed as we celebrate Advent & Christmas: Dec 7 & 21 - Morning Prayer Service at 9:30 am; Dec 14 - Lessons & Carols at 10:30 am; Christmas Eve Service on Dec 24 - Holy Eucharist with Rev. Rick Paulin at 4 pm; and Dec 28 - Holy Eucharist with Rev. Rick Paulin at 9:30 am. 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 Legion for a great Remembrance Day Ceremony. A large group of local residents gathered and placed numerous wreaths at the Cenotaph. A fly-past of two planes in formation really added to the event. Thank you for the wonderful lunch that followed afterward. ~ *From John P. of Okanagan Falls*

Fish Heads to Christmas retail before Halloween and Christmas decorations before Remembrance Day. ~ *From Bob S. of Kaleden*



South Okanagan Similkameen Community Connections Volunteer Centre Update

By Laura Turnbull, Board Chairperson

The season of wonder and merriment is upon us. The streets are decked out with beautiful decorations, and the stores are filled with every type of item to buy that one could imagine. In noticeable absence, however, are angels, snowflakes, and scenes of the first Christmas of long ago. Where are the signs of peace, joy, and love that many of us associate with Christmases of the past? Surely, we carry them around in our hearts and live them out in our actions.

That has me thinking about the many volunteer activities available for the Christmas season and into the New Year. There is gift wrapping at the Cherry Lane mall in Penticton, not to mention that is something you might offer to do for a friend or neighbour who has difficulty maneuvering paper, ribbon, and scissors. Helping the Salvation Army with their Christmas appeal is a time-honoured Christmas volunteer tradition. Writing cards and letters for those who find that task difficult is something that might enable Christmas to be a little merrier for someone in a Care Facility. Donating money and gifts to SOWINS is a great feel-good project you and your family might undertake. Don't forget our furry friends! Give the gift of time by walking a dog at the SPCA this joy-filled season. Many of our local churches have special sponsorships of a family or two in need. Why not see if you can help?

Volunteering is a wonderful Christmas gift you can give yourself and an organization or individual. It helps to break loneliness. One feels a sense of accomplishment. The delight in helping others can boost your self esteem. Sometimes we learn new skills and even can teach them to others. The friends you make are second to none!

This holiday season, make volunteering part of your festive tradition. Call the Volunteer Centre at 1-888-576-5661 and Subrina Monteith, our Executive Director, would be pleased to help you. Look us up on our webpage at www.volunteercentre.info or send an email to info@volunteercentre.info. You'll be glad that you decided to volunteer in 2025.

Have a wonderful holiday season and Merry Christmas. I look forward to sharing with you in 2026!



Mike Molloy of Okanagan Falls

August 11, 1939 - October 15, 2025

In the caress of the cosmic realm.
In the arms of the angels.

Credible Cremation Services

Sensible Prices for Practical People - At need / Pre need.

Call Lesley, our own Senior, Licensed Director



Basic Cremation ... No Hidden Costs

\$1240.00 + taxes (Penticton area)

\$1440.00 + taxes (Kelowna area)

250.493.3912 (24 hrs)

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

Lesley@crediblecremation.ca

BC Lic# 49382 CONSUMER PROTECTION BC

If Basic Cremation Is Your Choice

By Lesley H. Luff, Okanagan Falls & Osoyoos

For those readers who may have missed the November publication, changes are now in progress: Lesley will be stepping back from full time duties; Robin Earle will be the At-Need Director; and Lesley will be the Pre-Need Director.

Just to clarify, as of November 1, 2025, when calling Credible Cremation Services, you may be directed to the Answering Service. For those who require assistance with the death of a family member or close friend, please be specific in your needs. If it is an at-need situation, you will be forwarded to Robin who will assist you. If you are inquiring about making your pre-arrangements, please ask to be directed to Lesley. And again, please be specific in your requirements. Robin will be looking after at-death situations. Lesley will be looking after pre-arrangements.

My sincere thanks to everyone who supported Credible Cremation Services over the years. Robin and I both look forward to offering families the same dedicated service in the future.

Polite reminder to our neighbours who own and operate fruit stands. Kindly remember to take down your flags before you close for the season. Winter is coming and with it comes some very strong winds that can tear a flag to shreds in no time. It is quite disturbing to see dishevelled flags still flying on a property once the business has closed for the season. Thank you.

Credible Cremation Services

110-1950 Barnes Street, Penticton V2A 4C3

(By appointment please)

250-493-3912 or Lesley@crediblecremation.ca

"A Miracle On 34th Street"

By Cheryl Gill

Summerland Singers and Players is happy to announce its next show! **A Miracle on 34th Street** will be held at the Summerland Alliance Church. Show dates and times are as follows: **December 5 & 12 at 7 pm**, and **December 6, 7, 13 & 14 at 2 pm**.

It's Christmas 1947 and you're part of an invited audience at a live radio show version of Miracle on 34th Street. This well-known Christmas story begins at Macy's department store, where a kindly old gentleman named Kris Kringle is hired to play Santa Claus. But Kris is no ordinary Santa, he claims to be the real St. Nicholas! As doubts and disbelief swirl around him, Kris's gentle spirit touches the lives of a skeptical young girl, Susan, and her pragmatic mother, Doris. When Kris's claim is challenged in court, it becomes a battle not just for truth, but for the very magic of Christmas itself. Go back in time with us and follow this enchanting journey of faith, hope, and the true meaning of the holiday spirit - a Miracle on 34th Street complete with live music and a live foley artist performing the sound effects. A treat for the whole family!

Fortickets, please visit: ticketowl.io/summerlandsingersandplayers. Tickets are also available in person at Maple Roch in Summerland, as well as in person at the door. For more information, please visit summerlandtheatre.ca or email ssptheatre@gmail.com.



Full Service Family-Run Grocery Store in Okanagan Falls

Winter Hours: 8 am - 7 pm Daily

www.belichsagfoods.ca

NEW Seniors Frozen Meal Program Now Available!



Happy Holidays from the whole Belich AG Family!



Come and join us as we support the ...



"Fill the Van for the Helping Hand"

Saturday, December 6 ~ 10 am - 2 pm

Thank you to all the community partners for your support!

Purchase a non-perishable donation bag in store in either \$10, \$15 or \$20 denominations.

Drop off your Christmas Hamper registration forms!

Photos with Santa, Face Painting, Okanagan Falls Lions Club selling Holiday Ice Cream, Okanagan Falls "Friends of the Library" selling Books & Baking, Okanagan Falls Fire Department with their Fire Truck & RDOS Fire Pits, Okanagan Falls Elementary PAC selling 50/50 Tickets, Okanagan Falls Elementary School children singing Christmas Carols from 10:30-11:00 am.

Proud Winner of the Penticton Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards
2024 Service Excellence
2025 Community Builder Excellence

Mike, Kyle, and the Belich's AG Team are proud to be back-to-back Business Excellence Award Winners.

"We thank the community of Okanagan Falls for their great support! This Party is Just Getting Started!"

Having a party? We have great party platters!



Our Full Service Butcher Shop is ready for all your Christmas requests!

5350 9th Avenue, Okanagan Falls

250-497-5630

Follow us on Facebook at "Belich's AG Foods Okanagan Falls"

