

Kettle River Echo

Trails to the Boundary Society
3990 Hwy 3, Rock Creek, B.C., V0H 1Y0

Distributed to: Bridesville, Rock Creek,
Midway, Greenwood, Westbridge, and Beaverdell

News Items & Ads: echoeditor@trails-to-the-boundary.com

Contributions for the next newsletter are asked to be submitted no later than the 15th of the month.

RIVERSIDE CENTRE CELEBRATES VOLUNTEERS & WRAPS UP SENIORS BEING SEEN FOR 2024

December 11th saw a lively gathering at Riverside Centre. We celebrated the last session of Seniors Being Seen, before the holiday, for the year 2024. Regular programs resume Thursday, January 16th, 2025. As well, a volunteer appreciation luncheon (catered by Leslie Hall) was provided for the 16 faithful women who work tirelessly to keep Riverside Centre staffed.



Kindness is like snow. It beautifies everything it covers.

~Kahlil Gibran



WISHES FULFILLED

The generosity of members of the community shone through in the overwhelming participation in the "wish tree" project.

Thirty three envelopes were placed on the tree containing information about children hoping for a visit from Santa.

West Boundary Elementary provided the list of children and their hopes for items Santa might bring.

Envelopes were taken and gifts were purchased for the man in red to deliver Christmas Eve.

Sincere thanks to all who initiated the project, bought the gifts, and saw that deliveries were made on time.

It does "take a village".....



RCMS Invites Your Ideas

Rock Creek Medical Society would like to let everyone know of the meeting dates in the upcoming months and would like to invite anyone who is interested to come to the meetings. There are many groups who use our clinic and we could use help and suggestions in the running of it.

Please note the following meeting dates and put them on your calendar

- January 30 @ 6 pm
- February 20 @ 6 pm
- April 3 @ 6 pm
- May 1 (tentative) @ 6 pm
- June 19 (AGM tentative) @ 6 pm

Come join us to make a better society to help cover all our needs in the community.

If you would like more information you can contact Bonnie @ 250-528-0185



As president of Trails to the Boundary Society, I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely wish a meaningful holiday season to each of you living in the West Boundary. It is my fondest hope that we can rely on community, optimism, and kindness to propel us through 2025.



Sincerely,
Pat Henley

merry christmas



Richard Cannings, MP
South Okanagan-
West Kootenay

HELPING CANADIANS THROUGH TOUGH TIMES

From the Hill

As the snow begins to fall, we are reminded that the holidays are just around the corner. But as we reach for the thermostat on these colder days, we face the reality that so many Canadians are finding it harder than ever to make ends meet. The rising cost of living has stretched family budgets to their breaking points, leaving people struggling to afford basics like food, housing, and utilities—let alone gifts and celebrations.

The NDP has been pushing for the removal of GST on daily essentials in an aim to address affordability in a substantial and permanent way. While the Liberals have partially responded with a winter GST holiday on some items, the measure falls terribly short and ignores our calls for removal of GST on bills like home heating, internet and cell phones, and essentials like diapers.

Moreover, the exemptions will only provide temporary relief. It's clear that much more needs to be done to address the systemic issues that are leaving Canadians behind.

The government's secondary proposal to offer relief this holiday season is the "Working Canadians Rebate," offering a \$250 cheque to individuals who earned up to \$150,000 in 2023. For single individuals with no children, the maximum payment will be around \$234, while families with children could receive up to \$467.

If passed, the rebate plan will send a one-time cheque to eligible individuals and families before the holidays. The plan could be a quick way to put money into the pockets of those who need it most and help Canadians with soaring grocery bills and other essentials. But this too is terribly flawed.

While this initiative aims to provide immediate relief, it notably excludes seniors and people with disabilities who aren't part of the workforce—a significant oversight that the NDP cannot support.

The NDP has emphasized that any affordability measures must include all vulnerable Canadians, not just those currently employed. We need to make sure that all Canadians who are struggling get the help they need. We have made it clear to the government that we will not support the proposed bill unless it is amended to extend the \$250 rebate to seniors and individuals with disabilities who are not working.

Moreover, what is needed is the permanent elimination of GST on daily essentials to provide ongoing support to struggling families, not just a brief tax holiday.

We've been vocal about the inadequacy of one-time payments as a long-term solution. The NDP believes the government needs to take a more comprehensive approach to tackling the affordability crisis. While we may support immediate relief measures like this rebate if they are expanded, they're band-aid solutions at best.

The NDP will continue to push for several additional measures to support Canadians during these tough times. We're calling for meaningful investments in affordable housing, increased social assistance rates, and further action to address corporate greed in sectors like grocery and oil. As well, a permanent removal of GST on essentials would provide ongoing relief to low- and moderate-income Canadians, ensuring they're better equipped to weather economic challenges.

Canadians are working harder than ever, but too many are still cutting back their grocery lists and cancelling activities their kids love because of rising costs. Meanwhile, billionaires and big corporations continue to enjoy tax breaks and record profits. That's why the NDP has consistently called for measures like a windfall profits tax on large corporations, ensuring that wealth is redistributed to those who need it most.

The holiday season should be a time of joy, not stress and worry. Yet, for far too many Canadians, it will be a season of tough choices and financial anxiety. While the Liberal government's GST holiday and rebate plan offers some hope, it's clear we need to think bigger. Canadians deserve a government that is willing to address the root causes of the affordability crisis and build a society where everyone can thrive—not just scrape by.

As your MP, I will continue to advocate for meaningful solutions that put people first. It's time for real leadership and bold action to ensure that no one is left behind. This holiday season let's not just talk about the spirit of giving—let's act on it.

As the days get shorter, and the nights get colder, it's a sure sign that the holiday season is upon us. Our communities in the West Boundary are very fortunate. Volunteers pull together to help each other and to celebrate the Christmas season. A welcome break from all the hard work everyone does during the year is much appreciated.

I just want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their contributions, no matter how large or small to the West Boundary, and to wish everyone a very merry Christmas.

May your health be your riches and your friends and family bring your joy.



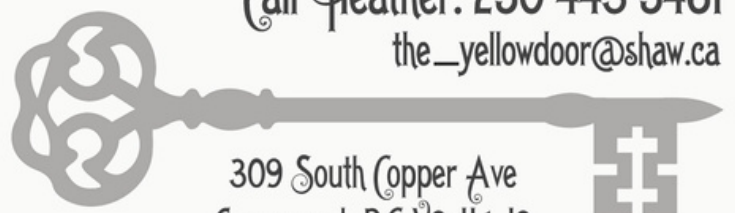
Sharen Gibbs
Director: RDKB/E West Boundary
C: 250.689.0177
E: areaedirector@rdkb.com

DIRECTOR'S

CORNER



Call Heather: 250 443 5461
the_yellowdoor@shaw.ca



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Greenwood, BC V0G 1J0

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THINKING OF YEAR-END CHARITABLE DONATIONS?

West Boundary Seniors' Housing Society is excited to invite you to participate with our non-profit organization, to provide for seniors in The West Boundary.

Ways your gift will help:

- Sustain affordable supported seniors' housing
- Continue affordable Meals on Wheels service (with the help of local volunteers)
- Support fun/inclusive bus trips for local seniors
- Promote connections with local school classes
- Fund leveling and resurfacing of the parking lot
- Make possible electric vehicle charging

Make a Gift today!

Call Us: 250-449-2842
 Email Us: parkviewmanor@shaw.ca



PARKVIEW MANOR
 670 NINTH AVENUE
 MIDWAY, BC

Motherwise

Pre and Postnatal Support

Being a mom can be amazing. It can also be stressful, difficult, and lonely.

Motherwise is a weekly peer support program for those seeking connection in the pre and postnatal period.

Share stories, connect with others, and get the support you need in a safe and confidential space.



Mondays

January 27, February 3, 10, 24, March 3, 10
Boundary Family Services
 9:30-11:30 am

Registration is Required

To register or to get more information, please call 250-442-2267 or email kristy.kuromi@bfiss.org

Boundary Family Services
 info@bfiss.org
 www.boundaryfamily.org

1200 Central Ave
 Grand Forks, BC V0H 1H0
 250-442-2267 or 1-877-442-5355

Baby's Best Chance

The Boundary's CPNP program



Baby's Best Chance (BBC) is a free prenatal and postnatal program serving Boundary families from Christina Lake to Big White and Bridesville.

Parents and caregivers can access current and evidence based information and support in the format that best suits their needs at any stage of parenting between a positive pregnancy test until their youngest child is 2 years old.

BBC offers group settings and one-to-one appointments.

Upcoming Baby Bumps and Beyond groups in Midway

Join us for group discussions on topics that matter to you: Prenatal Education, Labor and Delivery, Infant Development, Parenting Skills, Infant feeding, Maternal Mental Health and more
 10:00-11:30am at the Midway Public Library

- January 15
- February 19
- March 12
- April 9
- May 14
- June 11

Babies Best Chance is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada and facilitated by Kristy Kuromi
 For information and support in pregnancy or postpartum, contact 250-584-4292 ext 40258 or kristy.kuromi@bfiss.org

Boundary Family Services
 info@bfiss.org
 www.boundaryfamily.org

1200 Central Ave
 Grand Forks, BC V0H 1H0
 250-442-2267 or 1-877-442-5355

De-cember, de-clutter, de-tach and de-lete, anything that de values your life.

Don't bring it into 2025.

Pre and Postnatal Support in the West Boundary

Baby Bumps and Beyond

A free-drop in group for parents & caregivers

Wednesdays

Jan 15, Feb 19, March 12, April 9, May 14, June 11

MIDWAY PUBLIC LIBRARY
 10-11:30 am

Join us for group discussions on topics that matter to you

Prenatal Education, Infant Development, Parenting Skills, Infant feeding, Maternal Mental Health and more

Registration not required

Your Group Facilitators:
 Kristy Kuromi: Baby's Best Chance 250-442-2267 (40258)
 Haley Proudman: Infant Development 250-442-2267 (40234)
 info@bfiss.org

Boundary Family Services
 info@bfiss.org
 www.boundaryfamily.org

1200 Central Ave
 Grand Forks, BC V0H 1H0
 250-442-2267 or 1-877-442-5355

West Boundary Family Connections

Rock Creek Medical Centre
Every Friday 9:30 – 11:00

September to June



freepik.com

A free play group for families with at least one child aged 0-6.

A healthy snack will be provided.

Registration is not required for this program

For any further information please email:
mary-ann.dennis@bfiss.org



This program is presented by Boundary Family Services and funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada

Boundary Family Services
info@bfiss.org
www.boundaryfamily.org



1200 Central Ave
Grand Forks, BC V0H 1H0
250-442-2267 or 1-877-442-5355

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- DryShod & Baffin Boots
- West Coast Seeds & Garden Supplies
- Pet Toys & Treats
- Tack & Equine Supplies
- Jewelry, Wallets & Handbags
- Buck Knives & Hunting Supplies
- Fishing Supplies & Tackle

Ukrainian Christmas Customs are Unique & Symbolic

By: Vic Boychuk

Ukrainian Christmas customs are based on those of the pagan culture and religion, which have survived to this day. The Christmas holiday is the most important holiday for the Ukrainian people. Christianity was introduced into the Ukraine in 988 A.D. The pagan religion and traditions were too deeply rooted in the people to allow the Christian Church to simply eradicate them completely, so the Church accepted most of the ancient customs and holidays. Holidays like Winter Solstice, Feasts of Fertility, The Yule and many others became part of the Christian Christmas Holidays.

Ukrainian Christmas festivities begin on Christmas Eve (Gregorian calendar December 24; Julian calendar January 6) and end on the Feast of Epiphany. My parents and grandparents celebrated both and many Ukrainians that we know celebrate both days. The family gathers for supper with the appearance of the first star (Star of Bethlehem). The head of the house places a *didukh* (grandfather spirit) which is a sheaf of wheat (or other grain) under the icons in the house.

The table is covered with two tablecloths, one for the living members and one for the ancestors of the family. In pagan times, if you treated your ancestors with respect your life would be more prosperous. Some hay is spread under the table and under the tablecloth to remind us that Christ was born in a manger. An extra place setting is placed on the table for the deceased family members, whose souls come to partake in the food. Some also say the extra setting is for the traveler who has no place to go and is always welcome. The *kolach* (Christmas bread) is placed in the center of the table with a candle. The bread is round (representing eternal life) braided into a ring with three rings which represent the Holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). There are twelve meatless dishes in the supper, one dish for each of Christ's Apostles and meatless because there is a period of fasting until Christmas day. According to the ancient pagan belief the twelve dishes represent the twelve full moons of the year and meatless was a form of bloodless sacrifice to the gods.

The father offers a piece of *kolach* for every member and they dip it in honey and eat it. He then leads the family in a prayer. After the prayer the father extends his best wishes with the greeting "Khrystos Razhdaietsia" (Christ is born) and the reply is "Saviyet Yaho" (let us glorify him). Then the family sits down for the meal.

The first and main dish in the *Sviata Vecheria* (Holy Supper) is the *kutia* (wheat, poppy seed, honey, nuts) known as God's Food. The eldest of the family throws a spoonful of the *kutia* to the ceiling. The more kernels that stick to the ceiling, the greater the good luck in the new year (we skip this one). Then comes the *borsht* (beet soup) which is eaten with the *kolach* (which has been blessed in church). Then comes the rest: two kinds of fish—salmon, whitefish. or pickled herring (the silver color of the fish is a sign of good luck), *perowhe* (*pyrohy*), (stuffed with sauerkraut, mushrooms, prunes, potatoes, etc.), *kalocheni fasulie* (mashed baked beans), *pidpenky* (fried mushrooms with onions, garlic) or beets with mushrooms, *holubtsi* (cabbage rolls with rice, onions and garlic), sauerkraut and peas, *Pompushky* (deep fried dough with poppy seed, honey, lemon) and ending with *uzvar* (stewed fruit). The *uzvar* is made up of twelve kinds of fruit mixed together.

In the afternoon of Christmas Day, into the night and through the following days, groups of carollers visit homes, singing ancient and modern carols, bringing traditional Yuletide greetings.

Some of these traditions vary somewhat depending on the region.

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

~Vic & Monika



Energy Savings & Resilience Made Easy! Explore RDKB’s HomeSmart Guide and Win Big!

The Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (RDKB) has launched a new RDKB HomeSmart Guide to help residents understand how energy efficiency and resilient upgrades can work together to improve comfort, lower energy costs, and prepare homes for climate impacts.

RDKB Board Chair Andy Morel highlighted the value of the program and guide, saying, “The RDKB HomeSmart program, and this new guide are valuable resources for our communities. They empower residents to make informed decisions about energy efficiency and climate resilience, supporting the RDKB Climate Action Plan, as we all work toward a safer, more sustainable future.”

Freya Phillips, RDKB’s Senior Energy Specialist, explains the purpose of the guide: “Currently, there is no other homeowner resource that combines energy efficiency and resiliency measures tailored to our specific climate hazards in the RDKB, such as wildfires, drought, extreme weather and floods. Whether you’re considering a renovation or simply looking to understand the benefits of a particular upgrade, this guide offers valuable support for creating a healthier, more comfortable and resilient home.”

“This is a great visual and easy-to-read guide for anyone interested in how our region’s climatic hazards can impact their home’s comfort and safety” adds Raven Atherton, RDKB’s Retrofit Program Coordinator. “Whether you’re a homeowner, tenant, or renovation contractor, if you’re looking to make home improvements, you’ll want to take a look,” she adds.

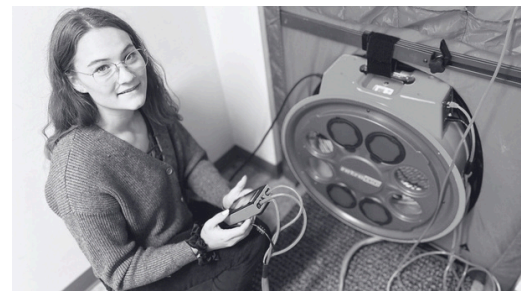
The launch of the RDKB HomeSmart Guide coincides with the RDKB HomeSmart program’s first anniversary. To celebrate, one RDKB resident will have the chance to win a pre-upgrade EnerGuide assessment which provides valuable insights into impactful home upgrades to improve energy efficiency and a post-upgrade EnerGuide assessment which measures the energy savings. The combined prize is valued at around \$1,000, and provided courtesy of FortisBC.

To enter the ‘Read to Win’ RDKB HomeSmart Challenge, RDKB residents need to visit homesmart.rdkb.com to read the guide, answer three questions about the guide, and submit their entry by January 31, 2025. The contest is open to both new and current participants who have signed up to the RDKB HomeSmart program. It excludes residents within the city limits of Rossland who have a separate program, Retrofit Assist.

The RDKB HomeSmart Guide organizes information into key areas: the building envelope, heating and cooling, interior, and exterior. Adopting the House As A System Approach, it also covers essential maintenance and preparedness tips.

To access the guide, register for the RDKB HomeSmart program, and enter the Read to Win’ RDKB HomeSmart Challenge, visit <http://homesmart.rdkb.com>.

The RDKB HomeSmart program is supported by The Columbia Basin Trust, Fortis BC and The Regional District of Kootenay Boundary.



Raven with a blower door test. It measures air leakage and is included in the pre and post energy assessment carried out by a certified energy advisor



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Pennie’s Cut Above

Located in the basement of Parkview Manor. Open on Mondays call ahead to make a appointment. Been cutting and perming hair for 40 yrs!!!

670-9th ave Midway

Call (250) 449-2145

Sidley Mountain Cowboy Church
hopes you join us on

CHRISTMAS EVE



December 24th
 6:00 to 7:00

“Good, Good News”

A “down home” get together you won’t want to miss.

See you all at the Bridesville Hall

Christmas Carols, Christmas Readings, Candle Lighting

**THE MOST USELESS
 CHRISTMAS DECORATION
 IS MOM'S STOCKING. I
 SAID WHAT I SAID.**

THE 40TH ANNUAL ROCK CREEK CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR, DEC 7

From almost all measures and viewpoints, this again was a huge success. Thank you to Deb and Glenda for your organizational skills and efforts to make it another wonderful community event. There were lots of other cheerful and creative elves involved in setting up the display tables, the lunchroom, the festive decorations and taking down all of that. Their efforts and enthusiasm are so important to make events like this successful!

Usually parking attendants, don’t get many high fives or thank yous or even smiles, but this event is so “down home” and friendly that the parking elves received plenty of each. Some people came out to warm themselves by our fire, enjoy a coffee (or bannock) and just shoot the breeze with us. Inside, there was a huge hubbub of stirred-up shoppers buying interesting and diverse works of art and crafts, visiting old friends, and enjoying the delicious food from the RC Trading Post with desserts from our volunteer baker-elves. No wonder many (mainly deafish old guys like me!) came outside to give their ears (and pocketbooks?) a rest and escape that festive frenzy!

The Rock Creek and Boundary Fair Association is an important part of our communities. We sponsor and hold events like this craft fair. These affairs foster community interaction, provide a venue for our talented contributors, as well as monetarily and morally support individuals and other non-profit groups like WI and the Food Share.

Some Results of the RCBFA’s Rock Creek 40th Annual Christmas Craft Fair

- # of Attendees: There were no admission tickets sold, but judging by the number of cars in the parking lots and the many generous donations to the food share, I’d say over 400 people came out.
- # of Volunteer Elves: 20+
- # of Display Tables: 48 mostly local artisans and crafters
- Money Donated to the Boundary Food Share: \$970
- Money raised for the RCBFA: several hundred dollars
- Money Raised for WI’s Quilt Raffle: \$200 at the craft fair, \$200 at the fall fair and over \$1100 overall
- # Smiles and Social Interactions: innumerable and priceless!

On behalf of the RCBFA board of Directors, Membership, and our Dedicated Volunteers (and Elves), I wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous and Happy NewYear!

If you wish to volunteer at the fall fair, future craft fairs, work bees, or even become a member of the RCBFA please contact Dean Corbett at president@rockcreekfalfair.ca or 250-446-2420.

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The West Boundary Senior Housing Society is holding its AGM on Wednesday, January 29th, 2025 at 1:30 pm at Parkview Manor, 670 Ninth Avenue in Midway. Society membership is only \$10 annually, and we are also looking for new board members to join our team. If you are interested in seniors and seniors' housing in our area, please consider attending the AGM and/or joining the board. For more information, contact Judy at 250-445-6352.

Best of the season to all Echo readers, subscribers, and contributors. Special acknowledgement to Vic Boychuk for his regular, historical contributions — they are most anticipated.



ROCK CREEK COMMUNITY MEDICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN

You are invited to support the Rock Creek Community Medical Society for a Variety of Activities and Projects

- Acquisition of Service Items such as Walkers, Crutches, etc.
 - Purchase of medical equipment
 - Paving/sealing the parking lot

Donations can be Made as Follows

- By cheque – Mail cheque to Rock Creek Community Medical Society at P.O. Box 170, Rock Creek, BC V0H 1Y0
- E-Transfer – The transfer would be to the Rock Creek Community Medical Society by sending it to
 - Drop it off (cheque or cash) at the Medical Centre between 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Mondays through Fridays

Note: All donations are eligible for a tax deductible receipt.

For a 2024 receipt, donation must be received by Dec. 31, 2024. Any donation received on or after Jan. 1, 2025 will receive a tax deductible receipt for 2025.

Thank you for choosing to donate to the Medical Society.

For further information please contact:
Harald Zinner at 250-446-2517

REWARDS OF VOLUNTEERING

I am honoured to be a volunteer member for The Riverside Centre in Rock Creek, The Rock Creek Medical Society, W.I. and Westbridge Thrift Store. However, what truly fills my heart is the immense gratitude I have for working alongside our incredible volunteers within our communities. Together, we form close-knit teams with shared visions of creating a positive impact that extends far beyond ourselves. We aspire to ignite hope, foster renewal, and facilitate transformation. This vision drives every action I take. My ultimate goal is to live a life of abundant generosity, joy, and extravagance, all for the benefit of others.

Submitted by Adrienne Haynes

StellerVista credit union

West Boundary Branch 250.445.9900
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RDKB BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

(November 13, 2024 Board meeting)

GRANTS-IN-AID DISTRIBUTED FOR AREA E/WEST BOUNDARY

- Westbridge Recreation Society - Christmas dinner: \$500
- Midway Public Library - Area E library cards: \$5,000

Board Elections

The Board of Directors elected Rossland Mayor Andy Morel as Board Chair and City of Trail Councillor Terry Martin as Board Vice Chair for 2025.

Director Appointments

Directors Andy Morel and Bill Wenman were appointed to the Southeastern BC Regional Connectivity Committee for a one-year term (2024-2025); Director Frank Marino was appointed to Selkirk Innovates for the year 2025; the Board Chair and the Board Vice Chair, as Alternate, were appointed to the Municipal Finance Authority for the year 2025. The Board Chair and Director Linda Worley, as Alternate, were appointed to the Municipal Insurance Association (MIA) for the year 2025.

(November 27, 2024 Board meeting)

GRANTS-IN-AID DISTRIBUTED FOR AREA E/WEST BOUNDARY

- Kettle River Museum - 2025 BC Economic Summit: \$1,370

Delegations

1. Kootenay Employment Services & Community Futures East Kootenay: The Regional Childcare Project aims to strengthen the childcare sector by helping with recruitment of workers and supporting childcare centres. The delegation is seeking \$15,000 from the regional districts in the Kootenays.
2. Kootenay & Boundary Farm Advisors Re: Progress Update: Since 2017, they have provided extension services to farmers. In the RDKB, 196 farms and 273 producers have been supported. In 2025, the Advisors will continue to deliver services on the ground, collaborate/connect, and upgrade platforms.

Short term/Equipment Financing

The Board authorized a number of five year loans: These included a Structure Protection Unit for the Emergency Preparedness Service, a new fire engine for the Kootenay Boundary Regional Fire & Rescue Service, a new fire tender for the Beaverdell Fire Service and a new fire engine/fire rescue truck for the Big White Fire Service.

Recycle BC Depot Contract Renewal

Depot services for the collection of residentially generated packaging and printed paper materials will continue under agreement with Recycle BC at the Rock Creek Transfer Station, West Boundary Landfill, Christina Lake Transfer Station and McKelvey Creek Landfill for an initial term of January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2029.

Next Board meeting: Wednesday, January 15, 2024

This is a portion of the RDKB Board Highlights. To subscribe directly to the full RDKB Board Highlights: <https://jointheconversation.rdkb.com/board-highlights>



ROCK CREEK COMMUNITY MEDICAL SOCIETY

MEET & GREET

Come out and socialize, find out what's happening with your community clinic and health services.

Meet the directors to socialize and catch up on the Clinic happenings.

Sunday, Jan. 12th, 2025

Basement of the Clinic

2:00 pm to 4 p.m

Refreshments available



Boundary Métis Community Association

Invite you to join us...

Hello Winter

SOLSTICE

OUTDOOR GATHERING & BONFIRE

DECEMBER 21, 10am—2pm

GREENWOOD BALL FIELD FIRE PIT

Indigenous Winter Games
- bring your family and make your team!
Food & Drinks - Prizes - Family Giveaway
Bonfire - Socializing - Drumming

EVERYONE WELCOME!

Grab your mittens, lawn chair, your drum & lets celebrate winter!

boundarymetiscommunity@gmail.com or 250-666-0284



“AN ALPHABET OF LOVE” BY LIZ BRYAN

This is going to be about letters (no, not love letters) but letters themselves. All 26 of them, in different shapes and conjuring up different memories.

Being a bit under the weather lately, feeling sorry for myself, and playing far too many games of Scrabble with my computer friends, I started to think about the letters of our alphabet and how incredible they are. Especially the shapes of the capitals: most of them straight and angular, like the A, K, T or N, easy to carve on a stone, and those delicious curves, the C, B and S. I remember watching my big sister drawing these magic signs onto paper and how I tried to copy them, my pencil uncooperative in my tight fist. I loved the G: it was a face with its tongue sticking out, the E like a rake on its side, the S like a snake.

Without these now familiar shapes, there would be no written words to send out into the world as stories or poems, or to scribe on gravestones. Our present alphabet began, we are told, with a few marks scratched or painted by nomadic tribes onto rocks. Then came the runes of the ancient Phoenicians and Celts and the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, all of them linking a standard set of symbols with meaning and with the sounds of the human voice. I think it was the ancient Greeks or Romans who created the first structured alphabet (the very word is an amalgam of Alpha and Beta, its first two letters.) And it was Christian monks who brought the Roman letters to Britain and made those beautifully illustrated manuscripts.

Twenty-two of our letters come directly from the Egyptians, more were added by the Romans, the rest filled in later, although for a while there was no J, W, or U, but other symbols, including a th, wy and eth. And Z was number 7 in the alphabet until the Romans cast it further down. Much tidying up was needed to give us today's version. Which is perfect. We can all recite its little sing-song verse, the one we learned in kindergarten.

As a lover of words and therefore of letters, I suggest that as the New Year approaches, we should run down the alphabet, using its historic arrangement to remind us of what and who we love and how lucky we are to have them. Most of us are not H for hungry, or P for prisoner, or R for refugee, but hopefully, C for contented.

I will start; A is for Amaryllis, a bright burst of scarlet, B is for Books and Babies, C is for Carrot Cake, my favourite D is for son David, E is for England, F is for Feathers and Fields, G is for — But I won't bore you with my whole list, it's too long, and too revealing. Besides, I want to tell you of the transformative qualities of the sibilant letter S, that not only looks like a snake, but it also hisses like a snake. As a Scrabblor, I treasure the tile with the snake on it because it has the ability to make things plural. An S (or sometimes an ES) tacked onto an existing word will score a lot of points. This is easy. But also remember, an S placed at the beginning of certain words can change their meanings entirely. Add an S to witch or pan or wine, word, log, tack, wing, wipe, lice or kid and you have ten brand new things! Amazing.

And I will end this with another of my favourite words. It starts with a Ki and ends with, you guessed it, SS.

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Crossword

Across

- 1. Bestial hideaway
- 5. Letter before epsilon
- 10. Frank's daughter
- 14. Lot of rows to hoe?
- 15. Lunchbox cookies
- 16. Mild expletive
- 17. Chinese restaurant offering
- 19. ___ mater
- 20. Range of vision
- 21. Secret store
- 22. Preamble
- 23. Heroic narrative
- 24. Baseball league
- 25. Basic commodity
- 28. Northwestern U.S. capital
- 30. Kind of premiere
- 31. Well-defined prevailing wind
- 35. Start for lock or knock
- 36. Earthenware jars
- 37. Smuggler's weight, perhaps
- 38. Surpassing everything
- 40. Spanish title of respect
- 41. Some siblings
- 42. Show for critics
- 43. Union of old
- 46. Long stoles
- 47. Films with casts of thousands
- 48. One of the world's religions
- 50. Gift for a malihini
- 53. Computer insert
- 54. Tense tennis situation
- 56. Charge for a hand delivery?
- 57. Blow away
- 58. Tuftlike mass
- 59. Orderly and systematic
- 60. Condition of many fences
- 61. Porgy and bass

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17				18							19			
20					21						22			
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43	44	45							46					
47							48	49				50	51	52
53							54					55		
56							57					58		
59							60					61		

Down

- 1. Be without
- 2. Need liniment
- 3. Word with Age or cross
- 4. Business solicitor, for short
- 5. Senility
- 6. Susan's soap role
- 7. Poland's Walesa
- 8. Strong puff
- 9. Burro
- 10. Extremely sad films
- 11. Dome-shaped structure
- 12. Title giver
- 13. Sixth president
- 18. Heat to the boiling point
- 22. Tense choice?
- 23. Type of ballot
- 24. Pageant contestant
- 25. Absorbent stick
- 26. Musical sound
- 27. They may be fine
- 28. Ducks and most people have them
- 29. Viva voce
- 31. Comic King
- 32. One from Hanover
- 33. Balm ingredient, perhaps
- 34. Even opposite
- 36. "Wanna make something ___?"
- 39. Is indebted
- 40. Disney dog
- 42. Taken to the cleaners
- 43. Enclosed automobile
- 44. State one's belief
- 45. Western scene, e.g.
- 46. Five-alarm, e.g.
- 48. "___ La Douce"
- 49. When it's saved it's taken
- 50. 1953 Caron role
- 51. He lived for 905 years
- 52. Yen
- 54. Help at the checkout counter
- 55. Switch setting

Solution on page 4

deck the halls
AND NOT YOUR FAMILY
fa la la la la la la la la

Little boy tells his nursery teacher he found a dead cat.

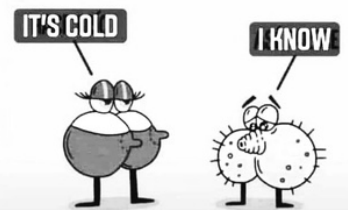
"How did you know it was dead?" asks the teacher.

"Because I pissed in its ear & it didn't move" says the boy.

"You did what!?" shrieks the teacher.

"You know" explains the boy, "I leant over & went Pssst & it didn't move!"

Evening news is where they begin with "Good evening," and then proceed to tell you why it isn't.



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- **Cribbage** @ Parkview Manor (6:30 pm)

TUESDAYS

- **Musical Jam** @ Midway Seniors' Centre (2 pm - 4 ish) every 1st and 3rd Tuesday
- **Greenwood Senior's Thrift Store** open 11 am - 3 pm

WEDNESDAYS

- **West Boundary Lil' Explorers** @ McMynn Village Park in Midway (9:30 am - 10:30 am) running July 3 - August 28
- **Greenwood Senior's Bingo** @ 1 pm

THURSDAYS

- **Kettle River Horse Club** meetings @ 7 pm @ the Riverside Centre in RC (second Thursday of each month)
- **Kettle River Art Club** in Greenwood meets on the 1st Thursday of each month. New members and guests welcome! Located in the McArthur Centre, 1375 Veteran's Lane. Meeting times vary. Please email for more details to: info@kettleriverart.org Several Art Markets are planned throughout the year. For a schedule, more information on upcoming markets and vendor applications, please email: markets@kettleriverart.org
- **Greenwood Senior's Thrift Store** open 11 am - 3 pm

FRIDAYS

- **Family Connections** (9:30 am - 11 am) @ Rock Creek Medical Centre

SATURDAYS

- **Greenwood Senior's Thrift Store** open 11 am - 3 pm (closed Saturdays of a long weekend)
- **Lions Meat Draw & 50/50** from 3-5 pm at Prospector Pub in Rock Creek

SUNDAYS

- **"In the Dell Art Zone"** (1-4 pm) @ Beaverdell Community Hall

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21 (10 AM-2 PM) @ GREENWOOD BALL FIELD FIRE PIT

- Hello Winter Solstice Outdoor Gathering and Bonfire

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24 (6-7 PM) @ BRIDESVILLE HALL

- Sidley Mountain Cowboy Church

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12 (2-4 PM) @ ROCK CREEK MEDICAL CLINIC BASEMENT

- Rock Creek Community Medical Society Meet & Greet

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15 (10-11:30 AM) @ MIDWAY PUBLIC LIBRARY

- Baby Bumps & Beyond (Pre and Postnatal Support)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15 (10-11:30 AM) @ BOUNDARY FAMILY SERVICES (GF)

- Baby's Best Chance (Pre and Postnatal Support)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16 (1:30 PM) @ RIVERSIDE CENTRE

- Seniors Being Seen resumes programming

MONDAY, JANUARY 27 (9:30-11:30 AM) @ BOUNDARY FAMILY SERVICES (GF)

- Motherwise (Pre and Postnatal Support)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29 (1:30 PM) @ PARKVIEW MANOR

- West Boundary Senior Housing Society AGM

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30 (6 PM) @ ROCK CREEK MEDICAL CENTRE

- Rock Creek Medical Society meeting

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