



APEX MATTERS

"Keeping You in the S'know"

Volume 22 : Issue 6

Your **FREE**
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Newsletter!

February 2026



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Olympic Inspiration

By Myleen Mallach, Owner/Publisher of Apex Matters

Every four years, the Winter Olympics arrive like a bright flare in the dark cold, reminding me how much determination can glow against difficult conditions. Watching athletes train for a single run or jump pushes me to rethink my own limits. Their routines are built on quiet mornings, repeated failure, and a belief that small improvements matter. I find that mindset spills into my daily life: I set clearer goals, accept slow progress, and show up even when motivation feels thin. Nationally, the Olympics offer a shared story of effort and pride. We celebrate medalists, but we also rally around perseverance, sportsmanship, and respect for rivals. For a few weeks, differences soften as flags rise and anthems play, creating a sense of collective momentum. Young people see new possibilities; communities invest in sport, health, and inclusion. The Olympics remind a nation that excellence is rarely accidental - it is cultivated together. In icy arenas and snowy courses, we rediscover a simple truth: when individuals strive with discipline and hope, a country can feel stronger, more unified, and ready to endure. Go Canada Go!

"Keeping You in the S'know" since 2002!

Published by Myleen Mallach of Okanagan Matters Publications
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Above is a photo of a refinished log home at Mt. Baldy, which hired the services of Hotham Eco Blasting. Your log home could look this great too! Another project recently completed by Hotham Eco Blasting is the Billy Goat Hut at the top of the Quad at Apex. Call Joel at 250-328-9114 or email hothamecoblasting@gmail.com.



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Apex Mountain Resort

February/March Special Events:

January 7 - March 11 ~ Wednesdays are Ladies Day - The day includes a lift ticket, 2 hour lesson and lunch in the Gunbarrel paired with a wine tasting from a local Okanagan Winery. Looking forward to having Wesbert, Meyer/Mayhem, Gold Hill Winery, Hugging Tree Winery and Corcellettes show off their vintages. More info at Apex Snow School.

February 13-16 ~ Family Day Long Weekend - Bring your family up to Apex to make those winter memories.

Lift Operations for Family Day Long Weekend:

- Friday, February 13 - Quad, Triple & Magic Carpet open 9am - 3:30pm, and T-bar, Magic Carpet & Tube Park open 4-9pm.
- Saturday, February 14 and Sunday, February 15 - Quad, Triple, T-bar & Magic Carpet open 9am - 3:30pm, Tube Park open 10am - 3:30pm, plus T-Bar, Tube Park & Magic Carpet open 4-9pm.
- Monday, February 16 - Quad, Triple, T-bar, Tube Park & Magic Carpet open 9am - 3:30pm.

February 14-15 ~ Okanagan Shred Sessions - Hosted by the Apex Freestyle Club. Saturday is Mandatory Training, Single Moguls Competition, and Slopestyle Competition: U8, U10, U12, U14, and U16; and Sunday is Big Mountain Competition: U12 (includes athletes aged 8-11) and U16 (includes athletes aged 12-15). Slopestyle on Okanagan Park.

February 15 - Disco Night at the Skating Loop (WEATHER PERMITTING!) - Hosted by the Apex Community Association at the Skating Loop. Wear your best disco outfit! Skate rentals available from Apex Mountain Resort. Skating lessons with Holly. Enjoy music, lights, prizes, and a bonfire with S'mores and Hot Chocolate (bring your own mug) by donation.

February 21-22 ~ BC Cup FIS Slalom Race - Hosted by the Apex Ski Club and held on Adriens Alley.

March 7 ~ Onesie Day - Dress up in your comfy couch onesie or your slopeside onesie and come out to play.

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Day Lift Operations ~ Daily 9am - 3:30pm thru April 6, 2026.

Night Lift Operations ~ Friday & Saturday 4-9pm.

Tim Horton's Tube Park ~ Friday 4-9pm, Saturday 10am-9pm, and Sunday 10am - 3pm.

Skating Loop & Skating Pond ~ Open daily at 10am. Loop night lit until 10pm. Open 7 days a week, weather pending.

The General Store ~ Open Monday-Thursday 8:30am - 5pm. Friday & Saturday 8:30am - 7pm.

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February Update From Nickel Plate

By Meghan Keir, Nickel Plate Nordic Centre Manager

February often feels like the deepest stretch of winter - the days are still short, the cold lingers, and motivation can dip. At Nickel Plate Nordic, we see this time of year a little differently. February is when community, movement, and time outdoors matter most.

Whether it's a quiet ski through the trees, laughter during a group meet-up, or warming up in the lodge after a loop, getting outside and moving our bodies helps carry us through the final stretch of winter. Nordic skiing isn't just about fitness - it's about connection, rhythm, and finding joy in simple movement.

Cross-Country Skiing Is for Everyone ~ At Nickel Plate, we truly believe cross-country skiing is for everyone. You don't need experience, fancy gear, or a ski group to belong here. If you've ever felt intimidated heading out on the trails alone or unsure where to start, you're not alone and you're exactly who we want to welcome.

That's why we continue to offer Beginner Social Skis. Relaxed, non-instructional meet-ups designed to help members and guests feel comfortable on the trails. These skis are all about skiing together, learning the trail system, meeting people, and having fun in a low-pressure, supportive environment. No drills, no expectations, just friendly faces, easy trails, and shared winter stoke.

Programs To Build Confidence & Skills ~ As we move through February, we're also excited to offer new opportunities for skiers looking to grow their skills or try something new.

Our next **Masters Biathlon** series is a great option for adults interested in combining Nordic skiing with marksmanship in a supportive, approachable setting. Whether you're brand new to biathlon or returning to the sport, this program focuses on skill development, confidence, and fun. This program starts February 14th and runs for three sessions.

We're also launching our next **Learn to Loppet** series, perfect for skiers who have some experience and are curious about participating in a Loppet or ski event, but aren't sure how to prepare. This program breaks things down in a welcoming way, helping skiers build endurance, pacing, and confidence while learning what to expect on event day.

Both programs are designed to meet skiers where they're at and encourage progress without pressure.

Nature, Movement and The Mid-Winter Stretch ~ There's something powerful about continuing to move through winter rather than waiting it out. Time spent outdoors, especially in community, can lift moods, quiet busy minds, and remind us that winter still has so much to offer.

As we head toward longer days, we invite you to keep showing up: for a quick loop, a social ski, a lesson, or a lantern-lit glide through the forest. However you choose to enjoy the trails, know that you're part of a community that's glad you're here.



In this 3 week course, there will be instruction on technique, training, mental skills, nutrition, waxing & race day strategy. You will also receive additional "framework" for personal training in-between sessions.



Participants must be comfortable skiing. Intermediate skiers & up.
• February 15, 22 & March 1
• 10 AM - 12 PM
• Only 10 spots available.
Book now!



What's Happening At The Edge?

By Ash Dunsford

Life is good at the Edge! The Edge Team has been busy creating our weekly features. The delicious and popular Raspberry Mocha is back and you must try it. Speaking of raspberries, have you tried our Gratify treats yet?! The Raspberry Neapolitan Bar is the best seller! Gluten free, dairy free, and vegan - Gratify's snacks will not disappoint!

Every week we feature "Thai Salad Tuesdays", the very popular Hot Thai Chicken Salad often sells out, so be sure to come for lunch early. The Edge also bakes a huge fresh Homemade Lasagna every Friday morning. Monster slabs of Lasagna with garlic toast served all day. Get it for lunch or take it home for dinner.

Have you heard the good news? The Edge Bistro offers 11 different "TAKE AND BAKE" Pizzas?! Gluten free crusts and vegan cheese options are always available. Simply order on line at the-edge-bistro.square.site or in person at the Edge. Pick up is after 3 pm daily.

The "Where in the World is Your Edge Toque" Contest is back for its third year! With close to 1000 Edge Toques out there in the wild, we've had so many good entries already this year. We want to see where your Edge Toque has ended up! We've chosen a mid-season winner for our contest and it is Jon who was in Iceland with his Edge toque! Come see us at The Edge to claim your prize!

Send us a picture by using the hashtag #edgetoquetravels on Instagram or Facebook messenger and show us your toque in a fun, silly, strange, or beautiful place! Get creative as we will be awarding prizes throughout the rest of season, with a Grand Prize of a pizza party for 4 with a bottle of Hester Creek wine awarded during March Break. All entries will be printed out and posted up in the Bistro on our new Edge Toque Collage. Let's see those Toques!

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Left - Jon, this month's winner, in Iceland with his Edge Toque.
Right - Lisa and family at Big Ben in London.

Volunteer Patrol Update

By Brad Nunes, CSP SO Boundary Zone


CANADIAN SKI PATROL™ Hello fellow lovers of swooshing and sliding on snowy surfaces. We are slipping into the second sector of our ski season. February is normally our best snow month and we are ready for it. This is a good reminder that we do have great areas outside of our hill. Apex is known for its great slack country. That all said, it is not terrain to be taken lightly. You should never go into the back country without proper avalanche safety training (AST) and all the recommended equipment (which you learn about at an AST course). And the buddy system always applies, on and off piste. Stay safe out there everyone! See you on the slopes!

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Carvers Corner

By Jorgen Anderson,
Head Coach & Program Director

What a crazy month of racing! January brought some real ups and downs with weather patterns that challenged ski clubs across the province. We are incredibly lucky to have such an amazing resort at Apex - a place that continues to host, challenge, and inspire athletes and skiers from all over BC.

We are also beyond excited with the buzz around the upcoming Olympics. Apex Ski Club alumni Reece Howden is having a historic season and is currently the number one ranked ski cross racer in the world - let's go, Reece! This will be Reece's second Olympic Games, and we're all hoping that second time really is the charm. Let's go!!

In mid-January, the club hosted the BC Games Trials. What a fun event, with athletes coming from all over the valley to compete for a chance to qualify for the BC Games in Trail later this month. Mason Perrier, Tomas Fischer, and Josh Forsley came out of a very strong field to earn their spots. Only the top eight boys and girls from the valley qualify for the U14 BC Games - well done, fellas!

The event included athletes from U12 to U16, although the BC Games competition itself is for the U14 age group.

Our U16 group attended the Teck Open at Sun Peaks, racing four days of Giant Slalom and Slalom. There was some really strong skiing from this group, and it was a great experience for all involved.

At the end of the month, this same group will head to Japan for the Japan Cup. You'll see these athletes cruising around with big smiles - they are incredibly excited for this opportunity.

Our U12 and Carvers recently had an event at Apex. For some athletes, it was their first racing experience. Watching these little rippers navigate the nerves, race the course, and celebrate afterward with a hot dog lunch (provided by the amazing Penticton IGA) and some candy was priceless. This is grassroots racing at its best - where it all begins. I remember Reece Howden in this same event, and now he's competing on the World Cup and Olympic stage. Dream big, kids ... this is where it starts.

You may also notice some older athletes - Grade 11, Grade 12, and gap-year skiers - training regularly at Apex as part of the Okanagan Ski Team program. They will be racing at Apex on February 21-22, with Leah Evans and Oliver Paralik competing. Home-hill advantage can often lead to great results.

Looking ahead, Apex will be hosting several exciting events:

- BC Cup / FIS Races ~ February 20-21
- Wine Makers Cup ~ February 28

Do your snow dances, folks - February has historically been one of our best snow months.

Special Thanks To Our Amazing Sponsors ~ We are proud to recognize and thank our sponsors for their continued support of Apex Ski Club: Gold Sponsor: Interior Roofing. Silver Sponsors: Penticton Collision Centre, Neighbourhood Brewing, Ritchie Homes, Guerard's Furniture, and Gorman Bros. Lumber Ltd. Bronze Sponsors: B&L Machine Shop, Betts Electric, IGA Penticton, The Van Os Family, Sociale Restaurant, Handford Smirle LLP, Theo's Restaurant, Roche Wines, and Canco.

Thank you to all our families, volunteers, coaches, and sponsors for making this season such a success so far. We're looking forward to an exciting February on snow!

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Above - Claire and Charlotte head to head. Below Left - Hot dogs provided by Penticton IGA. Below Right - Apex Ski Club's BC Winter Games Boys.



Breaking And Making World Ski Cross Records

By Nancy Howden, Reece Howden's Mom

Well, it's been quite a start to the season for the former Apex Carvers racer Reece Howden. Coached by the one and only Jorgen Anderson!

Reece has had 9 Ski Cross (SX) races so far this season with 6 of them landing him on the podium and 4 being gold medals! Reece started the season being tied with retired French SX racer Jean-Fred Chapuis for the most overall wins. Reece won his first race of the season in Arosa, Switzerland, thus breaking the world record for most individual wins by a male athlete. I'm sure there was a big celebration with the Canadian SX team that night!

The team was then off to Innichen, Italy for a double header where Reece was on fire, winning all his heats and gold in both races! Reece set another marker in Innichen. With his seventh victory in the last 10 World Cup races, he broke the record for the number of wins in a 10-race block, which was held by Chapuis (Fra) and Tomas Kraus (Cze). Reece has now won over a quarter of the World Cup races he has competed in!

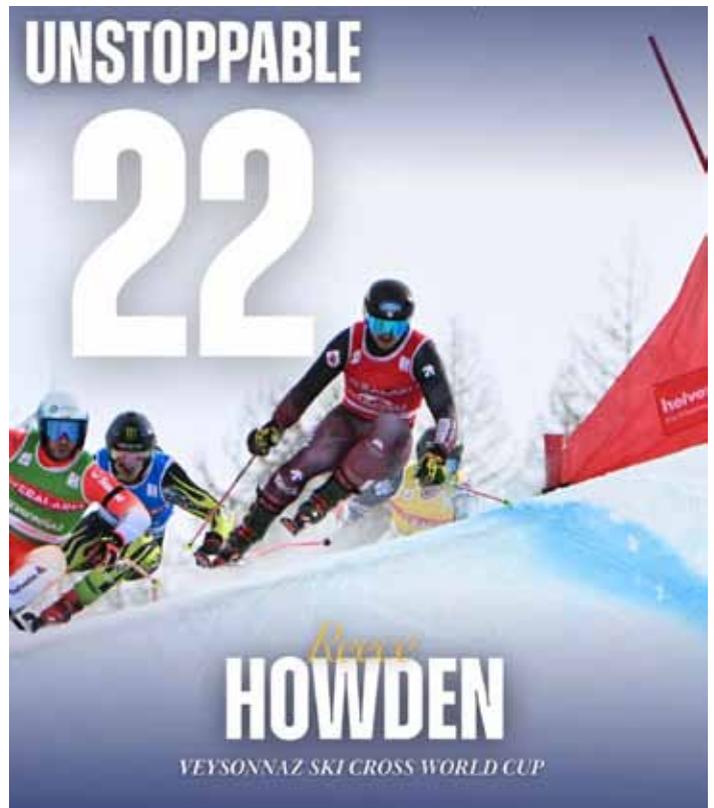
After a well needed Christmas break, Reece was back at it in Veysonnaz, Switzerland where he finished 2nd on day one and 1st for another gold medal, dominating every heat extending his world record of most wins to 22! He continues to hold the highest podium percentage of any male athlete in World Cup history.

Reece said, "It's unreal to have this kind of consistent success, and I'm really grateful that I can ski my best heading into the games."

The last two races before the Olympics were in Val Di Fassa northern Italy in the beautiful Dolomite Mountains! Training was really good and then a big snow storm hit and on qualifying day there was lots of loose powder on the course. With that, slow skis and a little bobble, Reece was unable to qualify. However, there was one more race there before they headed to the Olympics and Reece was determined to have a good finish. It was super tight racing, lots of passing and he held his composure and finished with a bronze medal in 3rd, so Reece was super happy with that! There's still lots of season left and he's happy with his skiing. Reece is going to keep doing what he's doing, trying to ski smart and work on everything he needs to do to get the rest of the season and of course the Olympics off.

"Love what you do and chase your dreams! Mine came true and so can yours!", shares Reece.

Join us in cheering for Reece Howden in the Ski Cross event at the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic Games. Go Reece Go!!!





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By The AFC Team

From Apex Freestyle Club Head Coach And Program Director Alexa Chick ~ This season is just FLYING by! While we've had a bit of a rough start to the year with warm temperatures melting away a good portion of the snow, our club members have continued to hold their spirits high as we wait for Ullr to return!

Since our last edition, our Performance Team has kicked off the year with two back-to-back competitions in Red Deer and Panorama for the Canada Cup series, our alumni athletes have given impressive performances at the Apex NorAm, and one of our Jr. Performance boys represented the club at a Shred Series competition in Whistler! Particular shoutouts go to Franky Farcau who won gold in U16 at the MogulFest event in Red Deer, and Oskar Cucnik, who earned a bronze in the rail jam at Whistler Shred Series!

As we look to the coming weeks, the club has some exciting events on the horizon, including the 3rd annual Okanagan Shred Session, February 14th and 15th, held here at our home mountain! This entry-level competition is all about having fun, making new friends, and challenging yourself in a community environment, and we encourage all of our club athletes ages 8-15 to register today! I'm especially stoked that we're hosting a Big Mountain competition as part of the event on the 15th, so you won't want to miss it!

In the meantime, keep doing your snow dances and praying to the snow gods - Mother Nature is bound to grace us with her snowy presence again SOON!

From Apex Freestyle Club President Jesse Ritchie ~ A big shout out to all the organizers and volunteers who helped during the NorAm event. We are very lucky to have a great coaching staff lead by our head coach Alexa Chick. Make sure to give them all a high five when you see them on the hill!

Save the date ~ February 21 is Spaghetti Dinner at the Gunbarrel! Please keep an eye out for my emails!

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Okanagan Shred Sessions ~ The Okanagan Shred Sessions are BACK! These are entry-level regional ski events that help athletes develop their skiing skills in a variety of disciplines while introducing them to competition in a fun-filled, action-packed environment.

February 14-15 at Apex Mountain Resort ~ Slopestyle, Moguls, and *NEW* Big Mountain

We encourage all eligible athletes to enter each of these competitions and show off the skills they have been working on! Registration is coming very soon!

Apex NorAm Moguls - January 29 - February 1 ~ 105 male and female moguls athletes from around the globe again demonstrated amazing skill on what is widely thought of as the most fun course and one of the best run events on the circuit. We are thankful that Mother Nature brought a few centimeters of snow and the fog was held at bay!

Apex Freestyle was represented by alumni:

Grady Parsons ~ 4th Singles & 12th Dual Moguls

Jackson Kendell ~ 33rd Singles & 36th Dual Moguls (first NorAm Start)

Emelie McCaughey ~ 42nd Singles & 40th Dual Moguls (first NorAm Start)

If you missed the action this time, we'll be again hosting the Apex Classic (Canadian Selections) next December.

Thank you for the longstanding support of the Apex Mountain Resort team from James, Shawn, the grooming team, lift operators, Ski Patrol and the ladies in the office. We are very fortunate to have the backing of a fantastic mountain community.

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Next deadline is 12 noon on Friday, March 6th.



Grady Parsons and Jackson Kendell. Photo Credit: Trond Meyer Photoisimo



Apex Freestyle Snowboard Club Program Director Josh Shulman ~ 2 months down, 2 months to go! Regardless of the snow conditions this year, our crew is absolutely crushing it!

You've likely seen the squad of mini shredders in our FUNDIES program mobbing around the hill or maybe the Freeriders posse spinning or flipping their way down a crooked lap. We've also been busy at a variety of awesome events.

First, we headed over to Nelson for a perfectly timed Big Mountain Freeride contest at Whitewater. You could never ask for better conditions. Over 80cm of fresh POW over the course of a week AND the Glory chair had been closed for 2 days before we got there, but was fixed right in time for our arrival. It was DEEP! Oh yeah, the contest ... sometimes all you gotta do in life is show up. Let that be a lesson to us all.

Next up was the ElleBoard and GROM series events at Apex. We had a stellar crew of 10 ladies aged 7-39 show up and shred! The next day saw a crew of 11 GROMS participate in a park jam in the Okanagan park. This crew threw down! Can you do a sweet method off the end of the cannon at the bottom of the park? I know a couple 10 year olds who make it look good! Thanks to BCSnowboard and Freeride Boardshop for helping us put that amazing weekend together.

Did you check out the "Frost Fest" rail jam in Penticton? The level of talent on display at that event was top notch! 3 athletes from our crew took part and 2 of them made it out for the 38 rider qualifying round into the round of 16. Nice work fellas!

So while the first half of the season has not quite delivered the cold smoke, it sure has delivered the stoke! I'm pretty excited to see what the rest of the season brings, as we head into full on contest season. Slopestyle, SBX, Slopestyle, Slopestyle, SBX, Banked Slalom all before April flowers bloom. Let's go AFSC!

Pro-D Day Camps ~ We are thrilled to announce that we will be introducing two Pro-D Day Camps this year open to new and existing Apex Freestyle Members. This is a great opportunity for community members to try our freestyle!

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Hello Again!

By Alec Henderson, Team Canada Slopestyle and Big Air Skier



Just like that, I'm back updating you after one of the craziest months of my life!

First and foremost, I'd like to thank everyone for the immense love and support these past couple years. I couldn't do it without the support of this community of legends. It's been a real journey to get here, I feel things are really just about to get really good.

Now the last time you heard from me, I was on my way to the Laax Open in Switzerland. A stunning spot and one of my favourite places in the world for skiing. Going into this event, I was stoked to finally do a Slopestyle World Cup again after so many Big Air competitions. Eager to prove to myself that I could do well against the best in the world in a Slopestyle, this one had an extra bit of pressure. This was the final Olympic qualifier and the last chance to grab a ticket to the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic Games. I needed a top 8 for mine, some needed a top 5, some needed a top 30 and others even needing a gold to earn a spot. Everyone was trying to be on their 'A' game this week. The qualifier consisted of 60 men, two heats of 30, top seven go from each heat creating a 14 man final. I loved this park and skied well earning my way into my first Slopestyle final and 4th in my heat. I was so hyped it wasn't over, I was one step closer, and I got to fight for my spot another day.

It was some of the best skiing I had ever seen from a World Cup final! A huge pleasure to be apart of it. I put down a solid run, but I knew I could have done a more difficult one. I wanted to land a run and try and crack that top 8. So many good runs were thrown down, and I ended up just outside in 10th. Definitely not the outcome I was hoping for and I came as close as possible to my Olympic dream. I just fell short, but I'm going to use it as fuel, and I'm so hungry to step on that box in a World Cup soon. Lots of new goals ... sky is the limit!

Feeling a little defeated, I turned that around quite quickly with a trip to X Games Aspen. I was stoked to watch my first live X Games and get to see what it's all about. My girlfriend Naomi Urness was competing and she brought me along as her athlete support! It was a cool week planning runs and skiing such an infamous course. One day I will compete on this course. It got me so inspired! Despite battling an injury and not doing most of the practice, Nao clutched a 2nd place in the Slopestyle and 4th in Big Air. It was so hype!!

We parted ways and she went to Italy for the Olympics, and I was on my way to a rail jam in Toronto. Go Nao!!!

The Apik Fest ... It was a sick time! One of the only events with big money on the line, so people were going ham! I came out with a 2nd and my good friend Noah PM took the win. I had an epic time and will definitely be back next year!

Now, I'm posted up in the east, Toronto right now and heading to Montreal soon. Filming street skiing with friends:)

Feeling good right now, happy to be with friends, excited to support Canada at the Olympics, get to ski so much, life is good. Next time you hear from me, I'll be at the Slvsh! Stoked to go back and defend the title.

Thank you so much again! If you want to see more, feel free to follow my Instagram - @alechendersonn.



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Penticton Sno-Trackers Club

By Joe Millar, President

As president of the Penticton Sno-trackers, I'll be the first to admit this winter has been a bit of a heartbreaker for us here in the South Okanagan. Anyone who's glanced out the window lately knows what I'm talking about. Warm weather has settled into southern British Columbia, and unfortunately, that's left us with very limited snow conditions close to home. Our local riding areas just haven't received the snowfall we'd normally count on, and that's disappointing for a club that lives and breathes snowmobiling.

That said, one of the great things about being part of the snowmobiling community in BC is that our season doesn't end just because Penticton is short on snow. BC is a massive province with incredible terrain, and while we may be lacking locally, there are still plenty of places where winter is very much alive and well. Sometimes all it takes is getting out of town, pointing the truck in a new direction, and turning a challenge into an opportunity.

Many of our members have already been doing just that - heading north or higher in elevation to find better snow and outstanding riding conditions. From the Kootenays to the Cariboo, the Shuswap, and beyond, there are snowmobile clubs across BC that are maintaining excellent trail systems and welcoming visiting riders. These clubs put in countless volunteer hours grooming trails, maintaining infrastructure, and making sure their areas are safe and enjoyable, and they deserve our support.

Riding in other regions isn't just about chasing snow; it's also about experiencing new terrain and expanding your snowmobiling horizons. Every area has its own character - different landscapes, different challenges, and different kinds of rides. Whether you're into long trail rides, deep powder, or scenic mountain views, there's something out there that reminds you why you fell in love with this sport in the first place.

Visiting other clubs also strengthens the broader snowmobiling community. When we buy trail passes, fuel up locally, grab a meal, or stay overnight, we're supporting fellow clubs and small communities that depend on winter recreation. That spirit of cooperation and mutual support is what keeps snowmobiling strong across the province, especially in winters like this one.

While we all hope for a late dump of snow here at home, the reality is that flexibility is part of snowmobiling in BC. This season is a reminder that adventure doesn't stop at the city limits. On behalf of the Penticton Sno-trackers, I encourage everyone to stay safe, respect local rules wherever you ride, and make the most of what this winter still has to offer. The snow is out there - you just might have to go find it.

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more information.
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Mindful Movement

By Vanessa Fox

Feeling empowered in your workouts is a key element to success! That empowerment can be found in having comfort in the space you're exercising in, familiarity with body weight exercises or the equipment you're using, and being able to sink into your body to really hone in on your movement.

Every body is different. Bone length and joint angles, muscle type, current fitness levels, and injuries - we're all unique! Practicing mindful movement ensures that your exercises are appropriate for your body and are in line with your fitness goals. Whether you're just starting out or are an exercise enthusiast, mindful movement is for everyone! Increase or maintain strength and bone density. Stay strong and healthy during and after pregnancy. Switch up or even turn up your current exercise routine.

Maybe you're asking, "but what is mindful movement?" Great question! Mindful movement comes from improving the mind-body connection. This includes really feeling the right muscles for the job, and knowing whether they are working as stabilizers or mobilizers in that particular instance. This intention is created through education and awareness ... i.e. getting to know your body better from the inside out! The breath is a powerful tool in making this happen. Tapping into our breathing centers us in the current moment, so that we can focus on the task at hand. It helps us bring awareness to and engage muscles that need to step up a bit more, and to release tension and help other muscles relax and do less of the work, if they've been compensating.

Let's work together to get you moving, feeling, and looking your best!

For more information and to book your initial session either at Apex or in Penticton, please call 250-466-8826.

ComParrot by Bonnie J. Malcolm Can you spot 12 differences between these pictures?



Solution: 1. Opening appears on back of boy's cap. 2. Dog's collar is longer. 3. Stripe on boy's shirt sleeve is missing. 4. Extra pocket on shirt has moved. 5. Leg on table is colored in. 6. Flower in bouquet is colored in. 7. Heart on card is colored in. 8. Ribbon on girl's dress is shorter. 9. Mirror frame is taller. 10. Curtains are shorter. 11. Top of table is wider. 12. Ribbon on heart is longer.

The Artisan's Den at Apex

Located at the bottom of Grandfather's Trail in the Old Hotel.



Licensed Premise! Drop in for a snack or lunch, enjoy a bevy, and do a little shopping while you are here.

Art Classes Available.

What Is The Artisan's Den?

By Jane Ono

The Artisan's Den is a hidden gem in the Apex village. It's a coffee shop; a place to grab lunch when everywhere else is busy (and it's licensed!). It's a gift shop; a place to buy locally made art for anyone who deserves something special. It's an art studio; a place to learn a new craft or even do some yoga on special days. Located in the old hotel, the Artisan's Den is tucked in at the intersection of Grandfather's and Okanagan runs. If you haven't found it yet, it's worth checking it out!

"Everyone is an Artist" in the Artisan's Den:

Our ongoing Thursday night series continues. Every session starts at 7 pm, and you can register by dropping in to The Den, or by contacting Jane at janeonstrike@gmail.com. Prices include taxes.

Paint Your Partner ~ February 12. (\$80/two people). Enjoy a pre-Valentine's Day activity, as you create a special portrait of your partner. No peeking until you are done! Sign up with a group for more fun! Directed by Sue and Taffy.

Hand-Felted Soaps ~ February 19. (\$35 each). Jennifer will lead us through the process of adding colourful wool to two bars of soap. Your felted soaps last longer, are anti-bacterial, and exfoliate and lather better. A practical and beautiful project!

Pottery Platters ~ February 26 and March 5 ... both days. (\$115 each). Create a large platter or charcuterie plate and one or two ramekins to match. Basic hand-building skills covered. Day 1 we build, day 2 we glaze. Pick up your projects the following week.



Slushy Thoughts From The Snow Bank

By Brad Nunes

Well, Mother Nature was not entirely kind to us this January. It seems like ICE is a huge issue everywhere these days! But I'm an eternal optimist and I have a real good feeling about this month. I think we are on the cusp of greatness. I honestly tell most people that their best bet for the peak of the season is skiing in February. January can have snow, but it also tends to be the coldest month. I said, it tends to! I didn't say it was, okay!?! Even a great guru who writes one column a month for this fine publication can occasionally get his predictions wrong. I'm not divine, just divine adjacent (and very humble). But I really do have a good feeling about February. I think we are due. I'm looking at you all up there in the heavens ... We have been good little skiers, embracing the groomers and looking for spring skiing in January. We have kept our spirits high and didn't start blaming anybody ... yet. Just please, toss us a few nice powder days and I'll keep putting enthusiasm into my Lord's Prayers. If not, I hear there is lots of snow in Japan. The Buddha might get a few prayers tossed his way ... I will honestly embrace any way ya'll choose to beg for snow. Invoke whatever rights you have in your back pocket. I'll even turn a blind eye to a few missing chickens and goats, if it will help!

Now, I'm typically all good for taking pot shots at whatever holidays fall under the window of publication. I do worry that over the years ... it must be around 5 now ... that I've spun my tales in these columns, that I have beat to death the concept of Valentine's Day. I've also slagged on about Family Day, making jokes about forced confinement with loved ones. Heck, I think I've even thrown shade at that totally sane practice of asking a shocked, overfed, rodent about the predictions for winter. The one day I don't think I've ever covered is the day commemorating the birth of my father, John. Yes, the wonder husband, father and local businessman everyone is dying to see (he is a funeral director and yes ... we have heard EVERY joke), is the reason you are being subjected to reading this piece. And not even just in the fact he had a hand in my creation, he is the one who inspired me to start smashing a keyboard in the first place. Myleen asked me to write this column, because I used to write a decidedly unhinged PAC report for Kaleden Elementary which appeared in Skaha Matters. I was inspired to write that report in a style my father used to use when he was asked to write an update in the paper for the local minor hockey league in Oliver. We both had asked if anyone needed to approve what we wrote and everyone shrugged their shoulders. So, left to our own devices, we did what every media outlet does, we embellished a little. When you mix a little truth into some good-hearted lies, the result tends to be some of the most heartfelt, entertaining and honest writing you can get. So yeah, a huge Happy Birthday to the big guy in my life. Thanks for inspiring me to put words to page (among so many other things). Love you. And much love to all of you! Stay safe out there and much love. Cheers!

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"Pow Day" ~ Photo by Johnny Smoke



The Largest Selection of Ski Inventory in the South Okanagan

The Apex Mountain Shop

Letting Go To Grow

By Fred Albrechtson, Nickel Plate Junior Racer Alumni

It's blatantly obvious, but far more draining than any business owner will admit. It's the also why so many small businesses remain trapped in the owner/operator stage. Most owners feel like they should be in the trenches along with their crew, undergoing the hardest tasks, putting the most on the line, and being the most exhausted at the end of the day. Now that is true - to an extent. But once a company is producing a sufficient workload, that owner must step into a managerial position, and away from the labour. Otherwise, they risk stagnation. Delegation bruises the ego. It still pains me to not always be the hardest working guy on the job site; after all, the owner is getting the biggest slice of the pie, right? But at the end of the day, if I bury myself in tasks someone else could handle, I'm not solving the bigger problems - relating to workflow, efficiency, equipment, and growth. If those problems don't get solved, we stall. As soon as I stopped trying to fix every problem, and stress about every little thing beyond my control, things took off.

Being young, I know very little about most things. Knowing this, I have become great at asking for help, making myself put my ego to the side. There are still many times when I just need to struggle through something or figure it out on my own, although something usually ends up breaking - knowledge is expensive. The most successful entrepreneurs who scale aren't the ones who do everything well, but rather excel at delegating those tasks. I have been fortunate enough to surround myself with a knowledgeable community of like-minded business owners that I can rely on, and who have connections to help me out with anything that I would need. Beyond that, I am building a great team of employees, that work well together and complement each other's flaws. They are

much stronger in certain areas than I and are valuable assets to the team.

The key takeaway for anyone to succeed at doing anything in life requires letting go of the small stuff and focusing on what moves the needle. Rely on your networks for support and always be willing to lend a hand. In turn, you'll receive the help when you need it the most.



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As winter continues, my focus remains on listening, learning, and showing up for the people who call our mountain communities home. These conversations, often best had in the mountains, help shape the future of our region and ensure local voices are heard. If you have questions, concerns, or ideas you would like to share, I encourage you to reach out. You can contact my constituency office by email at Donegal.Wilson.MLA@leg.bc.ca, by phone at **250-493-6400**, or visit www.donegalwilsonmla.ca for updates and information.

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Apex Mountain Resort would like to remind local residents and visitors alike that water conservation is extremely important all year round! It is integral to the well-being of this beautiful mountain that we love so much. We all need to make a conscious effort to conserve water when you can.

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Some Conversations Are Better Had In The Mountains

By Donegal Wilson, MLA Boundary-Similkameen

Winter brings our mountain communities together in a way no other season can. As the snow settles in and activity increases across our region, it becomes clear how closely outdoor life, local economies, and community well-being are connected.

Over the past several weeks, much of my work has focused on being present in the places that matter most to people in Boundary-Similkameen. That means spending time in our communities, listening to residents, and engaging directly on issues that affect daily life in rural and mountain regions. These are conversations best grounded in local experience, shaped by the realities of living and working in challenging terrain and winter conditions.

That perspective was reinforced recently when I was genuinely surprised, and deeply honoured, to receive the Gordon Ritchie Service Award for 2025 from Avalanche Canada. The award recognizes contributions to public avalanche safety across Canada. As someone who has spent years working alongside volunteers, educators, industry partners, and community leaders to improve safety in the backcountry, the recognition meant a great deal to me.

Avalanche safety is not an abstract issue in mountain communities. It is about people returning home safely at the end of the day. It is about shared responsibility, education, and respect for the land. The award now hangs in my office as a reminder that this work is never about one person. It reflects the collective effort of communities that care deeply about one another and about keeping our mountains safe and accessible.

Spending time on the land reinforces how important it is that decisions around land use, access, and recreation are informed by firsthand experience. It is difficult to understand the needs of mountain communities without seeing the conditions, the terrain, and the risks involved. When policy discussions are grounded in real-world experience and local knowledge, outcomes are stronger and more balanced.

Winter also brings a shared commitment to safety, environmental stewardship, and respect for others. These values are consistently raised by residents across Boundary-Similkameen, and they guide how I approach advocacy on behalf of our region.



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

From The Director For RDOS Area "I"

Here we are already half way through the winter season at Apex. I trust lots of snow comes your way this month.

Thank you to the Apex residents that attended the annual Apex RDOS Financial information meeting held on January 24. Great questions were asked and engaging conversations occurred around vacation rentals, speeding, dogs continuing to roam off leash, and other community specific questions.

It's not too late to provide feedback on the 2026 Budget before the RDOS board adopts it towards the end of March. To view the budget information, visit rdosregionalconnections.ca/rdos-budget. You can provide comments and feedback online.

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



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February APOA Update

By Barry Leigh for the APOA Executive

On behalf of the APOA executive, I would like to welcome the new members who have recently joined and to thank those who have renewed their membership for 2026.

Renewing is easy. Memberships can be renewed by sending an e-transfer to apoexec@gmail.com (please include "APOA Membership 2026" in the message field), or by mailing a cheque to **APOA, Box 23016, Penticton, BC, V2A 8L7**. Please remember to let us know of any changes to your contact information, including your email address or phone number.

If you are not yet a member, you can join by visiting the APOA website and selecting the "Join the APOA" tab to complete the membership form. Payment can be made by e-transfer or by mail, as noted above.

A reminder that our Annual General Meeting will be held in the latter part of March. Please watch for the date, time and location to be announced in the next issue of Apex Matters. The AGM is a good opportunity to catch up on APOA activities and there will be an opportunity to join or renew your membership.

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ACA February Update

By Cindi-Lou Baker, Vice President



Hi Everybody! I hope you all survived Blue Monday! I guess it's a real thing. Being in the mountains seems to help. We have certainly had more sun than the valley people this past month. Hoping February brings more snow and less sun!

This year, we are doing the Disco Skate Party on Sunday, February 15th from 6-8 pm. So get your groove on, find some cool duds and come on down to the Skating Loop! We will have S'mores and hot chocolate available by donation. We ask that you bring your own mug for the hot chocolate. The environment thanks you! There will be prizes in kids and adults categories, for best costume and best skate/dance moves. Something new this year: Holly, Apex local, will be giving skating lessons early in the evening. She has been skating since she was 12. In her teens and 20s, Holly taught skating for CanSkate, as well as private lessons in both Ontario and Vancouver Island. This season, she has been working weekends at the Skate Shack on the Adventure Skating Loop. Holly loves skating, skiing and Apex! Thank you, Holly!

The ACA has many projects in the works. We look forward to sharing the news, when they come closer to happening. If you have a community event or project idea, or would like to volunteer, please send an email to apexcommunityassociation@gmail.com. We'd love to have you join our team.

Have fun out there! Keep praying for snow!

Blood Donor Clinics
March 9, 10 & 11
1:30-5:30pm - Penticton Seniors Drop-in Centre, 2965 South Main St
Call 1-888-2DONATE or www.blood.ca **It's in you to give!**



Apex Fire Brigade Society February Update

By Jacquie Foley, AFBS Chair

Happy February! Wow, we are already half-way through the ski season ... crazy! A few items to note from the AFBS:

The AFBS will be holding our **Annual General Meeting on Saturday, February 21, 2026 at 4 pm at the Apex Fire Hall.** Please join us to hear about the things that we did in 2025 and what we have planned for 2026. Need more information? Email afbs.info@apexfirerescue.ca.

Apex Firefighter's Ball ~ A huge thank you to all of you who turned out for the 20's themed Firefighter's Ball. We had about 60+ people attend and participate in the silent and live auction fundraising events, raising more than \$5,000! A special thank you to Sandy Whitty and her group of volunteers ... the decorations looked great!



A BIG thanks to all our fantastic sponsors, including private, family and business sponsors as follows:

Private/Family Sponsors: John Davis; The Foleys; Paul Hirschfield; Finbar O'Sullivan; Ilse and Luis Rodriguez; Collette and Dwight Shanner; Brian Spence; Emiel van der Meer; and Charlotte and Murali Venkataraman.

Business/Group Sponsors: Andrew Sheret; Apex Fire Brigade Society; Apex Hospitality Services; Apex Matters; Apex Mountain Resort; Apex Volunteer Fire Rescue; Barry Beecroft Fuel Distributors, Ltd.; Betts Electric; Cloverdale Paint; Dori Munday (Personal Real Estate Corporation); Dragonboat Pub; Flambé at Home; Gunbarrel Saloon; Home Hardware Penticton; Lakeside Resort (Oliver); Neighbourhood Brewery; Norm Davies (Personal Real Estate Corporation); P&E Lumber; Pacific Rim Equipment; Peak Sweets; Penticton Honda Centre; Summergate Winery; Summerland Pharmasave; Summerland Tirecraft; Sysco; The Edge Bistro; Thornhaven Winery; Tony's Meats; True Colours Paint - John Kelly.

The AFBS is always looking for more community members to get involved! Are you interested in helping in some small way? If so, please let us know by sending an email to afbs.info@apexfirerescue.ca.



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Hello, It's Us Again: Join AVFR Or AFBS & Protect Your Fire Protection Insurability

By Kelly Johnston, Fire Chief

As we look out our windows and noting the distinct lack of snow at Apex, hear reports of the severe lack of precipitation in the valley bottoms, it brings on the familiar feeling of dread for those of us who are in the fire, or climate world when we start thinking about what the summer wildfire season will be like ... and for the small subset of that group, who are busy connecting this work throughout the year with land managers, governments at all levels and insurance providers, we understand that the looming threats that are much larger.

Fire insurance is part of your core residential, or commercial insurance. The only way that you can opt out of fire insurance, is by completely opting out of insurance. Most of us have too much invested in our homes to risk not having them covered by insurance. Many of us have mortgages on our homes, for which the lenders require dwelling insurance to ensure their investments are covered.

We are fortunate that the Apex community has chosen to invest in being fire protected, as homeowners living in areas without fire protection are faced with significantly higher insurance premiums. Some cannot get insurance. In fact, in the face of unprecedented large losses to increasingly frequent natural disasters, including storms, flooding, earthquakes and wildfire insurance providers are becoming more and more restrictive with who and where they provide insurance.

So why is this still happening despite no recent significant local losses? Well, most insurance providers are underwritten by large re-insurers, who also underwrite other insurance providers who cover assets across the country, the continent, and across the globe. So when there are large losses, or even the risk of large losses in other parts of Canada, or other parts of the world, insurers reduce their liabilities in higher risk areas in our areas. Those of us who are regularly engaged in this field are seeing a disturbingly and rapidly increasing trend in high-risk areas becoming uninsurable. Therefore, it is more important than ever that the Apex community maintain recognized fire protection to instill confidence in the insurance providers who invest here.

In 2021, the Apex community voted to fund a tax-based volunteer fire service, allowing the previously established Apex Fire Brigade Society to transition into an accredited and recognized volunteer fire service.

12 months after the AVFR was established, the Apex community achieved a Fire Underwriter Survey Dwelling Protection Grading 3A for private homes, and Public Fire Protection Classification 7 for commercial and strata buildings, dropping most insurance premiums by over 50% and allowing others to obtain dwelling insurance again.

To qualify for these ratings, Apex Volunteer Fire Rescue was required to demonstrate minimum fire service equipment and vehicle certifications, a minimum number of trained and certified volunteer who are present in the community and able to respond, and a working and certified community fire hydrant system. Through a massive undertaking of effort from our volunteers, and with the support of the community, we were able to achieve this in the first year of operation.

Achieving the initial Fire Underwriter Survey (FUS) ratings was just a start. The requirements of these ratings are not just a one-time assessment. The Fire Underwriters Survey evaluators conduct regular audits on equipment, training, volunteer staffing, and records to ensure that AVFR is maintaining the minimum

requirements. Additionally, these insurance requirements trigger several other provincially and nationally regulated operational and health and safety requirements. In three short years, the AVFR has progressed at lightning speed to address these requirements. Thanks to the generous support of the community, we now are operating out of a fire station that exceeds the current minimum firefighter health and safety requirements and provides a solid operational base, capable of accommodating the expected required adaptations to serve the community for the next 50 years. Now that we have the equipment and facilities in place, the key to keeping Apex protected and insured is people! Sustaining a healthy number of trained firefighters allows everyone to enjoy the benefits of fire protection; allows us all to maintain a healthy work life balance; brings firefighters, their families together for a positive team experience that builds lifetime bonds rarely experienced in any other organization and help builds an Apex community that is resilient to whatever is thrown our way!

We need you! Do it for yourself. Do it for your family. Do it for your home. Do it for your community.

Take Action and join us as an AVFR firefighter; or an AFBS support member. There is something for everybody and every ability!

Questions? Reach out to Fire Chief Kelly Johnston at firechief@apexfirerescue.ca.



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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 cabinet installation project for added storage space.



Have you been wishing for a refresh in your kitchen, bathroom or bedroom? 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.



Trail Of The Okanagans

By Mary Trainer

Dreaming of warmer weather and getting back on your bike? Until then, cosy up with one of these biking adventure books by Canadian authors. Find them online, at a local bookstore or the library.



- *The Cycling Adventures of Coconut Head - An 11-month, 8,178-mile trip across the U.S. and Canada* (1996) by Ted Schredd
- *A Life on Wheels - Biking Alone from Newfoundland to Latin America* (2007) by Martin Lobigs
- *Lands of Lost Borders - Out of Bounds on the Silk Road* (2018) by Kate Harris
- *Bikepacking in the Canadian Rockies* (2018) by Ryan Correy
- *With You by Bike - One couple's life-changing journey around the world* (2019) by Katrina Rosen
- *South Away - The Pacific Coast on Two Wheels* (2019) and *Shifting Gears - Coast to Coast on the Trans Am Bike Race* (2023) by Meaghan Marie Hackinen
- *Hell of a Ride - Chasing Home and Survival on a bicycle Voyage Across Canada* (2024) by Martin Bauman
- *Shifting Gears - Coast to Coast on the Trans Am Bike Race* (2023) by Meaghan Marie Hackinen

More guaranteed good reads: *Where the Pavement Ends: One Woman's Bicycle Trip Through Mongolia, China and Viet Nam* (2001) by Erika Warmbrunn; and *Six Highways to Home: A Cycling Journey from Whitehorse to Victoria* (2014) and *Cycling Vancouver Island* (2022) by John Crouch.

These books might inspire you to create your own local adventures: *Let's Go Biking - Okanagan and Beyond* (2020) by Colleen MacDonald and *Cycling the Kettle Valley Railway* (2011) by Dan Langford.

Snowshoes At Eskala Mountain Sports

By Claudia Reyes, Store Owner

Purchasing a pair of snowshoes can open up a whole new world of winter adventures. The snow-covered trails just got more enticing to explore. We suggest checking out the **TSL Symbioz Hyperflex Snowshoes** we have in stock. Here are some reasons why ...

Overview ~ The TSL Symbioz Hyperflex stands out for its remarkable versatility, excelling on both trails and packed snow. As the most compact option among those assessed, it ensures a secure and comfortable walking experience. The snowshoe's flexible deck contributes to effective shock absorption, making each stride smooth and stable. This model is particularly recommended for hikers who regularly traverse groomed routes.

Design & Construction ~ These hourglass-shaped snowshoes are engineered with plastic frames reinforced by durable carbon. The frames feature serrated edges and flexible gripping tabs, enhancing traction and stability. Underfoot, a stainless-steel claw, eight shark fin tangs, crossbars, and strategically placed cutouts provide a reliable grip in various conditions, making the snowshoes well suited for both ascents and descents.

Performance & Features ~ Walking efficiency is improved through the flexible edges and ergonomic design, which work together to reduce the risk of tripping. Integrated carbon stringers boost energy return and help minimize vibration during long-distance treks. The binding plate, designed for a snug fit, includes a heel lifter that can be operated with a trekking pole, further increasing comfort and pace on extended excursions. The lockable binding system allows for quick adjustments, minimizing interruptions during snowshoeing adventures.

Manufacturing & Suitability ~ Manufactured in France, the TSL Symbioz Hyperflex Elite is intended for use on mixed terrain. It showcases innovative engineering and provides dependable grip for both uphill and downhill movement.

Pros & Cons ~ Pros: Flexible design adapts effectively to varied terrain. Cons: Plastic decking can be noisy on hard-packed snow. Stop by and check out our snowshoes options at Eskala Mountain Sports, located at 210 Main Street next to Peach City Runners. We're ready to help you get started on your snowshoe adventure.



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Are You A Lindsey Vonn?

By Dr. Deirdre O'Neill, ND

Often when I ski, I feel like I am Lindsey Vonn. Plagued with knee injuries. Skiing despite the odds.

I may not have her style. Definitely not her speed. I do share her perseverance. And, possibly, her lack of patience.

And now, I share something else with her: the desire to ski without an ACL.

Reading Shandia's article from Dale Charles Physiotherapy Group in January's edition really hit home for me. If you haven't read it, grab one of the previous copies. She beautifully breaks down the many decision points that follow an ACL tear, which are far more complex than they used to be.

Years ago, the choice felt simple. I remember my surgeon asking me, over 30 years ago when I first learned about those three letters after my ski binding didn't release and I had heard a pop: *Do you want to ski again?*

The implication was clear. Reconstruction surgery was the answer. What I didn't know then was what came with it. I had no idea I would be embarking on a 6 month journey of postoperative rehab. No one told me there was up to a 30% risk of re-tearing the ACL within the first few years, especially in high-demand sports like skiing. There was no mention that over 50% of people with an ACL injury will show signs of knee osteoarthritis within 10-20 years, regardless of whether they have surgery or not. And no one talked about how skiing with its rotational forces, sudden deceleration, and variable terrain places uniquely high demands on knee stability. I never imagined that my focus would shift from choosing skis to choosing braces, supportive leggings, and ice machines just to keep going.

Fast forward a few decades.

Over the past twenty years, my understanding of knee health has fundamentally changed. I've learned that it's rarely just about the ligament that tore. Ligaments function as a system, and even small amounts of laxity in the supporting structures can quietly alter joint stability, load distribution, and movement patterns.

Imaging can tell us if something is torn, but it doesn't tell us how well a knee is functioning. MRIs often miss subtle stretching in supporting ligaments. This laxity affects how muscles fire, how force is absorbed, and how a joint ages over time. Those small, often overlooked shifts can set the stage for chronic pain and eventually arthritis.

That's why I approach pain differently now. I look beyond a single structure and up the chain. I think about stability, neuromuscular control, and how to support tissue health. Treatments like Prolotherapy and PRP aren't about fixing something "broken". When Regenerative Injections are paired with the right physiotherapy, the joint doesn't just heal. The joint and body relearns how to move well, which is where real improvement happens. Some experts on knees say that ACL injuries don't just come from a crash, but there were warning signs that the kinetic chain was weak. The answer is no longer simple and that's exactly why it works better.

Anyone who has worked with me during my own rehab would tell you: patience has never been my strong suit. I'm not deciding whether to race in the Olympics like Lindsey. I am not faced with a single shot on the world stage after retirement. But I also don't sit well on the sidelines waiting for an injury to "just heal."

I don't use anti-inflammatories to mask swelling. Instead, I focus on supporting the healing process: maximizing smooth rotations on the bike, using the pool for weightless movement, and accessing tools like photobiomodulation (laser therapy). And hopefully wiser than my younger self, I respect that critical six week window to let



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DR DEIRDRE O'NEILL
Naturopathic Doctor
Prolotherapist

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swelling settle before truly testing the knee again.

Because for me, skiing isn't a moment. It's a lifetime sport. Something I love to share with my family. And something I want to be doing for decades not just one more season.

Once the acute phase of a ligament injury has passed, the most important predictor of how well you'll do isn't the MRI, it's stability.

Do you get those "whoops" moments?

Does the knee feel like it might give way?

Does it swell after you push it a little too far?

If you're answering yes to any of these, that's your signal.

That help might be more targeted rehab and physiotherapy. It might be regenerative injections to support ligaments and tendons. And yes, sometimes it is surgery. The key is making that decision with a team that understands you, your goals, and the demands of skiing.

If you're navigating an ACL injury, chronic knee pain, or that grey zone of *"Can I keep skiing like this?"* you don't have to figure it out alone. You may not have access to world-class trainers or the immediate injections that keep elite skiers competing at the highest level, but that doesn't mean you have to navigate an injury blindly. The **Injury Guidebook** breaks down what to do and what to avoid in the early days after an injury. It even tackles whether it's time to finally shelf the traditional RICE protocol, so you can make smarter decisions right from the start, even from the comfort of your own home while watching the Olympics.

You can **download the guidebook** to gain clarity, confidence, and a roadmap for making decisions that support lifelong skiing and not just a quick return to the hill. Scan the QR code above or head to alpinenaturalhealth.ca/injury-checklist.

Now, I see things differently. Others who watch me ski might disagree. But perception is everything. And somehow, now more than ever, I feel even more like her.

Dr. Deirdre O'Neill, Naturopathic Physician, has an expertise in Prolotherapy and Platelet Rich Plasma using Ultrasound Guidance. She practices in Penticton at Alpine Natural Health. You can also find her on the hill as part of the volunteer Canadian Ski Patrol.



Photo by Johnny Smoke

Centering And Re-Centering: Core Strength For Skiers And Tips to Navigate Injury

By Farren Leigh, MPT, Registered Physiotherapist

We often think of our legs being the main muscles carrying us down the hill. While leg strength is important, core strength is often overlooked as a key player for successful skiing. Find out how your center affects your skiing, as well as some tips to 're-center', if your ski season has gone a little off course.

Why Core Matters For Skiers ~ Whenever you move your arms or legs your core is active. A strong core is essential for skiing, acting as the central stabilizer, connecting your limbs to your trunk to maintain balance and control as you navigate uneven surfaces.

There is plenty of research to verify that a well-trained core facilitates dynamic athletic movements. This means that all those powerful turns, jumps, and moguls are controlled by your center, not just your legs. A stronger core will also reduce leg muscle fatigue, as it works as a shock absorber and assists in managing the forces transmitted from the snow up through your body.

The deep stabilizers of your trunk keep you vertical and stable when gravity and rough terrain push and pull you down the slopes. Your core works to keep your torso centered over your skis and balanced through turns and poling. Finally, a well-conditioned core helps to prevent injuries by providing stability and support to the spine, hips and knees.

You Don't Need A Six-Pack ~ You do not need to be able to see your abs for them to be strong. Visually defined abdominals are largely the result of a combination of genetics and exceptionally low body-fat, rather than strength. As a former Pilates instructor for almost 20 years, I can confirm your abs are in there, I promise! Focus on strength and function over visibility.

The most common core exercise is a crunch or a sit-up which strengthens that 'six-pack muscle', also known as the rectus abdominis. The rectus abdominis, despite its popularity, is not actually that helpful in the dynamic movements required for skiing. It is the deep stabilizers of your core such as your transversus abdominis, multifidus, diaphragm and pelvic floor that are the key. These are the innermost muscles that wrap around your spine, pelvis and rib cage and act like a corset or belt supporting your torso from all sides.

What Core Exercises Are Best? ~ No need to scratch sit-ups completely, just ensure you also target the deep stabilizers. The first step is to 'find your deep core'. Activating your transversus abdominis, the corset or belt muscle, can be done with simple breathing and awareness. Try laying on your back with your knees bent and hands resting over your stomach. Take a deep breath in, then slowly breathe out and engage your core with a gentle wrapping sensation around your waist. You should feel a tightening under your hands, not a forceful outward push. This is often easier said than done on the first try. Some hands-on guidance from a physiotherapist can help you get this down. Learning how to contract your deep core is a game changer, once you do, you can then incorporate the principle into any of your own workouts!

Deep core exercises such as pelvic tilts, bird dogs, dead bugs, planks/side planks and Pallof presses will provide you with a strong foundation. These exercises can then be progressed to add resistance, rotations, and speed that will directly translate into better skiing! Proper form and engagement of your core during these exercises makes all the difference. Ask yourself, "where do I feel this exercise"? If the answer is your back, neck or hips then your core is likely not contracting properly. If you need a little coaching on this - you know where to find me!



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BE AWARE SKI AND RIDE WITH CARE



Hitting The Rough ~ If your ski season took an unexpected turn due to injury, here are a few ways to help you 're-center'.

Have A Bad Day ~ In lieu of the many motivational phrases out there, I'm here instead, to tell you to have a bad day. Give yourself a little grace to be bummed out, feel a tad sorry for yourself, sit in the FOMO for a minute.

Suppressing emotions usually backfires, making them return stronger. Slow down, feel it and try to give the emotion a name. Neuroimaging studies show that when you put feelings into words, it reduces activity in the amygdala, the brain's "fight or flight" center that triggers fear. Labeling emotions engages the prefrontal cortex, the part of your brain involved in logic and decision-making.

Find The Light ~ Literally - go outside in the daylight. If you can't be on a ski lift, find another way to lift yourself up. More research for you; there is a growing body of empirical evidence that supports the value of nature for mental health. Turns out your mom was right, go outside and play! Try another snow related activity. If these aren't options, put on a warm coat and take a stroll or find a bench to sit on. 10 to 15 minutes of daily UV exposure, even through winter clouds, helps increase serotonin levels (the happy chemicals).

What You Focus on Grows ~ It's not all downhill from here! Focus on what you can still do. Stay connected to your ski community, go for that après-ski with your peeps, even if you can't hit the hill. Come up with some realistic and measurable rehab goals with your physiotherapist, so you can see your progress in real time. If this season is a write off, focus on getting yourself strong and ready for springtime activities that will in turn make your next ski season even better!

If you need a little help finding and strengthening your center, or perhaps re-centering after an injury, come by. I'll likely have a variety of ab-solutely horrible puns to lift your spirits.

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A Glance Beyond Our Sky

Do you look up at the sky and question more than the weather forecast and snow conditions? In this issue, we share a very interesting article by Tom Landecker, an astronomer with NRC's Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory in Kaleden.

Intruder

By Tom Landecker

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

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

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

On July 1st, 2025 a telescope in Chile detected something that moved against the background of stars. Named 3I ATLAS, it has

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

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

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

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

Interesting websites:

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

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

Next New Moon is February 17. Next Full Moon is March 3.



Dan Kolbeck in the Apex Backcountry ~ Photo by Franz Unterberger

Jay's Tunes To Turn To

Artist ~ Almost Monday | Song ~ "Jupiter"

With little fresh snow across the interior these last few weeks, it has been challenging for mountain resorts throughout the region. Again, I praise the Apex outdoor maintenance crew for working so hard with what they have on the mountain, so we can enjoy the groomed runs daily. So let's "Rendezvous on Jupiter Juniper" to have some great turns together. The grooming has been excellent! Thank you for such a great job each and every day! Ski ya later.

Jay is a life-long skier, who has skied this great country from coast to coast. Join him this season in "Jay's Tune To Turn To" with whatever he finds to share. YouTube his tunes and join in the fun.



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Lifeskills

By Jim Ongena, Life Coach in Summerland

Bring Out The Best In Others

This is a skill I came up with many years ago as part of a leadership development course I developed and taught. Effective leadership requires mastering communication, strategic planning, conflict resolution, etc., but I believe that helping others reach their potential is even more important. And it was never in the standard leadership training manual. This involves modelling good behaviour, validating, encouraging, appreciating, giving trust and more. Once you actually choose to bring out the best, you will inevitably get better at it, no matter how you approach it. I suggest you start trying to do this with your spouse, kids, colleagues at work and even yourself. I find this effort very satisfying personally and always surprised at how relationships noticeably improve. Do EVERYONE a favour and give it a try.

To contact the author directly, email jimongena1@gmail.com.

Menopause: Coming In Hot

Submitted Press Release

Menopause: Coming in Hot is a powerful new documentary that challenges the traditional narrative around menopause - redefining it as an empowering transition rather than a stigmatizing one.

The film is the feature documentary debut of Victoria, BC born and raised director and executive producer Kate Green and is produced by Amber Orchard. Joining the producing team are Olivia Fellows and Jessica Young of Young Fellows Pictures. With a cast and crew comprised of approximately 90% women, the production is authentic in both its approach and portrayal of one of life's most natural - yet overlooked - cycles. Over one billion women worldwide are postmenopausal. Green, known for the award-winning short documentaries *Not A Stranger* and *Melting Stars*, brings a deeply personal perspective to the project, which was inspired by her own experience navigating peri-menopausal symptoms.

"As I started doing some research for myself, I realized there was a lot of information, but not enough distilled information", Green says. "There was confusion around what to do. Something I've learned is that it's not just about treating symptoms - it's about treating yourself as a whole person. And the ripple effects are significant. Studies show that unmanaged symptoms cost billions of dollars to Canadian employers due to reduced hours or taking leave. This doesn't just impact women's health; it has economic consequences for the workforce and the healthcare system if women can't access the support they need."

Filmed in Vancouver, Victoria, and Toronto, Menopause: Coming in Hot combines personal testimonies with expert commentary to explore public perceptions and the gaps in education around menopause. Drawing on real-life experiences, the film deepens understanding of its social, mental, and physical impacts - not only for the women experiencing it, but for younger generations who may not yet have considered it. Smart and biting funny, the documentary is a bold call for education, empowerment, and open conversation - ensuring the next generation is informed, supported, and unafraid to face menopause head-on.

"I would like audiences to see a regular person like me going through this process", Green adds, "and celebrating a new chapter in a fun, strong, and inspirational way."

This documentary will be available on TELUS Optik Video on Demand and on the TV+ app following its run in the Victoria Film Festival held at the Capitol 6 Theatre on February 8, 2026.

Kate Green spends a little time at Apex every year, so it has a special place in her heart, hence sharing this in Apex Matters.

UNISUS Announcement

Submitted Press Release

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



CatMatch



Meet Oakley

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

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

Visit alleycatsalliance.org for more information.



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South Okanagan Similkameen Community Connections Volunteer Centre Update

By Laura Turnbull, Board Chairperson

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Preserved Light

PHOTOGRAPHY



@preservedlight