



the stew

ISSUE 7.12 | DECEMBER 2016 | FREE

the
fire issue

Featuring the
McLeese Lake VFD

Pages 6 & 7

hear

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On the Cover:

Join us for the fire issue, as we discuss everything fire-related; from the heroics of our featured Fire Department, to cooking over a fire and much more.

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Ready to pass the torch

BY CRAIG SMITH

Fire and cease fire. Two commands I heard many times when I was in my teens and 20's. At first I thought I would write my "fire" article about my time in the military, firing everything from a 9mm pistol, to a submachine gun, to a snipers rifle, to the 120mm canon of a Leopard tank, but after a chat with a couple of my staff about rumours going around town, I changed my mind and decided to write an article to clarify what my direction is going to be in the next year.

After over 30 years of being out of school, I thought I would like to change the direction my life was taking a little, and have decided I want to go back to school and get my MBA. This is not a decision I came by lightly. I put a lot of thought into what

I wanted to do and felt I needed a change. For me, the day to day running of a business is not what gets me going; it was the resurrecting of a fallen business that did it. There is nothing better in the world than having a client ask you to do business with them after telling your predecessor "no" a short time before. I feel we have finally resurrected *The Stew*. We have gone from 6 ad clients when we took over, to well over sixty, and from 16 pages to 36.

We are the happiest paper in the Cariboo; if you want the news, there is the *Tribune* and if you want controversy, there's the internet. I wanted *The Stew* to focus on positive, informative, and entertaining articles about the arts, entertainment, leisure and recreation in the Cariboo. After a few months with our new focus, we began to get

emails and letters telling us how much they enjoyed reading our little magazine, and they were not just reading a few articles, but reading the whole magazine from cover to cover. Since we took over *The Stew* more than three years ago, we have been consistent with our style, the themes, our distribution and the delivery dates. I need to thank my wife and my staff for helping mold the vision that I had for this awesome community-focussed magazine.

So that brings us to the main point of my article this month. My wife and I have grown our businesses together and a few months ago, she started her dream job. This left me without my partner at work and as much as I say I can handle it, it's a lot of work! Add to that the fact that I want to go back to school for a couple years, and I won't

be left with an awful lot of time for continuing to do everything I do now.

Christa and I have decided that because *The Stew* is at the stage where it has become an amazing, sustainable business, it is time to sell. I'm going to be very picky about whom I want to pass this torch on to, but for the right person this will be an amazing, easily grow-able, small business. We will give whoever it is all the tools to be successful at being a magazine publisher, and help them take *The Stew Magazine* to that next level. We are not, I repeat NOT, ever going to shut *The Stew* down, and if it takes a while to find that right person to take over who will be good for *The Stew*, then so be it. We have worked too hard to close down a business that is actually making money, and plays such an important, positive role in our community.

So that's the long and the short of it. The schooling I want to take is designed for working people, so it's four days of intensive study once a month, with assignments and research projects in between, plus I have some pretty incredible staff who takes up the slack for me, so I can continue *The Stew* if I don't find that perfect person to pass our baby on to right away.

If you are reading this and it sounds like something you would like to talk to me about, then phone me at the store or send me an email at craig@ccrproductions.ca and maybe you will be the next publisher/editor/owner of *The Stew*. And to everyone - Christa and I, and our staff would like to thank you for an amazing year, and may you have a merry holiday season and a very prosperous 2017.

ingredients

Pages 6 & 7



Featuring the **McLeese Lake VFD**

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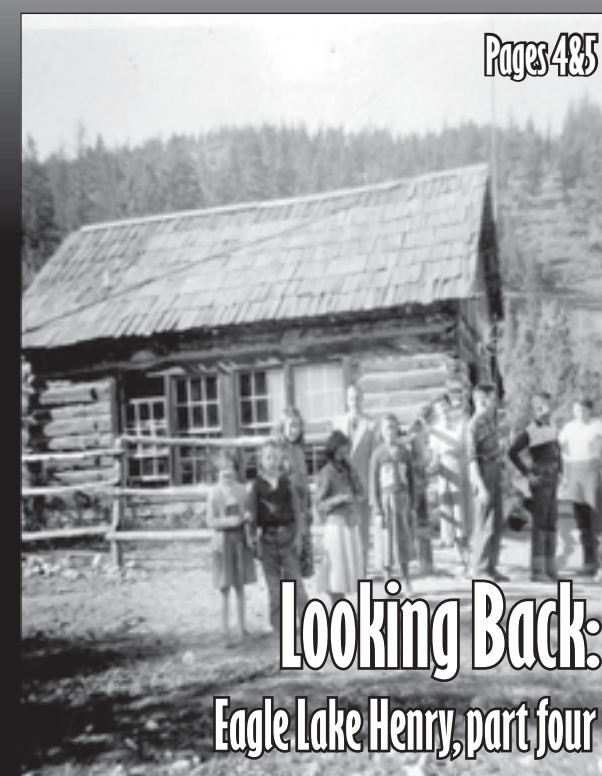
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"Time is fire in which we burn." ~Gene Roddenberry

Eagle Lake Henry, part four

Eagle Lake Henry's granddaughter, June Draney, says she and her sisters and brother did most of their schooling in the public school system in Tatlayoko Valley, just like their mother Mary Jane and Aunt Dona had.

June says she actually spent her first year at St. Joseph's Mission because there was no school in Tatlayoko that year. "It was okay with me. I had a 'big sister' to look after me. All the First Graders at the Mission were given a 'big sister' to show them around. It was lonely at first being away from my family. All these little beds we had to sleep in. My little sister was too young to go to school there but they sent her anyway. My 'big sister' was kind of harum-scarum, but she was okay. I made it through the year okay. The teacher had a

big class. I think I came second in math anyway. The next year the school opened in Tatlayoko so we went there."

The common theme running through Eagle Lake Henry's life was his sense of empowerment. Where many aboriginal people were run roughshod over by the Church and the Government, Henry wouldn't put up with people in authority trying to push him around. The power of being enfranchised and having 'white rights,' along with his own strong will, allowed him to put his children into residential school, then pull them out again with impunity.

June Draney gives an example of how Eagle Lake Henry held on to his dignity and inner authority when pressed by 'minions' in government.

"Grandpa Henry got

this letter saying he had to renew his guiding license. That meant he had to get in his vehicle and drive all the way to Alexis Creek where the game warden always helped him fill it all out. This was a three-hour drive down the old Chilko River Road.

"This time there was a new guy in there. Grandpa walked in and there didn't seem to be anybody around, and the office door was kind of open so he walked in.

"I don't know if he startled the guy or he was asleep, but he told Grandpa to go way back down there and then you come back and knock on the door. Grandpa said he just kept walking and drove back home."

"He said he wrote a letter to Victoria explaining what happened to him. The game warden was trying to find out who

wrote the letter for Henry because he couldn't write. He got a hold of my uncle and he was kind of quizzing him. My uncle said, 'I don't know. He's got lots of friends and neighbours. He's got an ex-cop, Johnny Blatchford, for a neighbour. Anybody could have written the letter for him. Maybe next time you'll treat him a little different.'"

"The game warden got quite a scolding from Victoria. Henry said the roads were rough and the way he treated me, go way back and knock on the door.... He liked people to be honest with him and treat him like a human, I guess."

Going to school in Tatlayoko, June says she and her sister had to board out with the Purjue family while her parents, her brother Marvin, and Eagle Lake Henry



Looking Back

By Sage Birchwater

finished haying until October. "When we first started school we stayed in a tent for a month. Then Johnny and Edith Henderson said we might as well move down to their place. They had an old house so we moved there."

She says they had a pet wether (castrated) billy goat called 'Willie at Mountain House' before they started school.

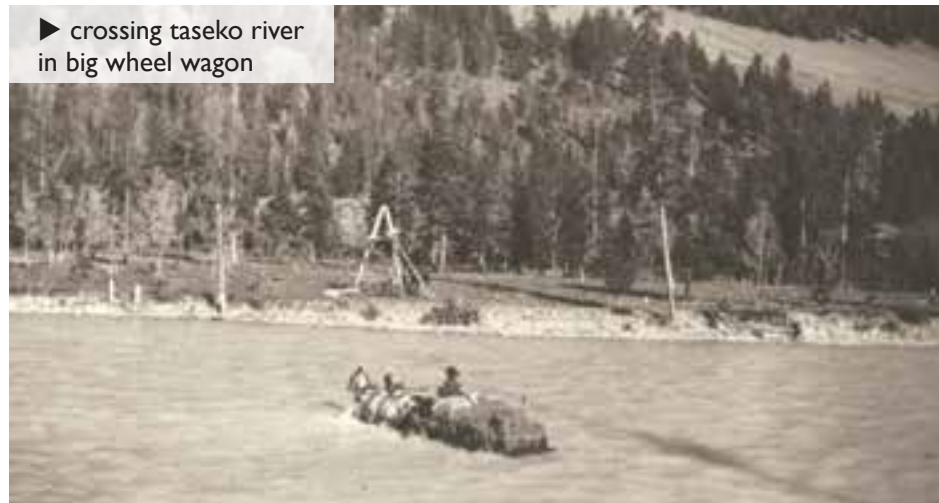
"We also had a dog and one pig, and were just like gypsies. My stepdad Pete Baptiste made a thing for Willie to ride in the back of the wagon. We had to cross the Chilko River and it was getting quite

late. Of course the dog had to swim. The little kids were crying because there was no room for Willie in the wagon, so he had to swim along with the dog. The kids were crying, 'Willie! Pete was hoping Willie would keep going down the river because he was always getting into mischief.'"

"We crossed the river and there were three channels. We got to the other side and were waiting. The kids were crying because they thought their goat got washed down the river. Then the dog came and was shaking himself off. Then all of a sudden we heard

hear

"The finest steel has to go through the hottest flame." ~Richard M Nixon



▶ crossing taseko river in big wheel wagon



▶ Hay wagon

...continued from page 4

this 'Baaaaah!' There was Willie, just a-coming. He didn't have time to shake himself off until he got to the wagon, then he shook himself off. We got our goat and took him all the way to Tatlayoko. Then once we moved closer to neighbours we had to give him away because he was getting into mischief."

Policeman Johnny Blatchford throws Henry into the slammer

Johnny Blatchford was a member of the British Columbia Provincial Police Force in Williams Lake in 1937, when he met Eagle Lake Henry for the first time.

"Eagle Lake Henry was in town shipping cattle and he got drunk and was raising hell with his family, so they had me arrest him and put him in the coop. When he sobered up, he was a pretty good guy. And he was pretty sorry he was in the coop.

So I helped him get organized and he paid his \$10 fine."

In 1940, Johnny got posted to the provincial police detachment in Alexis Creek and he met Henry again when he came in to buy his trapping licence.

"I told him, 'Henry, I want to buy a place,' and he told me about Tsuniah Lake. The country was wide open, so I leased it right away."

Tsuniah Lake was 16 kilometres from Mountain House and Johnny became Henry's neighbour for 25 years.

"We used to go to Tatla Lake for groceries. In the winter, we'd cross the Chilko River with a team and sleigh, but we couldn't cross in high water. Then we'd take a boat and swim our horses across the river. We left a wagon on each side of the river so we could pick up our mail in Tatla Lake then go back home again. I lived there seven years before they put a bridge



across at Henry's Crossing."

June Draney remembers it was 1956 when the neighbours got together and put the bridge in at Henry's Crossing.

"The government must have put up some money, but the local people did all the work. Grandpa Henry didn't want just anybody to use his horses, so he got Alex Mattheson to skid the logs in. He knew Alex was good with horses."

Eagle Lake Henry visits the pen

June says with her Grandfather Henry's

'white rights,' it meant he could legally buy alcohol for himself, but he wasn't allowed to give it to other First Nations people.

"He bought liquor for native people who didn't have the right, and he went to jail for three months over that," June recalls. "I remember that because Granny and I had to come back home. I guess Grampa hired Harold Stuart to take us back to Chilko Lake with the car. He could have paid his fine but he wanted to see what Oakalla looked like."

...Next month read the conclusion of the Eagle Lake Henry adventures.



▶ School in Tatlayoko



▶ Xeni Gwet'in wagon

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flavour of the month

Featuring the McLeese Lake Volunteer Fire Department

BY CRAIG SMITH

Our feature personality for our month of 'fire' was going to be one of the members of the McLeese Lake Volunteer Fire Department, but after his insistence and hearing their story, we are featuring the whole department. If you ever get to meet their President/Deputy Chief, Ian Hicks, you will understand what I mean when I say I haven't met a man before with this much energy or enthusiasm for his community. After the first minute, I said I need to stop and turn on my recorder; I seemed to be missing a lot of the information he was giving me because it was coming at me so fast.

Ian has been living in McLeese Lake for nearly 26 years, and during that time, it has not had any emergency services. Six years ago, there was a tragedy near this little town where a car and a semi trailer rig collided and started on fire, and a family perished. The closest fire truck took an hour and a half to arrive; Ian thought enough was enough. He wanted to do something for his community so he personally went out and bought the first fire truck with his own money, and eventually bought two more. He filled the tank with water, gassed it up, and left it in the parking lot of the Café with the keys in it in case anyone needed it. Five years ago, more community members wanted to come on board and do something to help, so a society was formed.

The next five years

were a whirlwind of events, bringing their little Fire Department to the level that it's at now. The Society put out a plea for help in the way of personal equipment for their newly formed department, and as Ian said, someone was smiling on them from above. They received a call from the Victoria Airport Fire Fighters saying they had some gear for them, but it was in Kelowna, so come get it and bring a trailer. When they got to Kelowna, there was a ton of gear that had originally been collected to send to Afghanistan to help out there, but after a couple of the oxygen tanks had been converted into a bomb on the last shipment, they were told they couldn't ship again. Ian said they asked what they could have for their little Fire Department, and the Victoria crew said all of it. There was more equipment than they could ever imagine; some was used but a lot of it was new.

A lot of donations have found their way to this new Department because not only are companies seeing the value, but seeing the immense dedication these members have. They have seen donations from Gibraltar Mines, the West Fraser Truckers' Association, the CRD and Director Steve Forseth, Spectra Energy, John Cameron, and a fairly recent grant that our MLA Coralee Oakes helped secure. The McLeese Lake VFD also collects bottles and cans, hosts farmers' markets and sells burg-

ers to raise the funds needed to sustain their society, which has now also bought all the fire trucks from Ian for what he paid for them.

This new Fire Department's first fire call was a 5 kilometre grass fire, caused by a malfunctioning train car that shot sparks into the dry grass near the Soda Creek Corn farm. Since then, the grateful owners of the farm have supplied corn for the society to sell as their way of saying thanks.

This crew that started by a few wanting to protect their community has grown to 16 members; 12 now trained, 9 first responders, 1 EMR and 3 traffic controllers.

Tori Lee is in charge of the first responders and would like to thank the Horsefly Volunteer Fire Department for the donation of their fully-outfitted first responder van. Their training has, for the most part, been done by Captain Stan McCarthy from the 150 Mile Fire Department, to which they say they owe a huge debt of gratitude.

This is an extremely humble bunch of people whose only wish is to do what ever they can to help their community. They are learning, and feel their job is to stop fires from spreading and help where they can. Their next project is to find some land and build a Fire Hall, so if you are going through McLeese Lake and see a farmers' market or a big box for bottles and cans, help them out - they are the smallest Fire Department in the area with the biggest hearts.





"Love is friendship set on fire." ~Jeremy Taylor

Keep your pets warm this season

BY CHERI GALATIUK, DVM

As the cold weather approaches, we often find ourselves seeking heat or warmth. Dreams of hot chocolate, snuggled under a cozy blanket beside a fireplace or a woodstove seem surreal in frozen weather. Just as we ourselves seek warmth in the chilly cold, our pets do the same. Here are some wintertime tips to keep your furry family fiery warm and happy over the cold months this year:

Protect those paws! Cats and dogs have sensitive feet when it comes to cold. Protecting your dogs' feet by having them wear booties can help. This not only keeps them warm in winter months but also keeps snowballs

from forming in-between their toes. If salt or other irritants have been applied to roads or sidewalks, booties can act as a barrier to keep their paws clean and dry. If you have an amazing cat that will wear booties, please take a picture! If not, just limit your cats' outdoor time when the temperatures turn frigid. Most cats are smart and won't want to head outside if the weather is too cold.

Watch those ears. Ear tips of cats and dogs don't have a lot of protection from the weather. Ears can become frostbitten if exposed to cold for too long. Most pets won't handle their ears being covered so limit outdoor time when the temperature drops.

Provide a warm bed. Just as we need a safe warm place to sleep, so do our cats and dogs! This has different meanings for different individuals as some breeds can tolerate the cold better than others. However ALL animals need a place where they can feel warm and safe whether it is a heated dog house, access to a warm garage or nestled next to you on the couch.

Make sure they have water. Water freezes when the temperature drops below zero. As simple as this sounds, some owners forget this basic chemistry concept and allow a dog or cat's water bowl to remain frozen. Animals need continuous access to fresh water and having an accessible source indoors or in a heated dish is a necessity.

Be safe when starting your vehicle. Cats in the cold look for a warm place to nestle. In



the cold months this can mean crawling up into the hood or sitting on your tires of your car or truck. If you live in an

area with outdoor cats, it's good practise to give your hood a couple of "bangs" as you get in to start your car.

Hope these tips help keep all our furry friends healthy and fiery warm as winter freezes over!



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“Seek those who fan your flame.” ~Rumi

Discovering Valley of Fire State Park



BY SYLVIA RASHBROOK OF ALL-WAYS TRAVEL

I have been to the State of Nevada, but I had never heard of the gem that is Valley of Fire State Park, so it was with anticipation that I embarked on the journey of discovering its secrets.

This park is located approximately fifty miles northeast of Las Vegas, near Overton, Nevada. Its structures of mountainous projections lies at an elevation of 402-917 meters, and covers about 42,000 acres. The Park adjoins the Lake Mead Recreational Area on the east side at the Virgin River convergence. The Valley of Fire Road runs

through the Park; almost 17 kilometers in length and connecting the east and west entrances.

The area contains eerie projections of brilliant red sandstone, limestone and shale, giving it an amazing natural beauty. If you are fortunate enough to use the trails, you will find breathtaking views of aged red mountains coupled with unbelievable colours and formations. You will soon discover that the Park is a photographer's dream. Once you see the red sandstone and landscape, you will understand why it is called The Valley of Fire. The rock formations and the stark beauty of the

Mojave Desert will capture your imagination, and take you back to a time when dinosaurs roamed the earth.

Summer temperatures in this desert often exceed 100°F (38°C); so the best time to tour The Valley of Fire is during Spring and Fall, with comfortable temperatures around 70-85°F (21-29°C).

The history of the Park is fascinating. Research states that the Park was first used by the “Basket Maker” people around 300BC; then, later by the Anasazi Pueblo farmers who lived in the nearby Moapa Valley. The valley, fertile because of the Muddy River, led the people to use this area for

that reside in this park are the raven, house finch, sage sparrow, and the road runner.

At first glance you may think that this park is devoid of plants, but that is untrue. It is home to the beavertail cactus, the creosote bush, the burro bush, the brittletail bush, the cholia cactus, the desert mallow, the desert marigold, the indian bush and many others that only the discerning eye can see.

The Valley of Fire State Park is the oldest and largest park in Nevada, and was dedicated in 1935. It is one of the most impressive parks in the United States with its remnants of prehistoric times. There is much to see; the tourism center features comprehensive interpretive displays and exhibits of local ecology, geology and prehistory. The Park's many trails lead visitors past incredible formations, like the Atlati Rock which features many examples of the ancient Indian petroglyphs. The most popular trails include the Mouse's Tank which leads to the petroglyphs and several natural water tanks in the sandstone formations. The area was named for Mouse, a Palute Indian. It was said that Mouse was suspected of a number of crimes in 1897, and he was said to have retreated to this area to avoid capture. Interesting!

You can also see the ‘beehives’ which are unique formations in the shape of beehives, made up of layers

of silt. Along the trails you will encounter petrified (and I don't mean scared!) logs. The logs have lain so long in the heat that they have become fossilized. The Elephant Rock is an amazing structure formed into a shape of an elephant due to the erosion and petrification of silt and sand over hundreds of years. Other points of interest are the White Domes featuring their contrasting brilliant colours, and Seven Sisters composed of seven tall, red, eroded boulders.

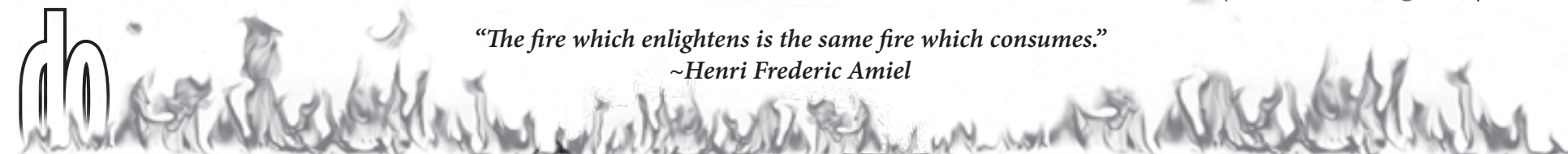
Because of the stark beauty of the Valley of Fire Park, it has become a popular location to shoot automobile and other commercial videos. It has also witnessed several movies made such as *Viva Las Vegas*, *The Professionals*, *Total Recall* and *Star Trek: Generations* where fictionalized Captain James Kirk died.

In most recent years, the Park has become popular for weddings. The breathtaking and colourful landscape add eye-popping drama to the photography of the wedding party. Wedding guests can camp in their RVs as there are plenty of available campsites, or choose to stay in a Las Vegas hotel.

If you are a nature buff, love to hike and camp-out, this park may be the place for you to visit. Speaking for myself, I would love to see this place. Call us at 250-392-6581 for flights, tours, car rentals, or if you want to get married at the Valley of Fire State Park, and let us help you organize your trip.

food gathering, hunting and religious ceremonies. Due to the lack of water, these people sought better living arrangements; however, they stayed long enough to produce awesome petroglyphs – drawings which are visible at several locations within the Park.

The Valley of Fire Park houses plenty of animals which are not seen by the majority of visitors. Be on the lookout for many different types of snakes and lizards. There are big horn sheep, coyotes, kit foxes, spotted skunks, jackrabbits, antelope, ground squirrels, and the famous desert tortoise. Species of birds



“The fire which enlightens is the same fire which consumes.” ~Henri Frederic Amiel

New board game ideas for the whole family

BY RICHARD BUTTERS, ADVENTURE GAMES

Sometimes the best Christmas gift that anyone can receive is the knowledge that, despite the way the world seems to be spiralling out of control some days, family values are still at the core of most holiday celebrations. It may seem like a given that Christmas is about time with family, but now-a-days, with people getting cell phones that cost more than an entire year's gifts, I often worry that Christmas may be forgotten as a time of love, and remembered as a time for gain. A fantastic way to reconnect with that family feeling is playing board games together.

Few Christmas traditions are as enduring as that of the family getting round the table together – sometimes between

Christmas dinner and the yearly re-watch of *Die Hard*.

Board games can really evoke a sense of wonder and teamwork for everyone. Overcoming common goals, working together, or intense competition can all be enriching experiences this winter, especially for those who would rather stay inside and warm.

If you're looking for a cooperative game to play, you could consider *Smash Up*, *Shadows Over Camelot*, or *Arkham Horror*. These games force the group to overcome challenges together in order to win, and can really bring everyone together.

Some families have a strong sense of competition, especially between siblings! A few board game gems for this category are *Betrayal at House on the Hill*, *Ticket*



to Ride, and *The Settlers of Catan*.

Trying out some new games this Christmas season could really enrich your time with family

and friends. Anything to get everyone around the table and laughing is a great way to spend an evening, especially with people you don't get to

see often. Making games a new family tradition is definitely in everyone's best interests to keep the whole family engaged and happy this holiday season.

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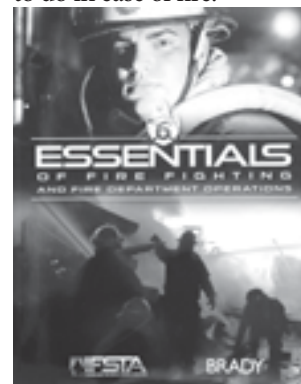
“Words are only painted fire; a look is the fire itself.” ~Mark Twain

‘Fire’ books for all ages



No Dragons for Tea: Fire Safety for Kids (and Dragons), by Jean E. Pendziwol

With its funny, rhyming verse and spunky illustrations, *Dragons for Tea* shows kids that learning about fire safety doesn't have to be scary. The story ends with The Dragon's Fire Safety Rhyme – a fun and easy way to remember what to do in case of fire.



Essentials of Fire Fighting Operations (6th Edition), by IFSTA

Continuing the tradition of excellence in firefighter education, this new, expanded version contains the complete 20 basic chapters, as well as additional chapters including first aid and hazardous materials response to meet all of the requirements for Fire Fighter I and II levels of NFPA 1001* and NFPA 472* and OSHA 1910.120. This overhauled new edition offers a complete support package and includes

updated information on 192 skill sheets, knot and rope requirements, the use of essential job tasks related to the medical requirements in NFPA 1582*, and more! Begin laying the foundation for your firefighting career now with this expanded version.

Brain on Fire: My



Month of Madness, by Susannah Cahalan

An award-winning memoir and instant *New York Times* bestseller that goes far beyond its riveting medical mystery, *Brain on Fire* is the powerful account of one woman's struggle to recapture her identity.

In a swift and breathtaking narrative, Susannah tells the astonishing true story of her descent into madness, her family's inspiring faith in her, and the lifesaving diagnosis that nearly didn't happen. *Brain on Fire* is an unforgettable exploration of memory and identity, faith and love, and a profoundly compelling tale of survival and perseverance that is destined to become a classic.

Fire Chief: The Story of a Volunteer Firefighter, by Ed Daniels

Retired Fire Chief pens reflections on his life as a volunteer firefighter. *Fire Chief* shares experiences and sacrifices until now known only to the



volunteers themselves. Ed Daniels recalls his life as a volunteer firefighter in the mountains of Colorado. Based on actual events, the book takes readers into the heat which countless volunteer firefighters face every day throughout the world. *Fire Chief* describes Daniels' experiences and encounters in frightening detail; stories of house fires, wildfires, car accidents and back country rescues as they really happened. Woven throughout his emergency encounters, Daniels describes what it is like for a volunteer fire chief trying to balance the load of raising a family, handling a career, and leading a team of sometimes unruly volunteers. Readers go along for the journey as he grows into an expert leader who eventually retires, and reflects on his lifetime of bravery and public service.

Franklin Barbecue: A



Meat-Smoking Manifesto, by Aaron Franklin

A *New York Times* best selling complete meat- and brisket-cooking education

from the country's most celebrated pitmaster and owner of the wildly popular Austin restaurant, Franklin Barbecue.

Franklin Barbecue has grown into the most popular, critically lauded, and obsessed-over barbecue joint in the country (if not the world)—and Franklin is the winner of every major barbecue award there is.

Franklin Barbecue is a definitive resource for the backyard pitmaster, with chapters dedicated to building or customizing your own smoker; finding and curing the right wood; creating and tending perfect fires; sourcing top-quality meat; and of course, cooking mind-blowing, ridiculously delicious barbecue, better than you ever thought possible.

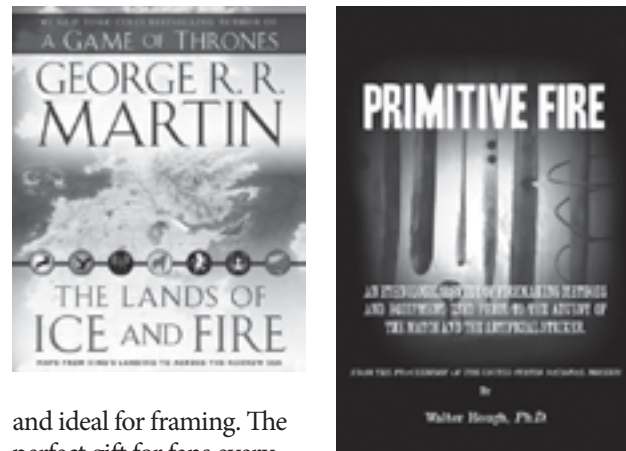
Richard Scarry's A Day at the Fire Station, by Huck Scarry



Sound the alarm for a day of fire-station fun! From fast fire trucks and out-of-control hoses, to sliding down fire poles and saving the day, children will love this exciting and hysterical story from the one and only Richard Scarry. Includes a sheet of stickers!

The Lands of Ice and Fire (A Game of Thrones): Maps from King's Landing to Across the Narrow Sea, by George R. R. Martin

The adventure that began with *A Game of Thrones* comes to life in twelve separate full-color maps, stunningly illustrated



and ideal for framing. The perfect gift for fans everywhere, this is the definitive dragon's-eye view they've been dying to see.

The centerpiece of this gorgeous collection is guaranteed to be a must-have for any fan: the complete map of the known world, joining the lands of the Seven Kingdoms and the lands across the Narrow Sea for the first time in series history. But this is just one of many unique maps that aren't available anywhere else. Never before has the entire scope of Martin's universe been so exhaustively and fascinatingly depicted.

The maps in this beautiful, one-of-a-kind collection will enrich your reading or viewing experience, provide another view of your favorite characters' epic journeys, and open up captivating new worlds—plus, they'll look great on any castle wall.

Primitive Fire: An ethnological study of firemaking methods and

equipment used prior to the advent of the match and the artificial striker, by Walter Hough Ph.D.

As far as historical reports of various methods of primitive fire-making go, none equal *Primitive Fire's* wealth of forgotten wisdom on many methods of making fire: by friction, by percussion, and by compression of air. It covers traditional fire-making from all over the world and also spends a good deal of time examining the Native American and Eskimo traditions in thorough detail. Penned at a time when these methods were still in day-to-day use by indigenous people around the world, *Primitive Fire* describes the equipment and techniques used through direct observation. Packed with scientific drawings as well as rare period photos, this is an extraordinary resource for anyone interested in self-reliance, bushcraft, survival or the broader field of anthropology.

dh

“Fire cannot quench fire.” ~L.E. Farase



Is your relationship burning out of control?



I absolutely love a wood fireplace in the winter for warmth and comfort. When I was a kid my favorite thing to do was lay in front of the fire with a good book on a cold winter day. Many good times have been spent around campfires with the fun and laughter of good friends around them over the years. But fire has another side as well; if it gets out of control, fire can be very destructive.

So many books have been written about “keeping the fire alive in your relationship” that I don't need to re-invent that wheel for this article. It is definitely important to keep the intimacy and closeness alive in a long-term, committed relationship, in order to keep that relationship strong and happy over the years. Without it you don't have a romantic relationship so much as you have companionship. The effort you expend in any relationship will show in

how well the relationship is doing overall.

Everyone who has built a fire, either in a wood stove or at a campsite, knows that not only do you have to work to get it going, but you have to continue to fuel it for it to keep burning. If you forget to add more wood the fire will go out. You are also probably aware of the hazards or complications that can occur when you add too much fuel to a fire. For instance, adding too many wood pallets onto a backyard fire pit can cause the fire to become too large and out of control.

So, just like with fires, when you spend too little time on your relationship because you think you have it going really well, it will wind down and leave you with cooling embers and ash where there once was a healthy, happy relationship. You need to keep adding to your relationship by making a concerted effort to show

the important people in your life how much you value them.

And just like how a fire that rages out of control can be destructive, a relationship that is a constant battle can be very destructive as well. Any relationship will have periods where you are at odds with the other person in that relationship. It can be tricky because individually we see things with different perspectives and the way we communicate can clash.

Understanding how to halt the battle before it happens can go a long way to getting the point across in a safe, and respectful manner that preserves rather than erodes the relationship. This can

make a huge difference to the outcome of contrary opinions and feelings. Set boundaries and guidelines for how you will discuss things that could become inflammatory. This allows both parties to know ahead of time that both people will be heard and honoured despite any differences of viewpoint.

Just like a fire, this will keep the flames of your relationship kindled, and yet will also keep it from blazing out of control in a way that becomes a destructive force. Showing honour and respect, while validating each other's feelings and ideas, will keep the relationship going steadily in a positive, comfortable direction.

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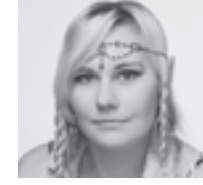
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*"Discipline is the refining fire by which talent becomes ability."
~Roy L. Smith*

Gecko Tree group exhibition, *The Founders*

Siobhan Wright, art teacher at Lake City Secondary (LCSS) in Williams Lake, is pleased to announce the group exhibition, *The Founders* on display at the Gecko Tree from now until December 24. The Founders are a group of young women, ages 16 and 17, who share the common belief that creativity is essential, and that to dream and design is as important as anything. They see themselves as an index for growth, regarding inventiveness as the ultimate creative and constructive act. These amazing young ladies want to show the community that their art is not an attempt to fit in, but rather a way of finding unity through diversity. Creativity has brought them together within the comfort of their high school art room, and they are celebrating this empowerment!



MARIAH-JAYNE GARTEN, born in 1999 in Williams Lake, is the daughter of a tattoo artist,



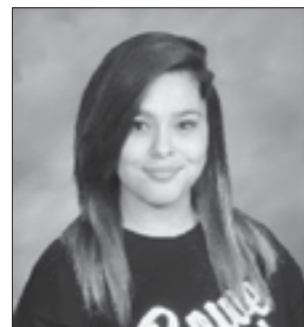
KARA ZAVITZ is a Vernon-born high school student attending LCSS. Born in 1999, she has been drawing and sketching since she could hold a pen-

and is currently enrolled in grade 12 at LCSS. In her art she expresses inner problems and views of everyday occurrences. This is her first time presenting her *Five Stages of Grief* series, and during November had a showing with her family at the Station House Gallery. The *Five Stages of Grief* is based off an idea Mariah had when working on artist trading cards from a class project which was a study in emotions. She hoped to express each stage of grief through the eyes of a fictitious animated character, as graphic novel illustration – a passion of hers. She likes to incorporate aspects of psychology in her work to add deeper levels of meaning, and as a personal form of art therapy. After graduation she plans to take Design Animation as her post-secondary education.



JESSICA TRUEIT was born in 1999 in 100 Mile and is currently enrolled in grade 12 at LCSS. In her art she creates worlds that don't exist, and their illusions. This is her first gallery presentation for her *Mystic Creature* series. The mystic creatures are based on an idea of a universe Jess cre-

ated in her mind while she was in the process of writing a novel. Her goal in this series is to forge outlandish characters within an eccentric atmosphere. She enjoys creating dark storylines and mythical creatures as a form of art therapy. After graduation she plans to take Digital Animation as her post-secondary education.



IZARIA BOWE was born in Vancouver in 1998, and has been creating art her whole life, seeing art as a way of keeping herself grounded. She moved to Williams Lake in 2004 with her grandmother who raised her and who is a big supporter of her art-making. She comes from a family who has always appreciated her art studies; they encouraged her to take art at school and to follow her dreams. Each of her sculptures holds hidden meaning. Octopus holds so many stories and secrets within that his that his mouth is a gaping hole, as he tries to be a vessel for everyone. The Vase represents a Grandma

elephant looking after her Grandbaby. The Vase has little cracks when you look closely, which illustrates the rough patches that every family deals with. The Butterfly Jar shows many butterflies, but the hand on top of the jar keeps them from escaping, illustrating the pressures of everyday life and keeping the peace. At the top of the jar sits a single free spirit that has escaped its captor's hand, symbolizing hope and freedom from these pressures. When she is finished high school Izaria would like to study sculpture at the Alberta College of Art and Design.



KIANNA HASELHAN was born December 15, 1998 in Williams Lake. She is currently attending LCSS and is building her skills in classes such as drawing and painting, ceramics and sculpture, photography, and art foundations. In this show, she is exploring themes in nature while developing her mixed media skills.

She enjoys focusing on the texture and detail that can be captured using micro-photography techniques to highlight the natural beauty of the changing seasons. The watercolour series is an attempt to play again with the element of texture both implied and real. Again, Kianna finds herself naturally drawn to nature in its small details and subtle lines as well as large, epic landscapes. Kianna's art making interests are not limited to two dimensions. She enjoys pushing the boundaries of clay to create three-dimensional natural forms. As in her painting and photographs, texture and nature become dominating themes. The addition of glazes is always an exciting challenge. Kianna is recognizing her potential and considering applying to the University of Victoria to further her art education and explore academic courses. Regardless of her path in life, she knows that art will always be a part of it.

Drop by the Gecko Tree on Mackenzie Avenue North, and enjoy the variety of works created by this group of talented young people. If you are interested in having your own show and sale contact Beatrix Linde, Gecko Tree curator 250-440-5759.



"Sky above me. Earth below me. Fire within me." ~Unknown



Behind the Curtain Fire in the belly

BY KATHLEEN MACDONALD, WILLIAMS LAKE STUDIO THEATRE

A person has to have a certain amount of fire in the belly to be willing to do improv. Don't get me wrong; improv is, in many ways, a very safe space. To even be able to happen, improv needs an environment of collaboration, keen responses of "yes, and..." to others' ideas, and the willingness to work as one cohesive unit. But it still takes a lot of courage to stand in front of an audience and perform unscripted, completely unplanned scenes, where you know where you're starting but have little to no idea where you're going, or what's going to happen along the way. It's the epitome of releasing control and almost zen-like when it really works.

The fire theme for December invokes thoughts of roasted chestnuts, of sitting comfy in front of a crackling fireplace, and a guiding light on a cold winter night helps one feel snug and cozy and ready for the Christmas season. But when I first heard that fire was the theme for the Stew's December issue, it reminded me of the fire in all of us that strives

to push us outside our comfort zones. Getting involved with the Williams Lake Studio Theatre's Improv Group was a gigantic step outside of my comfort zone.

It's hard to say exactly how far back improv's roots go. The Atellan Farce, the earliest well-known ad-libbed theatre that was enjoyed by ancient Romans and peppered liberally with crude jokes and Stooze-like comedy, often followed performances of tragedies (a cleansing of the palette perhaps?). Commedia dell'arte in 16th-18th century Italy had performers improvising street shows using stock characters and interacting in broadly sketched scenarios; having much of the performances unscripted allowed the performers to tweak shows to indulge in the latest political scandal or gear the show to whatever locale they happened to be performing in.

The modern style of improv most people today are familiar with, involving scoring points, competing in games and having a "winner" à la *Whose Line It Anyway*, is thanks to Keith Johnstone. A British and Canadian drama teacher, Johnstone developed *TheatreSports*, a merging of improv with



the accoutrements of a sporting match, as a way to counteract the pre-tentiousness he worried was infecting theatre and alienating audiences. It was an effective attempt to make theatre more appealing and approachable to the everyday man and woman, that continues to influence most improv groups.

Modern improv has also stretched beyond entertainment to become a tool for directors and theatrical theorists to increase actors' effectiveness in scripted roles. Skills and characteristics key to successful improv – active listening, purposeful collaboration, focused empa-

thy, identifying and acting on opportunities quickly, sharp concentration skills, adapting to the situation you're in rather than one you'd prefer to be in, being fully in the moment – can help an actor lift a scripted performance to that desired state where it feels authentic and truthful to the audience.

These same skills, and improv's knack for imparting them, are causing the art to leak outside of the theatre realm. Employees are taking part in ad-libbed exercises as businesses recognize the ability of improv to create teamwork and boost creativity. And therapists are finding improv a useful

tool in treating disorders like depression, obsessive compulsive disorder and social anxiety, acting as informal exposure therapy. Chicago's Panic/Anxiety Recovery Center has even joined with the famous comedy club, Second City, to offer an 8-week "Improv for Anxiety" program, and similar programs are cropping up in other major centres.

For about the last two years, members of the WLST Improv Group have met almost weekly to hone their improv chops and have been lucky enough to start having gigs around the community. On December 2nd, the Improv Group

will be performing at the **BlueNote Christmas Dinner and Dance Party at The Point**, and they hope to take part in the Winter Lights festivities on the 3rd. Like most improv groups, we relish these chances to play, collaborate and stoke those inner fires. If you'd like to get involved with the improv group, contact Kathy MacDonald at kmacdonald@hotmail.com. Also be sure not to miss the Williams Lake Studio Theatre's next production, *Calendar Girls*, running Jan 25-28, Feb 1-4 and 8-11. The week of Feb 8-11 will be dinner theatre at The Point.

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The Maranatha Players present: Cinderella



CINDERELLA ▶ Danielle Schultz



LADIES IN WAITING ▶ Gwenna Meyrick, Shante Adams, Vivian Meyrick, Katie Isaac, Jennica Walker

SUBMITTED BY THE MARANATHA PLAYERS

The Maranatha Players are proud to present the musical, *Cinderella*, on stage December 1-3 and 8-10, at Maranatha Christian School. This is a well-loved tale of a

young girl who faces the jealousies of her stepmother and stepsisters, only to overcome and find her true love. In September, twenty-four Maranatha high school students chose to audition for the musical and become part of a hard-

working team. Together they have learned to Waltz, do the Charleston, and sing harmony. They have become a group of friends, supporting one another throughout the process of putting a show together. This year sees five

grade twelve girls among the actors on stage; Danielle Schultz as Cinderella, Kaitlin Jantz as the Stepmother, Mikaela Martin and Megan Jantz as the Stepsisters, and Maria Seibert as the Fairy Godmother. These girls have all been on stage before, and embraced the chance to step into some of the roles that truly shape the story. "One of the most bittersweet parts of putting on *Cinderella*, is that it is the last show for my grade twelve girls, ones I have worked with for a number of years," says director Becky Strickland. "I so enjoy watching them embrace lead roles and grow as actors. I enjoy watching them work with others and mentor them. It is a blessing to work as a director where I do." The group involves students from grades

8-12, with varying levels of experience. All come with eagerness to learn and create a great show. "This diversity is what helps make the show not only a challenge, but also rewarding," Becky says. "Whether it is learning to Waltz, or learning to sing harmony, the students involved are challenged. They are always willing to strive for the best."

The group, The Maranatha Players, is also celebrating 15 years of theatre this year. From the beginning, the group has always had a focus on developing confidence, teamwork and being a positive growing environment. The arts are an important part of Maranatha Christian School, and The Maranatha Players have played an integral role in this. Through The Players, the

school's arts program has been taken to the public, where we strive to put on a family-friendly show with a positive message. The group is so blessed to have the active support of the citizens of Williams Lake, whether as sponsors for the play or audience members. This community is also a big part of the continued success the Maranatha Players experience.

We invite you to come out and see our show. ***Cinderella* will be on stage December 1-3 and 8-10, with a matinee on December 10th.** We will also have a special meet and greet with *Cinderella* and her court after the show on Friday, December 2nd. Tickets are available at The Open Book, \$10 for adults and \$8.00 for children and seniors.

The Maranatha Players Proudly

Present...

Dec 1-3, 8-9 7:00pm
Dec 10 1:00pm and 8:00pm

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Directed by Becky Strickland



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"Success isn't a result of spontaneous combustion. You must set yourself on fire." ~Arnold Glascow

WILLIAMS LAKE & AREA

December 1,8,15 Jam Night with Busted Remedy, OV Pub, 9:30pm

December 1,8,15,22,29 Just for Fun Ladies Singing Group, supported by Women's Contact Society and Angelkeys Music Studio, everyone welcome, Anglican Church, 7:30-9pm

December 1,8,15,22,29 Pokémon Thursdays, Adventure Games 83C Second Ave S, 3:45pm

December 1-3 The Maranatha Players present: *Cinderella* an all-ages musical, tickets at The Open Book, adult/teen \$10, senior/kids under 12 \$8, 1-3,8-9 7pm, 10th 1pm & 8pm

December 1-17 2nd Annual Festival of Trees, Signal Point, donations to local charities

December 1-24 LCSS presents the group exhibition, *The Founders*, on display at 'The Gecko' Tree

December 1-24 Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign, to volunteer call Sandra 250-392-1072

December 1-31 Christmas Market, Station House Gallery, open 7 days a week!

December 2 Blue Note at The Point, Christmas Banquet, dinner and dance with live music, performance by WL Studio Theatre Improv group, cash bar, 6:30-12pm, tickets available at Adventure Games and The Open Book

December 2 Late Night shopping Downtown 6-9pm

December 2 Mummaring (caroling for treats) with Angela Sommer starts at The BIA 327 Oliver St 6-7pm

December 2,9,16,23,30 Friday Night Magic, Adventure Games 83C Second Ave S, 5pm

December 2-3,9-10,16-17 Market at The Mall, upper level Boitanio Mall, 10am-4pm

December 2-4 Winter Lights Festival, Downtown Williams Lake

December 2,9,16,23,30 RCACC (Royal Canadian Army Cadets) meeting, lower hall, Legion 385 Barnard St, 6:15-9pm, info: www.3064rmmrangcadets.org

December 3 Christmas Tea & Bake Sale, Museum 113 4th Ave N, 11am-3pm

December 3 Santa Claus Parade, Downtown 11am

December 3 ITC Warhammer 40k Event, Adventure Games 83C Second Ave S

December 3 Santa and the WL Studio Theatre Improv Group, CJs Southwestern Grill, 12-2pm

December 3 Christmas Stories at the Library, 12-4pm

December 3 Midday Madness shopping event, Downtown 12-4pm

December 3 Photos with Santa, The Potato House, 12-4pm

December 3 Build your own Hot-Chocolate-To-Go bags, The Realm of Toys, 12-2pm

December 3,10,17,24,31 Warhammer and Tabletop Games, Adventure Games 83C Second Ave S, All Day

December 4 FREE skating & prizes to be won, Cariboo Memorial Recreation Complex

December 4,11,18,25 Morning Magic 10am, Game Night 6pm, Adventure Games 83C Second Ave S

December 5 Seniors Bingo FREE refreshments, upper level Boitanio Mall, 1pm

December 5 Christmas Cake & Other Treats Sale, Canadian Cancer Society Community Office, 176 N 4th Ave, 6pm

December 6 Christmas Wish Breakfast, OV Convention Centre, 6-10am, reservations: 250-392-3321

December 8-10 The Maranatha Players present: *Cinderella* an all-ages musical, tickets at The Open Book, adult/teen \$10, senior/kids under 12 \$8, all dates except Dec 10 7pm, Dec 10th 1pm & 8pm

December 9 Film Club presents: *Fly Away Home*, Gibraltar Room, doors open 6:30pm, starts 7pm

December 9 WL Community Band Christmas Concert, and caroling with the Just For Fun ladies

December 3 Santa Extravaganza, Spirit Square, 3-5pm

December 3 RCMA Open Mic, The Occidental 228 Front St, 7pm

December 3 Christmas Market, Arts & Rec Ctr, 10am-3pm

December 4 Country Christmas Market, Bouchie Lake Country Store, 11am-3pm

December 4-18 Gingerbread house competition & display, West Park Mall, 9am-5pm

December 7 Canadian Country Christmas, The Occidental 228 Front St, 8-11pm

December 8 CIHL Hockey, Kangaroos vs. Tomahawks, Twin Arenas, 7:30pm

December 10 Christmas Market, Arts & Rec Ctr, 10am-3pm

December 10 Lions Garage Sale, Maple Park Mall, 9am-2pm

December 10 Rumble #21, 2 Rivers Boxing 2-10pm

December 10-12 Old Fashioned Victorian Christmas, Barkerville, 10am-4pm

December 11 Country Christmas Market, Bouchie Lake Country Store, 11am-3pm

December 14 Sean Hogan, live music, The Occidental 8-10pm

December 16 Fozzie Follie's Burlesque, The Occidental 228 Front St, 7pm

December 17 CIHL Hockey, Kangaroos vs. Stampede, Twin Arenas, 7:30pm

December 18 Christmas Market at the Legion, 262 Kinchat St, 10am-3pm

December 18 Christmas Choir, FREE event at City Council Chambers 7:30pm, info: 250-398-7724

December 12 Christmas Cake & Other Treats Sale, Canadian Cancer Society Community Office, 176 N 4th Ave, 6pm

December 14 Tuba John Memorial Christmas Concert, St. Andrews United Church 7:30pm

December 17 The Gingerbread House Party, The Limelight 5pm, tickets: \$50/family at Events Etc 250-392-5512 or AboutFace Photography

December 18 Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA) meeting, public welcome, Big Brothers and Big Sisters suite 200, 369 Oliver St, 1pm, info: 778-412-9323

December 19 Christmas Cake & Other Treats Sale, Canadian Cancer Society Community Office, 176 N 4th Ave, 6pm

December 22,29 Jam Night with Busted Remedy, OV Pub, 9:30pm

December 23 Messy Church, St. Peter's Anglican Church, 5pm

December 24 Live Candle Tree Lighting, Likely Lodge 8pm

December 31 New Year's Eve party, Likely Lodge 9pm

December 31 New Year's Eve Masquerade Ball, Gibraltar Room 8pm, tickets: Events Etc 250-392-5512, CMHA, or New World Cafe

December 2 Ladies Night at the Lodge, 1262 Maple Heights Rd, 6-10pm

December 2,3 Annual Christmas Sale, Museum 705 Carson Drive, 9:30am-4pm

December 3 2016 Santa Shuffle, LeBourdais Park, 10am-12pm

QUESNEL & AREA

December 2 Ladies Night at the Lodge, 1262 Maple Heights Rd, 6-10pm

December 2,3 Annual Christmas Sale, Museum 705 Carson Drive, 9:30am-4pm

December 3 2016 Santa Shuffle, LeBourdais Park, 10am-12pm

Submit your events to craig@thestew.ca



Cadets, 5830 Horse Lake Road, 6:30pm, info: Capt. Kevin Seal 250-395-1181

December 1,8,15,22,29 TOPS Club Take Off Pounds Sensibly, United Church, Weigh-in 6:30pm

December 1-31 Critical Mass pop-up gallery by South Cariboo Rancher Gus Horn, 2-150 Birch Ave (formerly Hemingway's)

December 2,9,16,23,30 Crib Night, Forest Grove Legion, 8pm

December 3 Christmas Craft Sale, Lone Butte Community Hall, 9:30am-2:30pm

December 3 Breakfast with Santa Claus, 108 Mile Ranch, info: Bev 250-791-7206

December 3 Breakfast with Santa, The Valley Room (behind the Red

December 1,8,15,22,29 Annual Christmas Bazaar, Parkside Art Gallery, Tues-Fri 10am-4pm, Sat 12-4pm

December 1,8,15,22,29 Alcoholics Anonymous, 108 Community Centre, 8pm

December 1,8,15,22,29 Royal Canadian Army

December 29 CIHL Hockey, Kangaroos vs. Stampede, Twin Arenas, 7:30pm

100 MILE HOUSE & AREA

December 1 CIHL Hockey, Stampede vs. Tomahawks, Rolf Zeis Memorial Arena, Lac La Hache, 7:30pm

Canadian Mental Health Association Presents

New Year's Eve Masquerade Ball

Sat. December 31
Doors 8pm • Gibraltar Room

Tickets **\$85@**
Canadian Mental Health Association, New World Café, Events, Etc..., or online (additional charges will apply) at <http://cmaccbnye2017.eventbrite.ca>

Appetizers by: **NEW WORLD CAFE**

Desserts by: **Taylor Made Cakes**

Music by: **Lynden Grosso**

For information contact: 250-392-5512 or info@eerp.ca dba **Elegant Event Rentals & Planning Company**

Coach Inn), doors open 8:30am, FREE for all children

December 3,10,17,24,31 Meat Draw, Forest Grove Legion, 4:30-6pm

December 4,11,18,25 Alcoholics Anonymous, Community Health Ctr (rear of hospital) 7:30pm

December 5,12,19,26 Women's Drop-In Volleyball, Lone Butte Community Hall, 9:30am

December 5,12,19,26 Alanon, Community Health Centre (rear of hospital) 7pm

December 5,12,19,26 Community Bingo, Community Club, doors open 6pm, super star 8:30pm

December 6,13,20,27 Co-Ed Volleyball, PSO gymnasium, 7-9pm

December 6,13,20,27 HUGS Help Us Get Slim, 6300 Green Lake Rd, 6:30pm

December 6,13,20,27 Carpet Bowling Club, Interlakes hall, 1-4pm

December 6,13,20,27 Diabetes Drop-In, Community Health Ctr (rear of hospital) 1-2pm

December 6 Photo Group, Bridge Lake Community School, info: 250-593-4362

December 7,14,21,28 Community Bingo, Lac La Hache Community Club, doors open 5:45pm, starts 7pm

December 10 Community Christmas Dinner, Community Hall, 5:30pm

December 11 Christmas Market, 108 Heritage Site, 11am-5pm

December 11 Community Christmas Dinner, Lone Butte Hall, tickets/info: 250-395-1994

December 12 Great Cariboo Riders, PSO school, new members welcome, 7pm

December 12 Care-giver's support group, Community Health Ctr (rear of hospital) info: 250-593-4521

December 14 Compassionate Friends support group for bereaved parents, BJ's Donuts, 7:15pm

December 15 CIHL Hockey, Stampede vs. Tomahawks, Rolf Zeis Memorial Arena, Lac La Hache, 7:30pm

December 20 Photo Group, Bridge Lake Community School, info: 250-593-4362

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Canadian Mental Health Association's Sweetheart Ball

FRI. FEBRUARY 10, 2017

Location: Gibraltar Room

Doors open @ 6:30 pm, followed by Dinner and Dancing
Dinner & Dancing and a Safe ride home

Tickets: early bird tickets \$75/each until January 20, 2017, after January 20, 2017 \$85/each

Canadian Mental Health Association's Hootenanny

SAT. JULY 1, 2017

Barn Dance, Cariboo Memorial Complex, 8pm to 1am
Tickets: Early bird tickets \$30/each until May 1, 2017, \$35/each after May 1, 2017
Ticket includes dancing and safe ride home (pickup and drop off). We'll pick you up at home between 5 & 7:30pm, drop you off at the Rotary Club of Williams Lake's Steak Dinner. After dinner, Boot Scoot Boogie on over to the Complex or we can come get you.

Canadian Mental Health Association's Hauntfest

SAT. OCTOBER 28, 2017

Doors open @ 6:30 pm, followed by Dinner and Dancing
Dinner & Dancing and a Safe ride home
Location: Gibraltar Room

Tickets: early bird tickets \$75/each until August 20, 2017, after August 20, 2017 \$85/each

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APR. 21-22, 2017

Saturday 6 - 9 pm (Fashion Show @ 7pm)
Sunday 10 am - 3 pm Location: TBA

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Canadian Mental Health Association's St. Patty's Day Poker Tournament

FRI. MARCH 17, 2017

Location: TBA \$100/ticket

Events, Etc... Leave the details to us!
dba Elegant Event Rentals & Planning Company

Give us a call: **250-392-5512** • email us: **info@eerp.ca** or check out our website: **www.eerp.ca**, and *leave the details to us!*



"Don't set yourself on fire to keep others warm." ~Unknown



Cooking with flame

I was on a social media site the other day and saw a meme that I found curious. It was a picture of a cartoon character looking a little confused/concerned and it said, "Not sure if I cook because I like food or because I'm a tattooed pyromaniac who needs a job I can swear at." At first I found it mildly offensive, I mean not all cooks have tattoos and swear a lot. In fact my sous chef is a perfect example. Then suddenly I realized I'm looking at something on the internet, put there by cooks, for cooks (the page is called The Angry Line Cook. If you work as a cook you will like it, if you don't then maybe you should avoid it) and

it occurred to me that I'm not alone in that, as a cook I enjoy lighting things on fire. [Editor: Please place some kind of legal disclaimer here, something to the effect that Brice does not condone setting personal property on fire because it's stupid and people can get hurt. Thanks]

When in a professional kitchen, there is fire everywhere. All of the cooktops are alight with blue flame, all the grills are heated by fire, the char broiler is basically a barbecue grill, and the deep fryers make this amazing whooshing sound from the flames pouring into the baffles that heat the oil every time it drops below the set temperature. Cooks

also get the joy from time to time of setting a frying pan full of food ablaze.

I've written a few times in the past about my adventures with flambé including a dish that when prepared the way I was taught, would make anyone in the immediate area struggle for a breath as all the oxygen around would be syphoned into the glorious wall of flame.

My favorite fire story though goes like this... stop me if you have read it before... wait that won't work... uh then just skip to the recipe. I was working in a small kitchen and I was on one end of the line and my Chef, the other. We would each keep a couple of towels draped over



our apron strings to grab stuff, or wipe stuff, or anything else we might have needed a towel for. One particularly busy dinner service Chef got too close to the pan burner that we always left on full-fire, rather than re-lighting it every 30 seconds. His side towel caught on fire, and I saw the flames crawling up his leg. "Chef," I started, "you're on fire!" He looked over at me and said, "Ya, I know." I

thought, ok he thinks I mean "Wow dude, you're on fire! Way to go, you are the awesomest cook in the world. So I said a bit louder, "DUDE, you are on FIRE!" By this point the flame was a bright orange and he had to have felt the heat, but he just looked at me and smiled. "Ya man, thanks." Now I was worried about his safety, so I shouted, "DUDE there are flames shooting up the side of your body!" He looked

down, saw the towel and calmly pulled it out of his apron and placed it in the sink beside him and went back to cooking. Chef Cameron Dagneu. Cool guy, I miss you bro.

Hey, do you like booze and fire? Cool, me too. Do you know that if you get some fruit like, let's say cherries or apples or even bananas, and cook them in some butter in a frying pan till they get kind of shiny and a little soft, then pour some booze like kirsch or rum or brandy (or whatever 30-40 % booze you like) in the pan with them, and heat it up to a boil, you can then hit it with a flame, and it will not only make the most amazing blue flame, but also a crazy good aroma and the most delicious topper for ice cream or cake or some crepes. Easy eh?

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*"The fires burned, the ashes spread. The lifted light hears all that's said."
~Hawkwind*



Salvation Army news

BY TAMARA ROBINSON, WILLIAMS LAKE SALVATION ARMY

Well it's that time of year again! After a rainy summer and a beautiful September, the snow has begun to fall and it's a lot colder outside. I have heard from various hunters and outdoor enthusiasts that it's going to be a very cold winter. The majority of us get along just fine with the temperature change as we make plans to adapt. Sometimes adapting is as easy as start-

ing our vehicles to "warm up" before we venture out, wearing extra layers of clothing, or gathering more wood for our fireplaces. For the majority of us, the cold weather is little but a nuisance. However, for the 40 homeless individuals living on the streets of Williams Lake, and for those without adequate housing or funds, the idea of dropping temperature is not only a nuisance, but a matter of survival. So while many of us plan for what is said will be one of the coldest winters in a

long time, The Salvation Army is continuing to serve those in our community who are lacking essential needs.

The Salvation Army offers **daily meals** Monday to Friday. Breakfast is served from 9:00am to 9:45am, and lunch from 12:00pm to 12:45pm.

The **Drop in Center** is open Monday to Friday, and offers an assortment of free activities for people 16yrs and older. The activities include pool, ping pong, shuffle board, tournaments,

darts, crafts and a fully operational gym. Tamara Robinson, our **Family Services Coordinator and Outreach Worker**, is available Monday to Friday to assist individuals with accessing information and services and drug and alcohol treatment, as well as volunteer opportunities. William Smith, our **Drug and Alcohol Counsellor** is available Monday to Friday 9:00am to 4:00pm weekdays. Please call or drop in for an appointment.

Our **Food Bank** is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:00pm to 4:00pm (by appointment) and our **Share Shelf** (bread, produce and fruit)

is open 1:00pm to 4:00 pm Monday to Friday. We also offer vouchers for qualifying individuals and families who are in need of clothing, furniture, household needs and winter warmth items.

We will be providing a **Christmas dinner on December 23rd** in our soup kitchen to those who would like to attend. It will be held at 272 Borland Street from 11:30am to 1:00pm. We are looking for volunteers to help bring Christmas to the less fortunate on this day.

We are currently looking for volunteers to help in all areas which include our soup kitchen, food

bank, drop in, thrift store and our kettle campaign. Kettles are an essential way for us to collect monetary donations from the community to ensure that we are able to continue our services in Williams Lake. If you would like to volunteer in one of our service areas please contact Tamara Robinson at 250-392-2324 ext. 208. To volunteer with our kettle campaign, please contact Sandra at 250-392-1072 or Major Stephen French at 250-267-8064.

To old and new volunteers, clients and members of the Community, We wish you a very merry Christmas.

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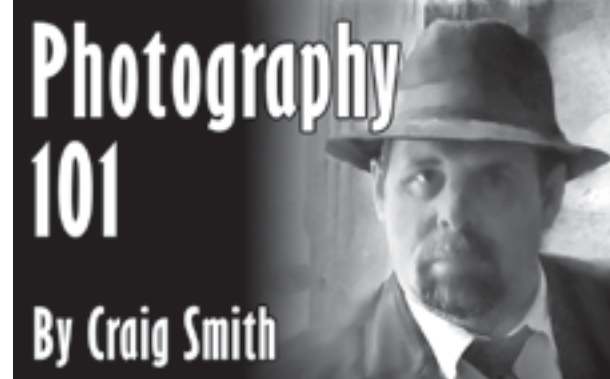
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"Some women are lost in the fire; some women are built for it." ~Unknown



Lighting your subject



With December's issue being about 'fire' I thought it appropriate to talk about lighting, as that's what fire gives us... well, besides heat.

With the days getting shorter and shorter, you will find certain things happening to your photography. If you don't have enough light you will be ending up with darker, grainier or blurrier pictures. You don't realize how much light that big ball in the sky (the sun) gives off until

it's not there. With less light, your camera has a few ways it can make up the difference. First, it can use all the same settings it has been using when it's daylight; this will give you a dark or underexposed image... not good. If your camera has some intelligence, it could change your ISO settings which will increase its 'negative' sensitivity to light. The trade-off when you do that, is that the image is (unless you own a very expensive camera and

meaning the light is constantly on. Unless these are really bright, they still might not be enough, unless you use enough of them. I was recently at a Bryan Adams concert and he asked everyone to turn on their smart phone lights so he could see the crowd and believe it or not, a couple thousand of those little lights lit up the arena.

The second way of lighting is by using a flash. I could write a year's worth of articles and still not explain everything there is to know about flashes, but let me try to sum up a few tips in the small space I have left. If you want to avoid red eye, get yourself a flash unit that sits in your camera's hot shoe. The pop up flash will not only cause more red-eye than you can imagine, but if you try and use it while you are using a longer lens it will also cast a shadow onto your subject. Turn more lights on in the area you are taking pictures, as your subject's pupil will not be as likely to widen and cause red-eye. If your flash swivels, point it at a white ceiling or tape a white card to reflect, as opposed to aiming it straight at them which is not the most flattering way of lighting.

All three situations are not ideal, so really, the only solution left is to make more light. The word 'photography' comes from the Greek words for drawing or painting with light. So light is our paint, and if there isn't enough paint, we have a blank canvas.

We have a couple of ways to make light. The first is what we call 'constant light', such as house lights, spot lights, head lights, flood lights, etc.,

As always, photographers get better with practice, so grab your camera after dark and have some fun. Have a merry Christmas, happy holidays and happy shooting.

Writers' Showcase

Short Stories by the Williams Lake Writer's Group

Dragon's breath

POETRY BY LINDA PURJUE

I have dwelling within my house
A troupe of domestic dragons.
Orange-gold breath they breathe at my command
To warm my home,
And cook my food,
And light the night with candle and lamp.
Encased within metal and glass
I have no need to fear;
Yet I do.
For these seemingly tame and mild beasts
Are not.
Quickly, before anyone can notice,
They can escape their pens
And run amok through bower and beam
Reducing all to ashes, to ashes,
To soot and ashes.

Wild dragons scorch the Earth
And set the forests afire.
Blackened boles of once-living trees
Stand stark and naked above barren ground.
But wait!
Winter snows and spring rains awaken the ashen lands
And Mother Nature's garden blooms
In a riotous profusion of colour;
Sweet, fire-liberated new life abounds.

My domestic dragons dream
Of new flowered forests
While they answer my commands.
I must walk softly,
And sing to them
Of flowers and trees,
Lullabies to calm them,
To keep them hushed and at peace.

THE SALVATION ARMY

Wishing You a Merry Christmas!

Worship
267 Borland Street, Williams Lake
Sunday Worship 10:30am,
fellowship coffee after church
Tuesday Bible Study 7-8pm

Food Bank & Drop-In Centre
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Breakfast 9-9:45am and Lunch 12:12:45pm

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hear

"What matters most is how well you walk through the fire."
~Charles Bukowski



Who needs eyebrows?



Aah the age of YouTube. The kidlets amuse themselves with videos of party antics that I pray they won't explore for many decades to come, but that did provide

the menace when the younger came running back in with something small in his hand, and re-armed himself with the hairspray.

ample entertainment for us one afternoon.

The eldest screamed that the 'world's largest spider' was trying to eat her in the basement bathroom. The younger brother decided to grab my hairspray to take on Goliath, and after wasting \$10 of product he finally realized the hairy beast was impervious to chemical spray, while his sister was choking to death.

I ushered both kidlets out of the bathroom to trap and relocate

By the time I saw the lighter and worked out the explanation "Sweetie, you've just spent the last two minutes filling a bathroom that has no ventilation with a chemical spray. If you try to light that hairspray stream you're going to explode us all," he had already pulled the trigger.

Whoosh! The fireball flew from floor to ceiling while Goliath ran like a madman, flames trailing behind him, under my feet for protection.

Cold swept down my spine while the pit of my stomach roiled. I had visions of the Children's Hospital, skin grafts, police and child psychiatrists at my door. My sweet boy looking like a movie extra in the latest DC movie.

I reached out for my pyromaniac in fear when he turned around, the biggest grin ever plastered across his face, the remnants of his eyebrows smoldering.

He looked to his sister. "Tell me you recorded that!"

I was deciding between a face-palm and loud sigh of exasperation when she screamed "you bet!"

They high-fived and my parenting fail was posted on YouTube before I noticed they'd turned on the computer.

Goliath brushed off the ash and looked up at me, a little worse for wear but altogether intact.

I guess we have a new pet.

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"From the little spark, may burst a mighty flame." ~Dante



THE STEW MAGAZINE'S Monthly MIX

HOLIDAYS OF THE MONTH

December is Human Rights Month

Throughout history there have been instances of wanton cruelty, and a blatant violation of the rights and privileges of mankind. Whether that was based on the color of one's skin, their nationality, religion, or merely being unfortunate enough to be living under the regime of another country, people have regularly been treated like animals, or worse. Human Rights Month is here to remind us of that day in 1948 when the United Nations General Assembly codified the basic human rights of every individual on the planet.

- Dec. 4** Cookie Day
- Dec. 16** Ugly Christmas Sweater Day
- Dec. 21** Crossword Puzzle Day
- Dec. 30** Bacon Day

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Get Involved!



3-day festival lights up the Downtown

BY KATE LINES, B.COMM, DOWNTOWN WILLIAMS LAKE BIA

The Winter Lights Festival, a 3-day Community Christmas event, is coming to Downtown Williams Lake on December 2, 3 and 4.

The event launches on FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2nd with late night shopping and caroling for treats. The community can join Angela Sommer's Just For Fun choir at the BIA (327 Oliver Street) at 6pm and carol while walking with the group. Singers can also branch out and visit participating stores to sing for treats. Seventeen downtown stores will be welcoming carolers in the mummering tradition: enter the store, sing a song,



get a treat. Maps of all participating stores will be distributed while the choir is gathering at the BIA. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3rd is another chance to enjoy Christmas shopping and celebrations Downtown! The Santa Parade travels south on 3rd Avenue and west on

Oliver Street from 11am to 12pm. Santa and the Williams Lake Studio Theatre Improv Group will visit with and entertain families at CJ's Southwestern Grill from 12 to 2pm while Christmas stories are performed at the Library from 12 to 4pm. Downtown's Midday

Madness shopping event goes from 12 to 4pm, and the community can stop in at the Potato House from 12 to 4pm for photos with Santa and hot cider by donation. Kids can drop in to Realm of Toys from 12 to 2pm to build hot chocolate to-go bags - perfect stocking stuffers!

Festivities continue SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4th with free skating and prizes at the Rec Centre. Downtown businesses are donating gifts and the community can enter draws to win, while they skate with the community.

Bring your families Downtown December 2, 3 and 4 for non-stop Christmas fun, brought to you by the Downtown Business Improvement Association, Downtown businesses, the City of Williams Lake, the Cariboo Regional District, the Central Cariboo Arts and Culture Society, the Potato House and the Realm of Toys.

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"Talent is a flame. Genius is a fire." ~Bernard Williams



Fired?!

The Importance of Employment Handbooks and Contracts

"You will never feel good, by making another feel bad"

SUBMITTED BY
FLORENCE GONYER,
COMMUNITY FUTURES
CARIBOO CHILCOTIN

When starting your business it is important to have a business plan in place which will be used to map out the future of your business and chart out the direction you want to see your business heading. These goals and expectations should help to increase the chances of long term success; a business plan is a great tool for business start-up. When writing up a business plan, we suggest to incorporate an exit strategy into the long term plan, this way you have an idea of what will happen to the business should you decide to no longer continue operations.

Similar to having a business plan in place, an employer should also have employment policies in place. Where business plans are instrumental for future partners and investors to have a visual outline of the business, an employee handbook works

the same for future employees. An employee handbook outlines general policies that the business has in place for all employees, and an employment contract outlines the terms and conditions of a specific job position. In keeping with the Stew's "fire" theme for December, let's focus on "how the relationship could come to an end," or the TERMINATION section of an employee handbook or contract. When hiring an employee, what is the policy for termination, if the employment relationship does not work out?

There are 3 ways a termination can occur:

1. Just cause: The relationship ends for a particular reason; the employer does not need to provide you with any money for severing the relationship (severance pay) and the termination can take place immediately (ie; theft, illegal activity, lying, violence, harassment, inappropriate behavior).

2. Without cause: The relationship ends but not as a result of

your actions (ie: downsizing, business closing down or employee is just not a good fit).

3. Resignation: When the employee terminates the relationship with the employer, you forfeit any claims to severance pay; resignations require some notice unless the employer agrees to immediate termination.

Employee handbooks/contracts offer clarity and direction to employees, and enforceable policies for the employer. Terminations should always be handled in a confidential and professional manner; this is why it is important to have policies in place and that those policies are followed through according to procedure. Keep in mind employers can face legal liabilities when terminating employees, so it might be a good idea to get legal advice or have a lawyer look over your employee handbook/contract prior to implementing it with your employees.



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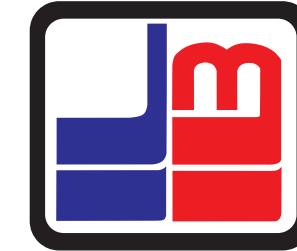
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"Love is a burning thing, and it makes a fiery ring..."
~Johnny Cash, Ring of Fire

Old and new holiday traditions



BY DAWN WALL, WOMEN'S CONTACT SOCIETY

December is upon us, and what is more Christ-massy than a roaring fire, even if this fire is just the one on the TV. Now that the festive season is here, family traditions are re-surfacing, and amazingly many of these traditions have fire as an integral part of the celebration.

In many countries, burning a yule log is a

significant part of the festive season. Originally this was a whole tree that was hauled into the fire-place and lit on Christmas Day. In many countries, the fire was lit with the remains of the fire that had been saved from the previous year, in hopes that this fire would last through the next 12 days of Christmas, bringing good health, good luck and prosperity for family and friends in the year to come. Today many people

still light a fire during the holiday season and often add pinecones coated in various substances to make the logs burn with different colours. For individuals who do not have a fireplace, a delicious chocolate yule log is baked - to add a little more flame to the log, you can flambé it.

December is the month for candles, and almost every country has a tradition built around their flame. Many

countries have candles lit in the windows to draw family home, or to welcome strangers in from the dark. Candles are also used to count down the weeks or days until Christmas; the advent wreath has four candles. The first candle is lit at the start of December, and as each week passes an additional candle is lit. You can also create a candle that is lit each night and burns to mark off the days until Christmas; this is a great craft to make with the children in your household.

Singing carols is also a great part of this season and many carols involve fire - the one that springs to mind first is *Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire*. We decided to try roasting chestnuts last year and now have a new yule tradition; the process was simple, the results were

delicious, and the sweet, nutty aroma of them cooking in the fireplace filled the room. Try roasting some chestnuts in your fireplace, BBQ or outside this holiday season - they're especially delicious when served

with some great bread and sliced apples. So during this merry season, light a fire, draw your family close around you, celebrate old traditions and develop new traditions. Merry Christmas.

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For more information contact Ross & Kay Titford, Market Managers 250-392-5405

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 December 31 10:30am-2:00am
 January 1 1:00pm-10:30pm



DID YOU KNOW?

Community organizations may be eligible for government community gaming grants to support their programs and services. Payments for approved grants are made throughout each government fiscal year, and the timing of the payments depends on the grant category / sector.

Last year approximately \$968,700 went back to the Williams Lake community and surrounding area from gaming dollars!

For a full detailed list of Gaming Grants paid to community organizations please visit www.gaming.gov.bc.ca/reports/#six then find Williams Lake on the list

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- 1) Decorate a Tree:** local charities are challenged to decorate a Christmas tree for the Festival
- 2) Vote:** guests who bring a food or toy donation will receive a ballot to cast a vote for their favourite tree
- 3) Found Money Donation:** The top 3 voted trees will split Signal Point's Oct.-Dec. accumulation of Found Money
- 4) Donations to Local Charities:** toy and food donations will be distributed amongst these local charities:



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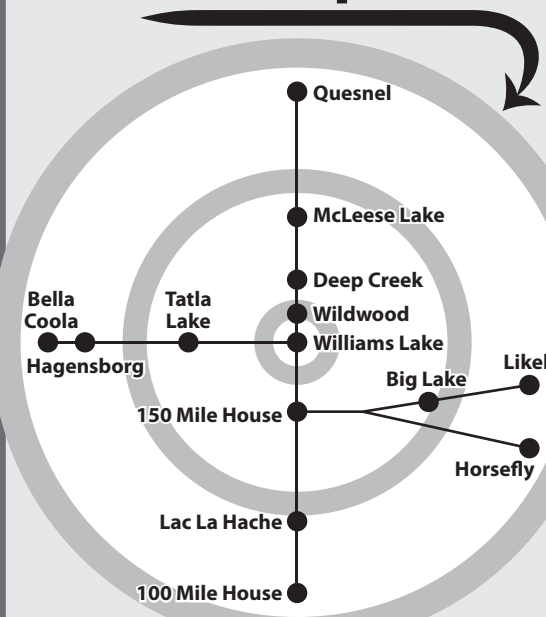
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read

"Fire burns brighter in the darkness." ~Suzanne Collins

Time's run out

A SHORT STORY

...Continued from November's Stew Magazine

Tommy was excited that he had found out where the fireplace had gone. Sure, it was hiding in the trunk of a large tree just behind Joan's garden. But the important part was that Tommy found it. How on Earth did it get there, was the real question. And why was she hiding it; what did Joan want from them?

"What are you doing out here, Tommy?" Joan's voice came from out of the darkness.

Her voice startled him, and he had to think quickly. "I, uh, needed some air."

"Did you get lost out here?" she asked.

"A little," he admitted sheepishly. "But the air certainly made me tired."

"Then let's get you back to bed." Joan smiled and held her arm out towards him.

Tommy walked up towards Joan and let her put her arm around him.

"Time's run out, Tommy," Joan whispered into his ear. "Once that fireplace moves to the tree, your ability to return home counts down. And you are almost at zero."

Tommy's teeth clenched making his jaw ache. "What do you want from us?"

She laughed quietly. "Does it really matter?"

Tommy turned and faced her, "Please let us go home."

The moonlight showed Joan's real features, and he saw the old woman he remembered when he had arrived this morning.

"But Tommy," Joan said, opening the sliding door and guiding him inside. "I don't want you to leave."

Joan's hand did not

leave Tommy's shoulder as she continued to lead him back towards the bedroom. She pushed him into the bedroom and closed the door behind him.

"Goodnight, Tommy," Joan said quietly.

Tommy ran over to his father's cot, "Dad, Dad! You need to get up now, or we are going to be here forever."

Jack snorted and rolled over. Tommy shook him until his eyes flew open.

"What is it Tommy?" Jack said groggily.

"Joan is going to trap us here," Tommy said, trying not to panic.

"Please you've got to believe me."

"Why would she do that?" Jack asked, still lying on the bed. "Joan's been nothing but nice to us since we got here."

"She's got you under some kind of spell or something, Dad." Tommy pleaded. There was a panic in his voice that caught Jack's attention.

"Please, Dad. You've got to believe me."

"Okay, okay." Jack got up, rubbed his eyes and walked over to the door. He grasped the doorknob and tried to open it. "We're stuck," he turned to his teenage son.

"Joan locked us in," Tommy cried out in anger.

"You think I don't know that, kid?" Jack pinched the top of his nose, right in between his eyes, hoping the pressure he put there would trigger a solution.

Tommy was quiet, and Jack could tell he was trying to think of a way for the two of them to get out of there. What were they going to do? Being there with Tommy, Jack felt something drain from him, and he could finally focus on his son and what he had been feeling. Panic began to set into Jack's bones. They were stuck. Tommy was just happy

Tasty Tidbits

By Paige Knights-Smith



that his dad might actually start believing him about Joan.

"I thought that we had enough time," Tommy said quietly before turning to face his dad. "Didn't we have enough time? We got here with enough time to get back."

"What are you talking about Tommy?" Jack asked his son.

"I found the fireplace, Dad," Tommy said. "It's outside in a tree trunk, and she said that the countdown is on."

Jack looked down at his watch, "The countdown? When will it be at zero? Maybe we already missed the mark."

"So what do we do now?" Tommy asked.

"I don't know," Jack shook his head and stared at the wall. Whatever they did, they had to do it fast. Time wasn't on their side.

"What about the window?" Tommy ran over to the window and it opened easily. "That was too easy."

"Something needs to be," Jack ran over and boosted his son up and out the window. "Let's go."

Tommy watched his father climb out the window, and then they both ran around the house towards the garden. "It's over this way."

Tommy smelled the smoke before he saw it, and instantly knew what was happening.

"No!" Tommy yelled, running faster than he could ever remember running before. "She's burning it down!"

Jack was at his son's heels, running behind him between the fruit bushes and down the path towards the palm trees. He could see

Joan's figure near the flames and he suddenly became panicked. He wanted to go home but he was afraid to leave Joan too.

The flames had just started, but the smoke was excessive. Joan stood far enough away that she didn't realize that Jack and Tommy had approached the tree from the other side.

Tommy could see the door and he wasn't willing to let it burn down. The bricks stood out inside the tree trunk, and using his sweater sleeve with one hand and grabbing his dad with the other, he counted out the hot bricks. Fifteen down and seven to the right. He pushed and the fireplace door opened.

"No!" Jack and Tommy heard Joan yell as Tommy pulled his father into the open door and away from the fire.

The floor was hard underneath them as they fell, and both Father and Son were met with dust from attic floor.

Tommy looked up and around the familiar attic of the house that his Father had bought, and sighed in relief.

Jack started laughing, "We're back!"

"Believe me now?" Tommy began to laugh with him.

"I will never doubt you again," Jack said threw his arm around his son and held him tight.

They looked back towards the fireplace, and there in its place was a photograph hanging at an obscure angle.

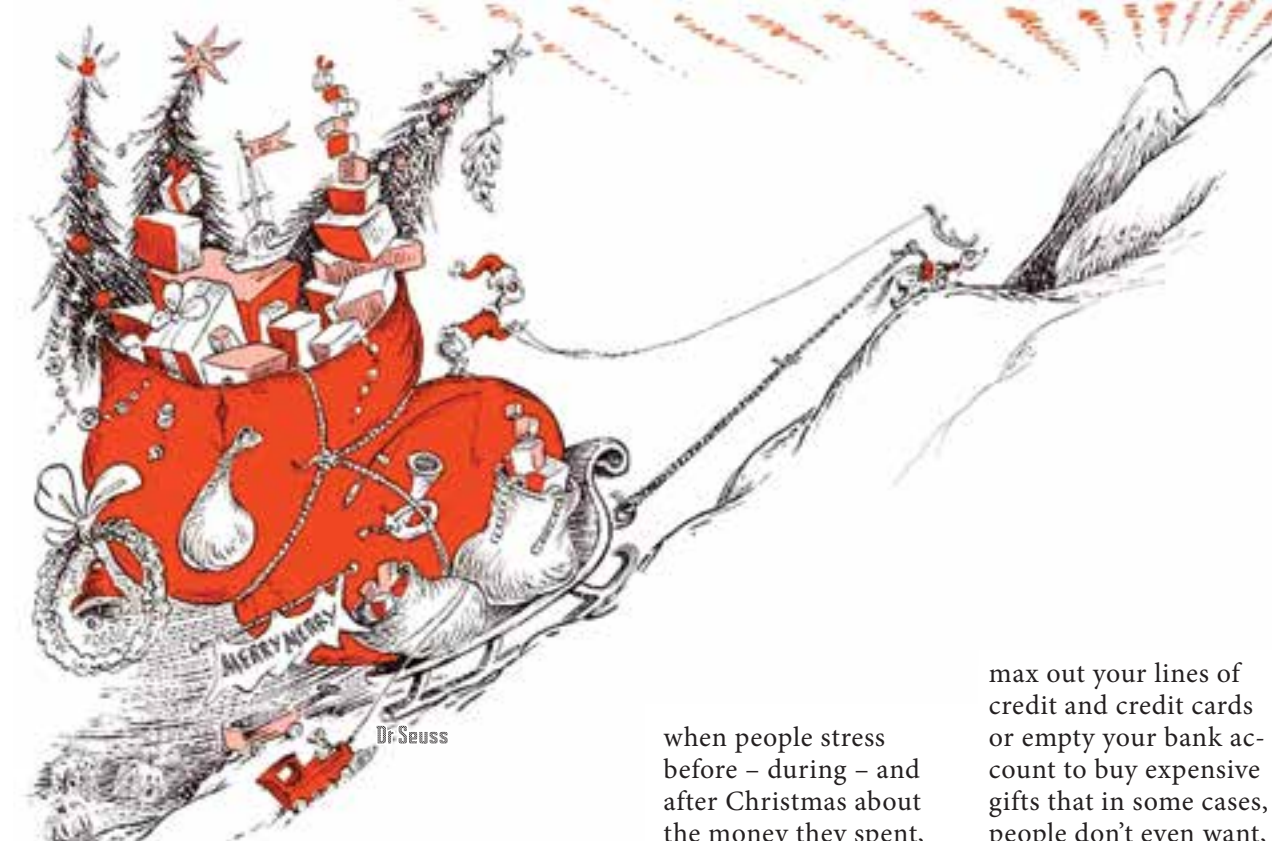
The photograph was of a fireplace nestled inside a tree trunk.

The End.



"Just because you are soft doesn't mean you are not a force.
Honey and wildfire are both the color gold." ~Victoria Erickson

What if Christmas doesn't come from a store?



Dr. Seuss

BY ADELE MCLEARN, CHS

Christmas – what is your first thought when you hear this word?

I talk with clients every day – all day – about money. And what have I learned thus far – Christmas is a time

when people stress before – during – and after Christmas about the money they spent, and the credit cards statements that have not even arrived yet! Christmas should not be a time whereby you

max out your lines of credit and credit cards or empty your bank account to buy expensive gifts that in some cases, people don't even want, let alone need. Maybe we should go back to grassroots regarding Christmas – a time to take a basket of

home baked goodies to a neighbor – shovel the driveway for a friend that is not expecting it – make up IOU cards to place inside of a Christmas greeting that states: One free housecleaning – one free dinner delivered – one night of babysitting for a much needed DATE NIGHT – a gift that means a great deal to those you care about.

When I watch the News and see that a man stabbed someone at the Black Friday Sale in order to acquire a much-coveted sale item it makes me think – where have we gone?! It's just a material item that has no true and lasting value... especially at this time of year.

Put away your credit cards – think of something that you could make or do for a friend or a loved one for Christmas that people will remember all the year through. Something that comes from your heart and not from your pocketbook. Something that takes time to think about and time to do. Instead of spending all of that time in long lines waiting for the store to open, you could have already made that special gift for that special person without stress, and money remaining in your bank account!

Maybe the Grinch got it right – "What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas... perhaps... means a little bit more?" May you and your family remember Christmas 2016 – with memories for a lifetime with those that you love and cherish.



"The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled." ~Plutarch

Newest gadgets for Christmas gift giving



You know you're a gadget/technology freak when you go to write an article about all the new tech out there for giving people at Christmas, and you already own most of it, but are still fired up about it. As I sit down on, what we tech geeks call our Christmas (Cyber Monday, the day when all the online sales happen, the Monday after Black Friday), shopping from the convince of our warm house in front of our laptop with our coffee or Red

Bull, I wonder why people would stand in line for hours or days to get deals that pale in comparison to what I'm looking at right now. I never understood Black Friday or Boxing Day sales even before Cyber Monday took off. I mean, do I really need a cheap TV that badly? As far as the latest toys go, I wasn't on that 'band wagon' of people that needed those for my kids, but I digress. I'm here to let you know about all the new things available for



that tech boy (as my son calls me) or girl.

Most of what I see this year is new and improved versions of what was available last year. A new iPhone, Apple Watch, Surface Pro and iPad seem to top the list, so I won't spend an awful lot of time talking about them. I got my Apple Watch last year and I love it. I was skeptical at first, as all the reviews I read

panned it. I am a die-hard Apple fan so I took the plunge; it does everything I want it to, including being able to answer my phone if I really want to look like inspector gadget. I can see my texts, see who is calling, check the weather, check my heart-rate, see how many steps I've taken, and be notified if someone has asked me a question on Facebook. The only drawback for

me was that it needed to be charged every night, but now that I have a power stand for it, it's not an issue anymore. The new one is now fully waterproof, has a GPS independent from your phone, a brighter display, a faster processor and it looks like there has been a price drop as well, so it's on my list.

Most of the rest of the new tech are speakers, headphones and earbuds all using wireless Bluetooth technology, probably because the new iPhone 7 has no headphone jack. There are some newer, faster, pricier laptops; the new MacBook Pro, the new Microsoft Surface; and new iPhone and google phones.

The newest gadgets aim to automate your home with temperature, lighting and security

controls all accessed from the convenience of your smartphone. There are also a couple of new gaming platforms for all the gamers out there, in the new Xbox One S and Sony's PlayStation 4 Pro.

My only disappointment was that I was hoping for more AI (artificial intelligence) choices to come to Canada, as really there is nothing yet. The Amazon Echo and the Google Home are into their second and third year, but still operate like Siri's intelligence-challenged-special-cousin and can be a little frustrating.

On the bright side, we are getting closer to the type of gadgets I longed for as I watched episodes of Star Trek when I was a kid, and I know that the good stuff always comes out at the Consumer Electronics Show in January... so Vegas, here I come!

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"Keep a little fire burning, however small, however hidden."
~Carmac McCarthy

Holiday-themed new releases

Looking for some new holiday entertainment? Check out these 2016 movie releases with a holiday theme!



Christmas Eve, imdb: 5.1, rating: PG, actors: Patrick Stewart, Cheryl Hines, Gary Cole, Jon Heder, James Roday

Love, hilarity and superior attitudes triumph after a power outage leaves six unique groups of New Yorkers, each with their own unique personal quirks, stuck inside of some elevators for the entire night of Christmas Eve. With having no place to go, and only each other to have

conversations with, all of them are forever changed by the shenanigans and thought-provoking conversation that took place on their endlessly long night together.

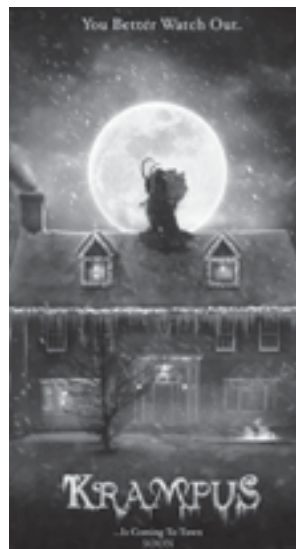
Office Christmas Party, imdb: NA, rating: R, actors: Jennifer Aniston, Jason Bateman, T.J. Miller, Kate McKinnon, Olivia Munn
A condescending office manager decides to throw a huge Christmas bash in an attempt to acquire



a new client. The CEO of the parent company is the manager's sister and she is considering closing down the branch because of poor sales. The manager hopes to save the day by orchestrating this extravagant holiday bash attempting to win over this prospective client. The new client can turn the company's branch into a successful and profitable faction. Hoping to boost his image, personally and professionally, this office manager plants a Christmas party that should be the mother of all Christmas parties.

Krampus, imdb: 6.4, rating: PG-13, actors: Adam Scott, Toni Collette, Allison Tolman, David Koechner, Emjay Anthony

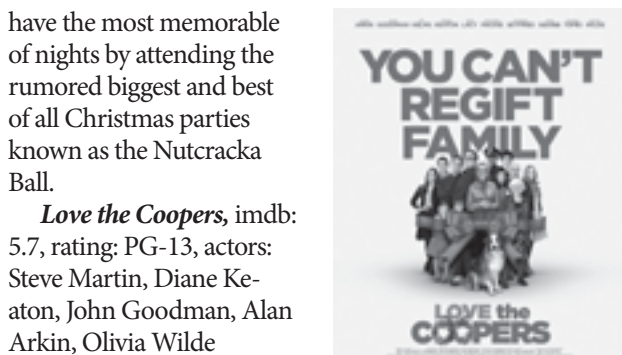
It is getting close to another holiday season and a local officer named Jeremy continues the investigation of his kidnapped child. When more children end up missing during the holidays, the police are faced with the realization it might be the work of a mythical demonic creature called Krampus. It turns out that Krampus is much



more than a myth. In fact, Krampus is the brother of old St. Nick. While Santa Claus reflects everything that is good about Christmas, Krampus is the anti-Christmas demon. The question is: Can police stop this creature before he ruins the holidays of too many victims.

The Night Before, imdb: 6.6, rating: R, actors: Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Seth Rogen, Anthony Mackie, Lizzy Caplan, Jillian Bell

For ten years, Ethan, Isaac and Chris have spent every Christmas Eve together on the anniversary of the passing of Ethan's parents who died when they were children. Unlike some who mourn, the three friends don't spend the entire night sharing bad memories. Instead, they party hard. With Isaac expecting a newborn and Chris leaving as his career takes off, they won't be able to enjoy this tradition any longer and decide to do everything they can to



have the most memorable of nights by attending the rumored biggest and best of all Christmas parties known as the Nutcracka Ball.

Love the Coopers, imdb: 5.7, rating: PG-13, actors: Steve Martin, Diane Keaton, John Goodman, Alan Arkin, Olivia Wilde

Holidays are time for families to come together, but they aren't always easy. That is especially true when the multi-generational Cooper clan gathers at their yearly Christmas Eve excursion. With so many around, chaos ensues, with unwanted guests and situations causing major havoc. Yet through it all, the family learns to band together and rediscover their love of life and family while restoring the Christmas spirit back into their hearts.

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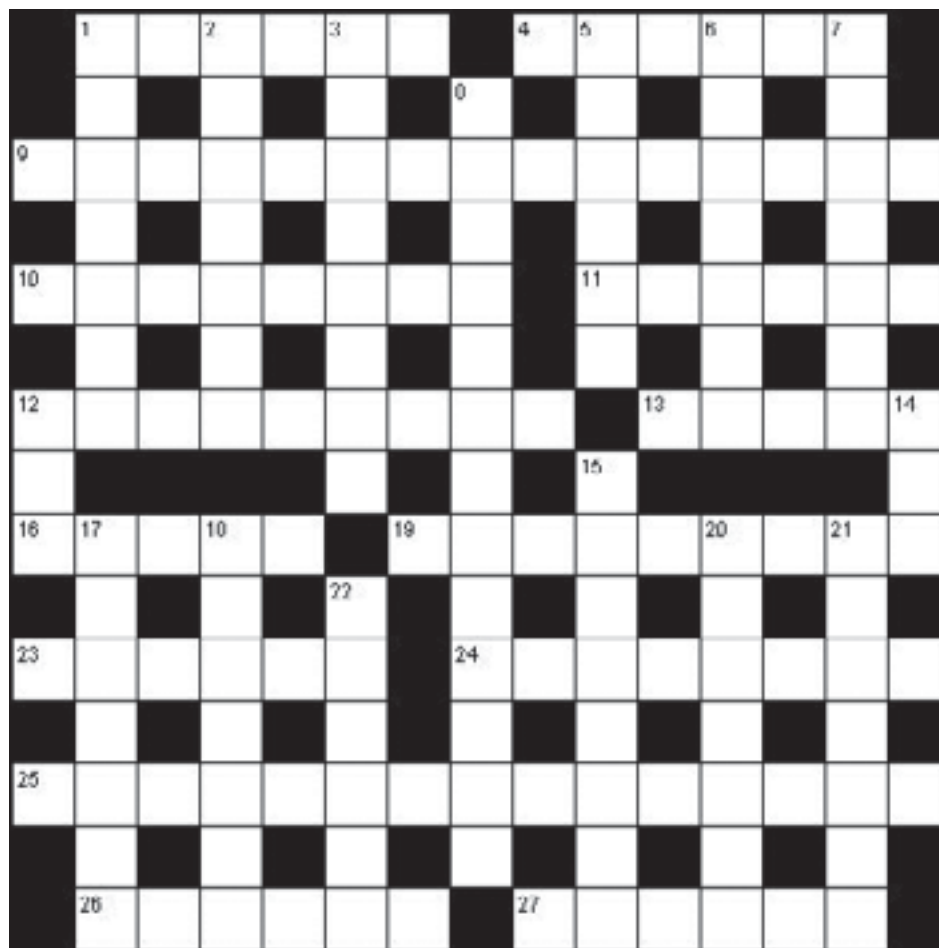


This month's crossword is brought to you by the fine people at Bob Paterson Homes.

X-Word Puzzle

ACROSS

- 1 Dress supporter in a flurry (6)
- 4 Heartless Rabbi contributes to account of Semitic language (6)
- 9 Comely union sure to be broken informally (15)
- 10 Completely remake tiny reel (8)
- 11 Bring about what is said to be unlawful (6)
- 12 Avoids being photographed despite easy charm perhaps (6,3)
- 13 Restore rates of lacrimal secretion (5)
- 16 In Malta, choose a counter for revolution (5)
- 19 Lose one's smile - act



- 25 Poorness is a life restored when you make it pay (15)
- 26 In some offices exists a discriminatory individual (6)
- 27 My son has one remodelled to produce muscle protein (6)
- 28 Opposite to 9 across (9)
- 23 Badly mauls you first in refuge (6)
- 24 Became complex when moved forward (8)

DOWN

- 1 Very good Aussie has an easy windfall (7)
- 2 Lacks microorganisms which can't reproduce (7)
- 3 The French enigma confused faithful follower (8)
- 5 Ark is lost when attacked by one of these? (6)
- 6 Gold cross found in small portion of ore (7)
- 7 Miner needs a dog, right? (7)
- 8 Comply to a rich mixture of many colours (13)

- 12 Approximately in position by family pet (3)
- 14 She is to seek redress (3)
- 15 Ian who kept getting Nev up found it enchanting (8)
- 17 One reverts emphasis but states boldly (7)
- 18 Message follows bad hail in capital of Nova Scotia (7)
- 20 Utterly perplex with "no" to new addition (3-4)
- 21 Walks over spouse's offspring (7)
- 22 Entertains us in same arrangement (6)



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