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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

By the time this publication has gone to press, the results of this federal election will have been decided. It's challenging to know how one should respond to the numerous "what if scenarios" we've been presented with. I was recently exposed to a poem entitled, "Sunflowers in Babylon" by Joshua Luke Smith which can help posture a response in the face of uncertainty: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=fsiB9uCMZ68](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fsiB9uCMZ68)

Among many things, the writer challenges us to plant seeds of hope. I'm always amazed at how new vegetation grows despite the conditions that are less than conducive. Are there seeds of hope that you can sow today, regardless of the complex challenges our society faces? These seeds are a hope for the future and help us to see beyond ourselves. Where in your community, or circles of work and friendships do seeds of hope need to be planted?

Have a Happy Mother's Day and enjoy the new growth of spring.

*From my family to yours,  
Lowell Harder*



## COVER ARTIST PROFILE

"Wild Stillness" 20x20" acrylic on canvas.

A quiet moment in the heart of the wilderness, "Wild Stillness" captures the deep, knowing gaze of a black bear, its fur illuminated with rich, warm tones against a dark, atmospheric backdrop. The intricate detail of each hair, the subtle reflection in its amber eyes, and the single green sprig caught in its mouth bring an intimate realism to the piece. There is a calm yet powerful presence in its expression—both gentle and untamed, a reminder of nature's quiet strength. This painting invites the viewer to pause, to connect, and to experience the stillness of the wild.

Reference photo thanks to Cooper Ferko [@coop814\\_photography](https://www.instagram.com/coop814_photography) on Instagram.

Kristen Young is a self-taught wildlife artist based in Millarville. Her artwork is a breathtaking blend of realism and soul, bringing wild animals to life with exquisite detail and emotion. Each painting feels like

a quiet moment of connection with nature—like you've caught a wild creature in its most peaceful, powerful state. There's a warmth and vibrancy in her colors, and a kind of storytelling in the eyes of her animals that makes you stop and really see them. It's the kind of art that doesn't just decorate a space—it invites nature into your home and reminds you why it's worth protecting.

Kristen's work has been published in the Pastel 100 magazine 2020 as a finalist, as well as a finalist in the Nature Art competition by Light Space & Time Online Art Gallery 2023. You can read more of Kristen's story and view her work at [www.kristenyoungart.ca](https://www.kristenyoungart.ca). Instagram [@wildlife\\_artist\\_kristenyoung](https://www.instagram.com/wildlife_artist_kristenyoung)

*We are looking to feature local amateur and professional artists or photographers. Now that we have a colour publication our ability to feature your work is better than ever. Submit your work to [info@highcountrynews.ca](mailto:info@highcountrynews.ca) We are looking forward to seeing what you create.*

## ROCKY VIEW COUNTY Election 2025

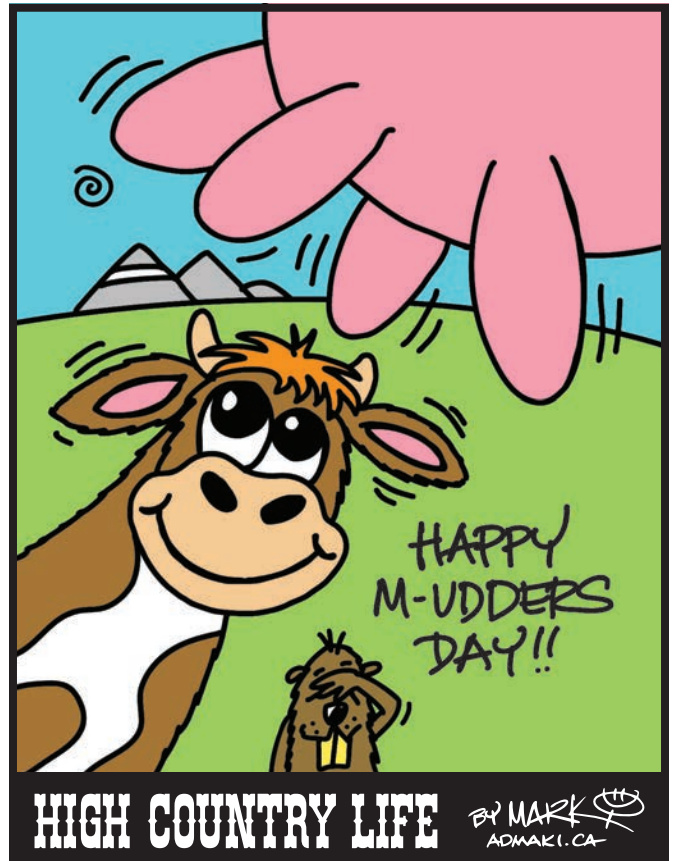


**THE NEXT MUNICIPAL ELECTION  
FOR ROCKY VIEW COUNTY IS  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2025.**

**ARE YOU CONSIDERING RUNNING FOR OFFICE?**

The nomination period is now open and lasts until noon,  
**Monday, September 22, 2025.**

Visit [www.rockyview.ca/elections](https://www.rockyview.ca/elections) to learn more about the Candidate Nomination Process and Election 2025.





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## SHAUNA KATHLEEN MURPHY

March 19, 1953 – April 10, 2025

Shauna Kathleen Murphy passed away peacefully on April 10, 2025, at the age of 72. Born in Calgary, Alberta on March 19, 1953, Shauna spent her life close to the things she loved most: the wide-open spaces of the mountains, the company of animals, and the quiet strength of family.

From a young age, Shauna had a deep bond with horses and began training them at just 12 years old — a passion that became a lifelong calling. She was known for her patience, dedication, and gentle way with animals, and she found joy and purpose in every ride, every trail, and every moment spent outdoors with her beloved dogs at her side.

Shauna was deeply rooted in family. She is survived by her brother Tom Murphy, and nephews Chris Murphy and Ian Dawson-Murphy. Shauna was predeceased by her parents, Marion and Vincent Murphy, and her brother, Glyn Murphy.

Her spirit lives on in the mountains she cherished, the animals she cared for, and the memories held close by those who knew and loved her.

In keeping with her wishes, no service will be held.

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## YOUNG COCHRANE MUSICIANS MUSIC TALENT COMPETITION

Young Cochrane Musicians invited to win a \$250 1st Prize in a new Musical Talent Competition.

The Competition is open to all types of musical performers (18 or under) from solo artists to full bands, performing anything from Opera to Doom Rock! and is free to watch.

Cochrane Drum Tutor is inviting young musicians to compete to win a \$250 cash 1st prize in their brand new Talent Competition at 1.30pm Sunday 22nd June 2025 at the Lions Club, Cochrane, Alberta. (2nd Prize: \$100, 3rd prize: \$50)

There is only a limited number of performance slots available, so wannabe winners need to go to [www.cochranedrumtutor.ca/recitals](http://www.cochranedrumtutor.ca/recitals) to sign up quickly!

The format for the competition will be similar in format to those on the TV with

a panel of 3 industry professionals as judges offering feedback to each performer, and then picking the 3 prizewinners at the end. The MC for the event will be Jacklyn Sparrow, the highly experienced band leader and musical theatre performer who will also perform a couple of numbers to kick off the event.

The Talent Competition is just the first of 3 special musical events that day hosted by Cochrane Drum Tutor. It will be followed by:

- Drum Recital at 4pm where drum students will play a range of songs live with The Treblemakers <https://treblemakersyyc.com/> voted Best Band in the Bow Valley for 2023 and 2024.
- “Open Jam” 7.30pm where local musicians (of ALL ages this time!) can jump onstage to jam together, network and enjoy a relaxed evening of impromptu performances!

Edward Allen, Cochrane Drum Tutor owner commented:

“Talking to lots of young local musicians, it was clear they were just itching for opportunities to get up there, perform, get some publicity and make contacts,

so the Talent Competition felt like a perfect way to give them that opportunity in a fun entertaining way right here in town”

For interviews or further information please contact Edward Allen at [edwardjohnallen@gmail.com](mailto:edwardjohnallen@gmail.com)

Many thanks in advance.

### Cochrane Drum Tutor

- Recital Day page: [www.cochranedrumtutor.ca/recitals](http://www.cochranedrumtutor.ca/recitals)
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/cochranedrumtutor](http://www.facebook.com/cochranedrumtutor)
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## SPRINGBANK HERITAGE CLUB

Springbank Heritage Club is a not-for-profit organization created for the benefit and enjoyment of senior citizens age 50+ in Springbank and surrounding communities. We are located at 244168 Range Road 33.

On April 4th, the Heritage Club singers took their talent to the Robinson Outreach at River Ranch (ROARR), a nonprofit organization with a mission to relieve conditions association with youth at risk and seniors. ROARR provides equine-assisted learning and related activities for the benefit of the participants. In addition to the equine activities, the program provides a warm meal every Tuesday and Thursday for seniors. It was at this lunch that our singers performed to the delight of those in attendance.



Everyone is welcome to join our singing group at the Heritage Club on Tuesdays from 10:00 to noon. No experience needed!

Our first book club meeting of the "Page Turners" was held on April 11th. We had a lively discussion around Whit Fraser's novel "The Cold Edge of Heaven" learning something about Canada's north in the 1920's when the issue of sovereignty was first addressed. Did you know that AY Jackson and Frederick Banting (an amateur painter) did a supply run up the coast of Baffin Island? Through their painting they were keen to help make other Canadians aware of these northern parts of Canada

and to encourage the defining of northern territories as belonging to Canada.

We will be meeting next on May 9th and will feature "Bluebird" by Genevieve Graham, another historical fiction. We hope to see you there!

The Heritage Club annual Strawberry Tea will be held on May 10th from 1:00 to 3:00pm at the Club. Admission is \$10, children under six are free. Following the entertainment, patrons will be served tea and strawberry shortcake. Groups of six or more should reserve by emailing [Joanpzwingli@gmail.com](mailto:Joanpzwingli@gmail.com).

For more information check out our website at [springbankheritageclub.com](http://springbankheritageclub.com)



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## COUNCILLOR UPDATE ROCKY VIEW COUNTY

### Don Kochan - Division 2

#### RVC Division 2 news items for your information:

**Budget 2025** – On April 8th Council passed the spring finalization budget with a 0% municipal tax increase and passed the provision of approximately \$5.2 million of surplus revenues to be placed in RVC's tax stabilization reserve which is used to support future projects and service levels. The tax stabilization reserve's 2025 balance will be \$72.9 million.

The Government of Alberta (GOA) has approved funding for transportation projects within Division 2 as follows:

Highway 1 / Range Road 33 Interchange upgrade – the amount of funding will be between \$16-\$24M. Administration is seeking clarity on the exact amount.

Highway 1 – Highway 22 Interchange (bridge rehabilitation design).

Highway 1 – Jumping pound Creek Bridge (bridge rehabilitation design).

The GOA increased the provincial education property tax requisition by 6.3% on residential property and 6.4% on

non-residential property. This will impact County residents and businesses, who will experience a property tax increase despite the County approving a 0% tax increase in RVC's 2025 budget. The new Education Property Tax Requisition rates will be \$2.72/\$1,000 for residential property and farmland and \$4.00/\$1,000 for non-residential property.

#### Springbank Area Structure Plan (ASP)

– After many years of community engagement, Springbank's ASP has been approved. The community voiced strong support for replacing the 3 existing ASPs into one, maintaining a country rural lifestyle, limiting commercial development that meets the immediate community needs and the establishment of a community core. Council approved 3rd reading on March 25th, including an amendment that I proposed to remove policy 20.07 that still had connection to the allowance of parcels less than 2 acres. The amendment was carried with Councillor Hanson opposing since he felt that there may be a need for less than 2-acre parcels in the future. The strong community input was appreciated, and it was clear that 2 acres and above sized parcels represents the rural character that the community wishes to preserve. Appreciate the communities consistent and persistent input that was provided in the establishment of the new ASP. Now for the successful implementation. You can view the updated ASP directly here: [Springbank ASP Document](#)

#### Huggard Road and Range Road 34

**Traffic Calming** - the planned traffic calming and safety improvement measures for Huggard Road are as follows:

**Speed Limit Adjustments:** The speed limit on the west side of Huggard Road will be reduced from 60 km/h to 40 km/h. For other sections of the road, the speed limit will remain unchanged.

**New Signage:** We are implementing new signage along Huggard Road, including vehicle-activated traffic control speed radar signs (electronic speed signs). These measures are designed to enhance driver awareness and compliance with posted speed limits.

**Locations:** The traffic calming measures will be implemented east and west of Range Road 33, including Range Road 34.

**Timeline:** The project is scheduled to take place between May 2025 and June 2025. **Additional Safety Improvements:** Brushing, increased signage, and other traffic calming measures will be included as part of this initiative.

For more information, please visit the Rocky View County website under Road Updates | Rocky View County or contact Andrea Baron directly at 403.520.3933

**Data Centers** - On March 4, 2025, Council received a report indicating that global demand for data processing infrastructure is creating an economic opportunity for Alberta and Rocky View County. Several potential investors have approached the County with proposals for the development of large data centres in locations with the necessary energy infrastructure to support these facilities. Council directed Administration to work with two project proponents to begin drafting ASP terms of reference, to raise public awareness of the opportunities, and to consider how to thoughtfully incorporate these opportunities into the County's planning framework while meeting the project requirements. The proposed process would ensure rigorous standards and additional details for policies and technical studies at the ASP stage are developed to ensure that the public interest is protected.

Don Kochan - Deputy Reeve  
Division 2 Councillor  
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## NEWSLETTER

### Judi Hunter - Ward 5 Trustee

#### EDUCATION FUNDING

An educated society is one of the cornerstones of a democratic society. There is a cost. For the 2025/2026 school year, almost 11 billion dollars in education funding and another 47 billion over 3 years for school builds and improvements through the School Accelerator Program.

The provincial government implemented a 4.5 percent hike in the Education Property Tax (EPT), which was frozen in the 2024-25 budget year. Municipalities collect the EPT for the provincial government. The EPT is levied alongside municipal property taxes, based on the value of the property. "Even with all those dollars collected province-wide and including this 4.5% increase, the Education Property taxes will only cover 31.6 percent of the K to 12 education budget," Superintendent Luterbach stated in an interview with Rocky View Weekly. General revenues of taxes collected across the province will pay the remaining shortfall. The success of the educational system is important to all taxpayers as our students are our next generation of innovators, leaders and citizens.

Just as our society evolves and changes so does our educational system. Our schools are responding to many changes. Since COVID there has been a significant increase in the number of students dealing with emotional issues. As a normal part of the curriculum, students are learning strategies to deal with anxiety and social

pressures. The Alberta curriculum has been revised to include financial literacy as a component from K-12. The curriculum also now includes a career development component from K-12. The focus is to provide students an opportunity to explore different careers as they progress through the grades with high school students can explore the trades, participate in post-secondary opportunities and take on the job training.

School systems deal with the many medical needs of students; this includes facility adaptations, specialized equipment, tools and staff.

Literacy and numeracy are more important than ever in our digital world, thus the focus on ensuring students receive early intervention.

#### CARBON TAX

ASBA (Alberta School Board Association) has been advocating both provincially and nationally on the position statement related to carbon tax: That school boards be fully rebated the cost of the carbon tax or levy (SGM 2016). Following his swearing-in as Prime Minister, Mike Carney removed

the consumer carbon tax effective April 1 through an Order in Council (OIC). Further details will be available in the federal OIC database soon. School Boards are advocating for this tax to be removed on school boards as well.

#### EDWIN PARR NOMINEE

Cochrane High School teacher Connor Benson is this year's Rocky View Schools (RVS) Edwin Parr Award Nominee. The Edwin Parr Award annually recognizes excellent first-year teachers across Alberta. Every year, teachers from ASBA member school boards across the province are nominated to receive the award. RVS is part of ASBA Zone 5. The Zone 5 celebration takes place on May 30, 2025.

#### CONSTRUCTION FUNDING

Rocky View Schools has been the recipient of new school announcements from the School Accelerator Program through its advocacy initiatives and support from parents and communities. There are a total of 8 projects approved for Rocky View to address our need for classroom space for students. (see table below)

Approved Projects and Location	Capacity	Funded Type	Opening**
K – 9 School Airdrie South Windsong	905	Construction	Fall 2027
K – 9 School Airdrie Bayview	905	Construction	Fall 2028
K – 8 School Cochrane Rivercrest	905	Construction	Fall 2028
K – 9 School Chestermere Dawson's	905	Construction	TBD**
10 – 12 School Airdrie Southwinds	1,810	Construction	TBD **
K – 9 School Airdrie Lanark	950	Planning	TBD **
10 – 12 School Chestermere Chelsea	950	Planning	TBD **
Cochrane Bow Valley Expansion	1450	In Progress	Fall 2026

*Timelines will be updated when confirmed by the provincial government. \*\**

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## COUNCILLOR UPDATE ROCKY VIEW COUNTY

**Kevin Hanson - Division 1**

### Quick Bits

Council has been busy on a number of fronts so far this year, not the least of which is Data Centres. To help Council understand this unique sector opportunity, on April 9th our Economic Development folks arranged a site tour of the modest eStruxture 25MW (Mega Watt) facility currently operating at 2/3 build-out in the Balzac commercial area. I was thankful for the opportunity, as although being involved in data and control room design and technology in a past life, this was the first large pure "data centre" I have walked through. The tour involved all the support systems (power supply, cooling, battery backup, fibre connections, full emergency backup diesel generation, etc.). We were not allowed a single glimpse of the current clients' actual server rooms – they are on full security lockdown 24-7. More to come next month - responsibly developing 400-900 MW hyper-scale investments...

### Business Licenses

RVC Economic Development folks were in Bragg Creek the evening of the April 16th Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting to engage local business owners about a Council initiative for implementing a business license scheme. This initiative is being considered so that RVC is better aware of who our businesses are in the County. Sanja Braak and Aaron Latimer from Rocky View presented the pros and cons of the initiative and a 3rd-party facilitator ran the interactive session. It is excellent to see Aaron once again quarterbacking our Economic Development after a short stint away from the County – his energy and passion for

Bragg Creek's businesses is infectious. RVC has been granting our Chambers some monies each year for the past several years including the local chamber receiving \$25,000 annually.

### Bragg Creek Area Structure Plan revision – Phase 3 Open House

RVC Planning folks hosted an open house, also on April 16, from 6:30pm to 9:00pm at the Community Centre. Folks showed up early and were participating from 6:20 onward. I was super impressed with the turn-out, it was busy from the get-go and was tapering off by 8:00pm with folks remaining right until 9:00pm to chat with planners. Over 120 people came out, including a couple of residents from Elbow Valley, who spend a lot of time in the hamlet, and the EVRC's community manager popped in as well.

In addition to covering the ASP project process, the information boards outlined how the revised Area Structure Plan will primarily focus on the Hamlet Growth Area and will build upon the work started for the Bragg Creek Expansion Strategy and guided by the results of the Visioning Committee:

- Community Identity – Maintaining the local character and charm of Bragg Creek while planning for future growth.
- Inclusive Community – Supporting a diverse range of housing, services, and amenities to meet residents' needs.
- Regenerative Development – Exploring sustainable infrastructure that balances environmental stewardship with economic and residential expansion.
- Sustainable Visitor Economy – Recognizing Bragg Creek's appeal to tourists while mitigating potential impacts of over-tourism.
- Living with Limits – Respecting the ecological and infrastructural limits of the community to ensure future growth matches the hamlet's capacity and protects its natural assets.

If you were not able to make the open house, you can still learn and provide feedback via our online engagement portal. The survey is available at [engage.rockyview.ca](https://engage.rockyview.ca). Either way, it is great opportunity to share feedback, concerns, and priorities directly with the project team.

Later this year, the team will hold a Community Workshop to explore community priorities, challenges, and opportunities in greater depth. It will build on feedback gathered during the initial phases, as well as insights from the Visioning Committee's work.

The project team will return to the community in the fall of 2025 to present the first draft ASP for further review, validation, and refinement. Let's work together to build a thriving, sustainable future for Bragg Creek which supports our hamlet's unique character!

### Exploring Waste and Wildlife Solutions in Bragg Creek

Rocky View County is working on this collaboratively with Bragg Creek Wild, who brought this topic to Council last year on July 17, 2024. At the ASP Open House, a separate information table was set up by our solid waste staff to engage residents for feedback on potential bylaw and other community-based solutions. Mason Austen, our manager of Utility Services was in attendance to discuss the topic. The goal is to provide additional community input to RVC on managing waste and reducing wildlife conflicts in and around the hamlet. This survey on waste options is also available at [engage.rockyview.ca](https://engage.rockyview.ca).

Concerns have been raised about attractants such as unsecured garbage, and one option under consideration is a potential garbage bylaw. Please share your input through the survey. Your feedback will help us better understand community experiences, concerns, and priorities as we explore potential solutions that resonate with the Bragg Creek community.

Contact: [KRHanson@RockyView.ca](mailto:KRHanson@RockyView.ca)  
or call 403.463.1166.

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## MLA UPDATE - BANFF/KANANSKIS

### Sarah Elmeligi

Spring has fully sprung across Banff-Kananaskis and while there will undoubtedly be one more annoying snowfall, I am turning to my garden with anticipation and imagination. The trails are now more muddy than icy (most of the time), and the sun feels warming and inviting. I hope you're enjoying the change of seasons as much as I am and getting your hands/bike/horse/hiking boots dirty with adventure. Having so many outdoor adventures at our fingertips is one of the things that makes Banff-Kananaskis so great!

It's wildfire season and I know many of you are concerned about wildfire risk. At the end of March, I hosted a Wildfire Preparedness Workshop where our community experts reinforced that we all have a role to play in reducing the wildfire risk and keeping our communities safe. Alberta FireSmart has great resources to help you fire smart your home during your spring yard clean up. Take advantage of the numerous opportunities across the riding to learn more about wildfire preparedness, so check community boards and municipality websites to see what's happening around you. If you missed the workshop, be sure to sign up for my e-newsletter (QR code next to my photo here) where we'll be sharing the awesome workbook we made to guide through preparing and staying safe.

Coal mining on the Eastern Slopes has been a hot topic in the legislature this spring. In April, I joined my colleagues on a series of meetings with stakeholders and concerned citizens along the Eastern Slopes and in Lethbridge. What we heard repeatedly was concern about water quality in our headwaters and the potential impacts of coal mining on other industries like tourism and agriculture. Despite public backlash and previous moratoriums, the government is reopening pathways for open-pit coal mining in Alberta's Eastern Slopes. Albertans want permanent protections for our headwaters,

native grasslands, and way of life. A clear, resounding NO continues to echo at numerous rallies across our province, including the protests I attended outside the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) hearings that took place in Calgary, Alberta (whose decision is expected at end of April.) The latest petition asking the government to protect our mountains and ban coal mining in the Eastern Slopes carried the voices of thousands of Albertans into the legislature when it was submitted in mid April. On April 9th, the NDP opposition team had a coal day in the legislature where all of our member statements and questions were about coal. You can watch that video on the Alberta Legislature Assembly YouTube Channel (April 9th, 2025 - Afternoon Session - Legislative Assembly of Alberta). You can see some of the videos I've recorded about coal mining on the Eastern Slopes on my YouTube Channel too.

MLA on Tour remains a critical part of my work in serving the people of Banff-Kananaskis. Last month I was also able to connect with some of you in Bragg Creek and Springbank. Whether we have a short one on one or a larger group chat, I'm always keen to hear what's important to you. Check the graphic and my social media profiles for this month's dates. We've nicknamed this spring the season of coal, corruption, and cougars because that's what I'm hearing about the most. Our upcoming e-newsletter focuses on these issues, providing more in-depth information – be sure to subscribe!

Our spring legislature session has been a busy one with 20 different bills to debate. I've tried my best to represent you and speak to a broad array of issues. From the need for scientific data to inform wildlife management and decision making to improved funding for wildfire preparedness and suppression; from reducing red tape to improve the success of small business to the need for the Child and Youth advocate to collect and report on data pertaining to children in care. I supported our municipalities in asking why the Government is pushing a provincial police force that will increase municipal costs, and I asked about tangible supports for mental health and people struggling with addiction. The last few weeks, I'll be able

to speak to all of these topics and more. Check out my YouTube channel to see all of my legislature appearances in bill debate. We've also posted my series of discussion with Ministers in budget estimate debate.

The legislature is always a fast-paced time, and I am continually reminded of how important it is to take each of you with me into the House – it is my job to represent you in Edmonton. At the same time, I'm also looking ahead to spending more time outdoors — hosting more Trail Days with Sarah and continuing our regular MLA on Tour visits throughout the region. This corner of Alberta holds a special place in my heart, and I'm always grateful for the chance to take in the fresh foothills air and stunning views — especially when I get to share those moments with you. Whether I'm in Edmonton or back home in Canmore, our constituency office is here for you. Please don't hesitate to connect.

*Sarah Elmeligi*



**MLA SARAH ELMELIGI**  
**BANFF-KANANSKIS**

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 Open office hours: M,W,T: 10:00 - 3:00pm, and by appointment  
 E-mail us anytime at:  
[banff.kananaskis@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:banff.kananaskis@assembly.ab.ca)

**MLA ON TOUR**

**Jumping Pound**  
**Community Hall**  
 44208 Township Rd 250  
 May 29th  
 5:00 - 7:00pm

**Mabel and Marie's**  
**Bragg Creek, AB**  
 May 30th  
 11:00 - 1:00pm

**Trails Day**  
**Bow Valley Provincial Park**  
 May 31<sup>st</sup> at 10:30  
 e-mail to RSVP



# Robert M. Hughes Financial Solutions Inc.

## True Cost of Financial Procrastination

Have you ever thought, “I’ll start saving next month” or “I’ll get serious about my financial strategy next year”? If so, you’re not alone. Procrastination is something we’ve all been guilty of at some point. However, when it comes to your finances, the costs of waiting can be much higher than you think. Let’s explore three ways financial procrastination can quietly derail your dreams: buying a home, traveling the world, and enjoying a comfortable retirement.

### 1. Difficult Housing Transitions

Buying a home is a significant milestone, but financial procrastination can make the dream of homeownership feel like a distant mirage. If you delay saving for a down payment or improving your credit score, you might find yourself stuck in the renting cycle longer.

The longer you wait to save, the more likely you’ll face higher home prices and rising mortgage rates. A \$400,000 property today might cost significantly more in five years, meaning you’ll need a larger down payment just to keep up. This can lead to frustration, financial stress, and even the feeling that home-ownership is slipping out of reach. Starting a plan now, even if it’s modest, can make a world of difference.

### 2. Delayed Recreation Opportunities

How often have you daydreamed about exploring new destinations, but then told yourself, “I’ll travel someday”? Without a financial strategy, “someday” often turns into “never.”

Traveling requires time and money, and both become harder to come by if you’re not prepared. When you procrastinate on saving or investing, your future disposable income may be limited by debt or unexpected expenses. Instead of jet-setting to your dream destinations, you might find yourself stuck at home, watching travel documentaries instead of living them.

The solution? Start small. Open a dedicated travel savings account, automate contributions, and watch your dream fund grow. Every step counts toward turning that “someday” into a booked ticket.

### 3. Disappointing Retirement Realities

Retirement is often painted as a golden phase of life filled with leisure and freedom. But without adequate financial preparation, the reality can be far from that idyllic image.

The power of compounding works best with time, so delaying your retirement contributions can severely impact your future nest egg. For example, someone who starts saving in their 20s has a significant advantage over someone who waits until their 40s. By postponing your planning, you risk entering retirement with limited funds, forcing you to make tough choices about where and how you live—and even whether you can retire at all.

Take the first step by assessing your current savings and setting achievable goals. Whether it’s increasing your RRSP contributions or working with a financial advisor, every effort adds up.

## The Bottom Line

Financial procrastination might feel harmless in the short term, but its long-term consequences can be overwhelming. From the stress of buying a home to missed opportunities for adventure and an underfunded retirement, delaying your financial strategy only makes things harder.

The good news? It’s never too late to start. Take a deep breath, make a plan, and take small but consistent steps toward your goals. Your future self will thank you.

Call me today to set up an appointment to review your goals and objectives and to ensure that your current investment approach will allow you to fulfill your goals.

Also, visit my business website ([myfinancialsolutions.ca](http://myfinancialsolutions.ca)) for additional financial information on insurance, retirement/estate planning, investments and whole host of other financial topics.

**Robert Hughes,**  
P. Eng., CFSB, CFP, CPCA

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## MAKE YOUR MARK By Mark Kamachi

### Build your brand with a contest?

Did you read our ad in last month's High Country News? You would've seen the "paint the easter egg" contest AdMaki Creative held. And if you would've entered your masterpiece to Kate as per instructions, you'd be the envy of fashionistas worldwide. Alas, as we had no contest entrants, so the highly coveted trucker hat stays under the pool table.

Using a contest to build your brand comes with some risks. It must be strategically focused, well thought out, well executed and creative enough to garner interest. Be it a colouring contest, name-the-product, or guess the number rice grains in a piece of futomaki, or one of thousands of ways brands try to attract new customers, contests can play a part in your marketing. Businesses often think a contest is how you build a following, grow your customer base, in order to make reams of money. It's not that simple. In this article, I'd like

to speak to the pros of using contests in your marketing. In the following month, we'll look at the cons.

People love contests like bears love my backyard bird feeders. Promise a prize for completing a simple task like colouring an Easter egg and viola, folks will break out their Sharpies, crayons or acrylics to get their hands on the goods (Or not in our case). Some may even share their experience and tell their friends on social media. What a way to build instant brand awareness. Free publicity!

Contests, as mentioned above, can increase engagement with your brand. People who share or comment about their contest experience with your brand are sure to become ambassadors for you. And you don't have to pay them a single penny. And imagine, on digital platforms, you become that much more discoverable. As I've always believed, word-of-mouth is the best form of advertising be it in conversation on or off-line.

With the right strategy in combination with your brand's personality, your brand can extend beyond your local target area with the right type of contest. Here are two examples of extremely popular and successful contests:

Tim Hortons' "Roll Up the Rim to Win" and McDonald's "Want PRIZE with that" contests are successful because they combine simplicity, excitement, and repeat engagement. Both campaigns are easy to understand. Buy a product, play the game and you've had a dopamine fix for the day.

Participation is effortless. Each offers a mix of instant and grand prizes, which keeps customers hopeful and coming back for more. Frequent small wins, like free coffee or fries, encourage daily purchases, while the chance at larger prizes generates buzz and media attention. These contests also create a sense of tradition and nostalgia. And people look forward to them each year. Social sharing and FOMO further increase participation, turning everyday purchases into a fun game. By gamifying the buying experience and rewarding loyalty, both brands have created iconic promotions that drive sales, build customer excitement, and strengthen brand loyalty. For just a donut or a side of fries, they've got you hooked.

You can use contests to your advantage. But be aware that used incorrectly, they can cause a lot of grief or worse, hurt your brand. We'll look into that next month.

*Cheers, mark.*



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## ENTER TO WIN AGAIN

Dig out last month's HCN AdMaki colouring contest and send it to [kate@admaki.ca](mailto:kate@admaki.ca)  
The most creative entry wins the hat.

Our colouring contest last month sucked. We knew that. It was done intentionally to prove a point. Right. This time it's clear and focused. But does it help our brand? Contests help if they serve a purpose: to promote your business and build your brand. We can help with that.



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## BRAGG CREEK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

### With these hands.

We can build, fix, hold, mend, and reach out. We can lend a hand, hold a hand, and even catch someone when they fall.

Right here, right now, there are many opportunities to get involved and have fun all the while. Hear our shout out for volunteers, helpers, friends, neighbours, and generally, an extra set of hands.

- June 15 to Sept 21 - Your favourite Farmer's Market is back! We are looking for volunteers to help out on Sundays, getting you outside enjoying the summer vibes. There are three shifts to choose from, on any Sunday that works for you. Volunteer with a friend and make a day of it!
  - Youth are welcome – a great opportunity to earn volunteer credits while on summer break.
  - Children love helping out too, this is a great family activity idea.
  - Check out the SignUp link on [braggcreekca.com](http://braggcreekca.com).
- Non-Profit Groups are invited to take part in the Farmer's Market as "Guest Hosts" to promote their endeavours while

helping run the market at the same time. Email [rental@braggcreekca.com](mailto:rental@braggcreekca.com) if we haven't already been in touch with you.

- June 21 – The Bragg Creek Foundation is organizing their annual "Clean Up the Creek" event. See [braggcreekfoundation.ca](http://braggcreekfoundation.ca) for full details, and please come out to help.
- July 19 - Bragg Creek Days – We can always use help on the planning committee, plus there are sponsorship opportunities if you have a business that wants to become more involved. Contact Ramonde via the Community Centre to get involved. For volunteering on the day, shifts will be available via SignUp on our website closer to the event.
- The Spirit of Christmas needs early interest and committee contribution. Is this something you would like to add your sparkle to? Contact Shaye via the Community Centre.
- The BCCA Board has various committees made up of Directors and members of the community. Maybe you have interest and talent to share in the areas of; Sustainability and Resiliency, Volunteer Management, or Community Research. Community representation is needed on these committees. Email [manager@braggcreekca.com](mailto:manager@braggcreekca.com).
- Do you have any ideas for BCCA fundraising? We would be interested to hear and help and grow. Email [manager@braggcreekca.com](mailto:manager@braggcreekca.com).

Before school is out, Banded Peak School is going to show us how "many hands make light work". The entire student population of Grade 7 and 8 are planning a full day in May to help out and volunteer their time and energy in the community, working hard to contribute and take part in the world around them. If you need some inspiration, and example of how hard work can be rewarding and fun, look no further than the great leaders in our youth.

Speaking of youth, have you booked in for the Multi-Sport Adventure Camps this summer? These are camps for kids aged 5-12, running from July 2 to August 29, plus a teen sport conditioning camp from August 18 to 22. With a small camp size (max 25 kids per week), and a focus on fun, skill-building, and outdoor exploration, this is the ultimate summer experience! More information & registration is at [braggcreekca.com/current-programs](http://braggcreekca.com/current-programs).

With these hands. We work, we care, we connect, and we give.

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## STAYING ACTIVE AS WE AGE

As we get older it gets even more important to focus on strength, conditioning and mobility. Our bodies undergo a variety of changes that can impact our overall health and physical capabilities. Muscle mass decreases, collagen production slows down and our tissues become less elastic. This combination makes us more prone to stiffness, weakness and injury. However, we can stay active through strength training, conditioning and mobility exercises to help counteract these effects and allow us to maintain our independence and quality of life into our later years.

One of the most significant changes that occur with aging is the loss of muscle mass. Studies suggest that after the age of 30, we lose roughly 3-5% of our muscle mass per decade if we do not engage in regular strength training. This loss leads to a decrease in strength, balance, and

endurance, making everyday tasks such as lifting groceries or climbing stairs more challenging.

Strength training—such as weightlifting, resistance band exercises, and bodyweight movements—helps preserve and even rebuild muscle mass. By consistently engaging in resistance exercises, older adults can improve their muscle tone, enhance metabolism, and reduce the risk of falls and fractures.

Cardiovascular conditioning is equally important in aging populations. As we age, our heart and lungs can lose efficiency, making activities like walking, running, or even climbing stairs more difficult. Regular aerobic exercise, such as brisk walking, swimming, and cycling helps improve heart health, lung capacity, and circulation. It also supports weight management, reduces the risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension, and boosts mental well-being.

Aging also affects the flexibility of our muscles, joints, and connective tissues due to the gradual loss of collagen and elasticity

in our body. This results in stiffness, reduced range of motion, and an increased risk of injury. Maintaining mobility through stretching, yoga, Pilates, and dynamic movement exercises can help keep joints limber and functioning optimally. Incorporating flexibility exercises into a fitness routine can reduce stiffness, improve posture, and promote better balance, which is essential for fall prevention.

The key to incorporating all these aspects of fitness is consistency. I often have patients ask me, “Do I need to keep doing these exercises forever?”. The answer is YES! We do need to keep doing a combination of strength, conditioning and flexibility FOREVER if you want to keep feeling good mentally and physically. It’s important to have a variety of movements in your arsenal so you target different muscle groups and have a well-rounded fitness routine, but truly, we cannot stop if our goal is enhanced longevity and overall well-being! It’s important to start gradually, listen to your body, and seek professional guidance if necessary to ensure exercises are performed safely and effectively.

Aging is inevitable, but losing strength, endurance, and mobility doesn’t have to be. By prioritizing regular exercise that includes strength training, cardiovascular conditioning, and mobility work, we can preserve muscle mass, improve heart health, and maintain flexibility, allowing us to stay active and independent for years to come.

Jennifer Gordon  
(BSc.PT, GunnIMS, AFCE)  
Physiotherapist - Bragg Creek Physiotherapy  
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## BRAGG CREEK TRAILS

### E-Bikes, Etiquette, and Everything in Between!

Spring is here, and that means a new season of adventures on the trails in West Bragg Creek. With longer days and warmer weather, it's time to gear up for the summer biking season in this much-loved, multi-use trail network.

West Bragg Creek has a great selection of cross-country trails for mountain biking, offering something for everyone — from wider, easier trails for a relaxed ride to twisty, flowy singletrack that keeps things fun and technical. As always, it's important to remember that West Bragg Creek's trails are multi-use, meaning they're shared with hikers, trail runners, equestrians, dog walkers, and more. With that in mind, it's essential for mountain bikers to be aware of their surroundings and respectful of other users. Everyone shares the responsibility of making each pass safe, courteous, and positive.

There are a few basic etiquette rules that can go a long way in reducing trail conflicts and keeping things friendly. You've probably seen the "right of way triangle," which outlines who should yield to whom, but even with those general guidelines, communication and common sense rule the trail.

One of the biggest shifts in recent years has been the increased use of electric bikes, or e-bikes, on the trails. With this relatively new addition to the user group mix, we've seen it all and we're working hard to help create clear etiquette guidelines so

## Pedal-Assist E-Bike Permitted



everyone can enjoy the trails peacefully and responsibly.

### E-Bikes on the Crown Land

The Type of E-Bikes Permitted:

- Must be pedal-assist only (no throttles)
- Power assistance must stop when you stop pedaling
- Assistance must also stop once the bike reaches 32 km/hr
- E-bikes must not exceed 500 watts of continuous power output

Where Pedal-Assisted E-Bikes Are Allowed:

- In the Kananaskis Public Land Use Zone E-bikes are permitted on the trails unless otherwise posted

- In Alberta Provincial Parks or Provincial Recreation Areas, on public roadways, designated trails and pathways where biking is permitted

Always pay attention to posted signs and publications.

### General Bike Etiquette for Multi-Use Trails

Whether you're on a traditional mountain bike or an e-bike, the same core principles apply. Here's a refresher to help keep our trail community safe and enjoyable for everyone:

- Be friendly and respectful to all users
- Bikes typically yield to others, but the real rule is: whoever can move aside safely should
- Use your voice or a bell when passing, and give people space
- Riders climbing have the right of way over those descending
- Let others know how many are in your group when passing
- Keep your dog(s) close and under control
- When descending, make some noise to let others know you're coming
- Look ahead while climbing to avoid surprises
- If you're slowing others down, find a safe spot to pull over and wave them through
- If you're looking to pass, clearly communicate, wait until it's safe or you're invited to go
- STRAVA times don't outrank safety or good trail manners
- Avoid using headphones — stay alert and aware
- Don't stop in the middle of trails or congest trail junctions



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- If you encounter horses, stop and ask riders how to pass safely

### **E-Bike-Specific Trail Etiquette**

E-bikes bring a few additional considerations to the trail. While all the general etiquette rules still apply, there are a couple things to keep in mind:

- Given their power and speed advantages, e-bikes should yield to non-e-bikes. Crawling up behind someone's back tire can be intimidating — leave space and be patient.
- E-bikes are often heavier and less responsive than traditional bikes, especially when it comes to braking and cornering. Ride in control, especially around others or in tight sections.
- Communicate clearly, anticipate sudden stops, and ride with the same care and awareness you'd want from others.

As trail use continues to grow, we all play a role in protecting the places we love. Practicing good etiquette, respecting trail rules, and sharing space with kindness helps keep our trails safe, sustainable, and welcoming for everyone — whether you're riding solo, with a crew, or with your four-legged trail buddy.

Have a safe and fun riding season out in West Bragg Creek this summer and thank you for being part of this amazing trail community.

To learn more about trail use, volunteer opportunities, or how to support Bragg Creek Trails, visit: [www.braggcreektrails.org](http://www.braggcreektrails.org)

*Conrad Schiebel (BCT President)*



## **Don't let summer chores push you around**

### **Instead let us do the pushing for you.**

Rather than waste away those sunny days doing the yardwork yourself, let us look after your lawn care, planting and spring cleanup. Your property will look its best this summer with some early maintenance. Need work beyond yard maintenance completed such as repaving walkways, repairing or building decks? We can take that off your list of chores as well. There's nothing we can't handle when it comes to exterior maintenance. Get Harder working hard for you this spring and summer.



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4-9pm: Open House/Pub Night

#### First Wednesday each month

1:15pm Book Club - bring a book to share with the group

#### Third Thursday each month

7pm: Open Mic Night  
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#### Fridays

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## SPRING WILD SMART TIPS



### IN THE YARD

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### ATTRACTANTS



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**AFTER**

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You can also still join us virtually on Facebook Live or YouTube  
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[www.braggcreekchurch.ca](http://www.braggcreekchurch.ca)

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## BRAGG CREEK AND AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

### BUSINESS BITS

Canadian flags wave strong and free throughout Bragg Creek ...

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Fly A Flag - Elbows Up for All Canadians

Have you seen all the beautiful new Canadian flags flying at several locations around the hamlet? The Chamber purchased 50 Canadian flags for member businesses to proudly fly in front of their store, shop, or home. Flags were offered for only \$20 to those who are inspired by patriotism and community beautification alike. Our flag represents the complex, wonderful and sovereign home that we call Canada, and the resilience, kindness, and courageous spirit of Canadians far and wide, no matter what struggles we face – tariffs, conflict, economic uncertainty. Special thanks to Sunil Mattu for spearheading this initiative, and pounding the pavement to distribute flags, and rally

our community to the cause. Oh Canada! What a place to be.

### EVENTS

Taste of Bragg – Another Lip-Smacking Time for the Epi-curious

Cheers to another successful Taste of Bragg Creek held Friday April 25! Participating restaurateurs, liquor merchants, and many local retailers opened their doors for a community-wide culinary and creative experience. The author of this article ate



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



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terrific tuna tartare at Bav Tav, sumptuous schnitzel at Braggs Korner Kitchen, Japanese hot dog at Berries, lovely lemon blondie at Bragg Creek Bakery, culminating with some chutney chicken at Powderhorn Saloon - with a refreshing Cowboy Trail Blonde Ale of course. Italian Farmhouse, Creekers Bistro, Handle-Bar Café and many others offered tasty treats for visitors and locals alike. All funds raised go to the Bragg Creek Foundation. A huge thank you to the sponsors: Rocky View County, the Bragg Creek Chamber of Commerce, AdMaki Creative, Bragg Creek Foundation, Bragg Creek Community Centre, and Raven's Call Marketing.

### MEETINGS & MEMBERSHIP

Mark your calendars for the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Learn, laugh, and connect, with guest speakers, members, and fellow business owners in your community.

### Join A Subcommittee

Do you have ideas? Creative solutions? A business initiative you'd like to explore? If so, we want you! Our Chamber Subcommittees are looking for volunteers with diverse perspectives and a collaborative approach to support the local economy. Contact the Chamber to learn more.

### Membership Benefits

The Chamber has developed a social media and communication plan to ensure local businesses get noticed. Contact Imke [media@braggcreekchamber.com](mailto:media@braggcreekchamber.com) to spotlight yours!

Membership gives you a full package of perks: Social Media Showcase, Mix n Mingles, Marketing, Benefits Plan, Calendar, Job Board, and Directory Listing. Visit us any time at:

W: [visitbraggcreek.com/bragg-creek-chamber](http://visitbraggcreek.com/bragg-creek-chamber)

E: [Office@braggcreekchamber.com](mailto:Office@braggcreekchamber.com)

On behalf of your Bragg Creek & Area Chamber team.



## THE LITTLE SCHOOLHOUSE

The Little Schoolhouse is excited for another month of discovery, learning, and play! We will kick off the month with a field trip to Bow Habitat Station, where all our classes will participate in an interactive educational experience to learn about the life cycle of Alberta's Rainbow Trout and Bow Habitat's conservation efforts.

This month, we will also explore the life cycle of butterflies, investigate various types

of insects, and learn how plants grow—plus, we'll even grow some plants of our own! Each class will delve into these topics through research, stories, provocations, and hands-on experiments. It's rewarding to witness the collaboration and discussion as we learn together. The enthusiasm is palpable, and as teachers, we are grateful to be part of this learning adventure!

Registration for our programs is ongoing. If you would like to join us, please visit our website for more information:

[www.thelittleschoolhouse.ca](http://www.thelittleschoolhouse.ca).

Wishing you all a safe and happy month!

*Ms. Shelley and The Little Schoolhouse team*



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## REDWOOD MEADOWS EMERGENCY SERVICES

Falls from windows are more common than people might think. According to a report by SafeKids Worldwide, more than 3,300 children are injured annually from falling out of windows.

Here are some tips to protect children from accidental window falls:

- Keep windows closed and locked when young children are around.
- While opening windows for ventilation, use those located out of a child's reach.
- Supervise children to keep child's play away from windows, balconies and patio doors.
- Don't place furniture near windows that young children can climb on to gain access.
- Don't allow children to jump on beds or furniture to help reduce potential for falls.
- Don't rely on insect screens; they are designed to keep bugs out, not to keep children in.
- Install window guards with quick release mechanisms to prevent how far the window will open, but able to be overridden in case of fire or other emergencies.
- Loose or looped cords pose a strangulation risk to children. Use only cordless window coverings or those with inaccessible cords in homes with young children.

Windows are a lifeline in an emergency:

- Create a home fire escape plan that includes 2 exits from every room in your home, through a door and a window.
- Practice your fire escape plan during the day and at night as many home fires occur at night.
- Practice opening and closing windows that may be designated emergency exits.

*Until next month, stay safe!*



## SWAMP DONKEY MUSICAL THEATRE PRESENTS:



# BETWEEN THE LINES

**PERFORMANCES:**  
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**Music & Lyrics by Elyssa Samsel & Kate Anderson**  
**Book by Timothy Allen McDonald & Jodi Picoult**

Based on the Novel by Jodi Picoult & Samantha van Leer

Original Off-Broadway Production of Between the Lines  
Produced by Daryl Roth  
Directed by Jeff Ahoun

**SWAMP DONKEY THEATRE, BRAGG CREEK**

**TICKETS & FURTHER INFO:**  
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Reverse Osmosis Membrane/Filters	Membrane, carbon & sediment filters replacement	Annually	Excess waste water, low volume or pressure, bacteria/bio-film build-up and bad taste
Water Softeners	Ion Resin Replacement & Control Valve service	Every 5 years	Hard water, scaling on fixtures, white film on glassware, dry skin/hair, mineral bed channelling, reduced efficiency & control valve jamming
Iron/Sulphur Filters	Mineral Bed Replacement & Control Valve service	Every 3 – 5 years	Sulphur smell, red-brown staining in toilets, sinks, showers/tubs & appliances, metallic taste, stained laundry, plugged/channelled mineral bed, build-up & bio-film, mineral bed solidification & control valve jamming
Ultra-Violet Sterilization System	UV Lamp & Sleeve Replacement	Annually	Contamination of distribution system with micro-organisms, bacteria, e-coli, coliforms, etc.
Well Shock Chlorination	Correct dosage of chlorine injection into well & flush	Annually (as per Alberta Environment)	Reduced well yield, bio-fouling, incrustation, bacteria build-up, sulphur smell & black slime on surfaces
Raw Well Water Testing (Provincial Lab)	Obtain water sample & submit to lab	Twice per year (as per Alberta Environment)	Contamination of distribution system with micro-organisms, bacteria, e-coli, cryptosporidium, giardia, coliforms, etc

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## Administration of Justice

Whenever I have attended town hall/community meetings at which the Alberta Minister of Justice is present, there are a few concerns that residents consistently bring up. Among them are “catch and release”, bail conditions, repeat offenders and sentencing.

A sister organization to the High Country Rural Crime Watch Association, the Okotoks Rural Crime Watch Association, sent a letter to the Alberta Justice Ministry and others earlier this year containing a number of hard-hitting questions relating to the administration of Justice. The Okotoks Rural Crime Watch Association received a fairly lengthy reply from the Assistant Deputy Minister (Justice) for the province of Alberta, Kimberley Goddard. Below I extracted her responses for the topics that I believe are most often expressed as concerns by the public.

First of all, it is important to understand that the Criminal Code of Canada is the responsibility of, and is written by, the federal government. It is then up to the individual provinces to enforce and administer that Criminal Code.

**Question #1: The Catch and Release process and bail conditions.** Response: “The Supreme Court of Canada has affirmed that the default form of bail for most accused persons is to be released without conditions. This means that release is favored at the earliest reasonable opportunity and under the least onerous grounds.” “Recognizing that this situation is not ideal, on January 13, 2023, a letter signed by provincial Premiers was sent to the Prime Minister, urging the federal government to take immediate action to strengthen the Canadian bail system.

The federal government responded with the introduction of Bill C-48 which came into force January 4, 2024. Bill C-48 “emphasized that it will be generally necessary to seek detention in cases of repeat violent offending, including allegations linked to gang activity, in order to protect public safety.” Bill C-48 also “created a reverse onus provision for

any person charged with a serious offence involving violence and the use of a weapon who has been convicted” as well as to “require the court to consider if an accused person has any previous convictions involving violence and to include in the record a statement that the safety and security of the community was considered”.

As a point of interest, local RCMP have unofficially “guesstimated” that 80 -90% of crime in our area is performed by repeat offenders. For the most part crime has gone down slightly in 2024 and RCMP, again unofficially, attribute this to repeat offenders being locked up or undergoing frequent curfew/conditions checks.

**Question #2: Non-removable detection devices after release.** Response: the “Alberta government is committed to the implementation of a modern ankle bracelet electronic monitoring program that is expected to be implemented across the province in early 2025. The criteria are for adult bail clients and community-sentenced offenders whom the court deems to pose a risk to public safety. The courts will have the discretion to impose an electronic monitoring condition that requires the individual to wear an ankle bracelet and be subject to electronic monitoring.”

It should be noted that our local RCMP officers do conduct curfew and other checks on convicted criminals to ensure they are abiding by the conditions of their release. Goddard noted that “Non-compliance with release conditions is

addressed promptly, which may result in the individual being returned to Court”.

**Question #3: Deterrent and punishment must be more significant than the rewards of the crime.** Response: “When seeking to arrive at an appropriate sentence, the prosecutor and the judiciary are guided by the sentencing provisions in the Criminal Code wherein it states that a sentence should be similar to sentences imposed on similar offenders for similar offences committed in similar circumstances. A justice has the responsibility to impose sentences in line with precedent, always noting that for each offence and each offender, some elements are unique.”

“The sentencing provisions in the Criminal Code are set forth by the Parliament of Canada. As only the federal government can make or amend criminal law, the Government of Alberta must work within this existing legislative framework. If you wish to express your concerns to the federal Minister of Justice, you write to the Honourable Arif Virani at [mcu@justice.gc.ca](mailto:mcu@justice.gc.ca).”

I hope the preceding gives you some insight into the administration of justice in Alberta. If it's the laws or sentencing you don't like, you'll have to make your views known to the Government of Canada. There is nothing to be lost writing to the federal justice department if you want something changed. I applaud the Okotoks Rural Crime Watch Association for their initiative.

*Dave Schroeder - HCRCWA Board Member*

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## PRIDDIS COMMUNITY

Hello Priddis!

Below you will find information on the many upcoming events happening in our community. We require many volunteers to make these events a success and would encourage you to consider getting involved in our community by helping out for a few hours.

**Garage Sale-** Our popular garage sale is back again on Saturday May 10. Shop for treasures and pick up a snack at our concession between 9am and 1pm. There is no entry fee and this is a cash only event. Please keep the garage sale in mind when you are doing your spring cleaning. We will be accepting your no longer needed items in good working order from 10am-7pm on Friday May 9. This is a fundraiser for our non profit community association and we appreciate your support.

**Community Cleanup-** We hope you will consider joining us on Sunday May 25 for a community cleanup. We will meet at the hall at 11am and then work together to get our grounds and playground in good shape for the summer season. Volunteers will be provided with drinks and a bbq lunch.

Please bring along any gloves, shovels, rakes, shears etc that you may have.

**Pickleball Tournament-** We are pleased to be partnering with JPS Furnace once again for a community pickleball tournament. This year's event will take place on June 21. Your \$40 entry fee includes a light breakfast, up to 4 games, bbq lunch and drink, prizes and so much more. All levels are welcome! Please email [accounting@jpsfurnace.ca](mailto:accounting@jpsfurnace.ca) with further questions or to register.

**Stampede Breakfast-** Our always popular Stampede Breakfast is fast approaching. Join us on July 6 from 8am-noon for a great breakfast, horse and wagon rides, face painting, live music, animal visits, a local vendor market and so much more! Tickets are just \$5 (children 5 and under are free) and can be purchased at the door. We hope to see you there!

Thank you!

We want to close by giving a huge shout out to the dozens of volunteers who recently worked at the PCA's fundraising casino. We are so grateful to you for volunteering your time to help raise funds for our community. Also a big thank you to Carmen and Wayne Heinen for once again coordinating all of the volunteers for this important community fundraiser.

~Priddis Community Association Board



## LONGVIEW LIBRARY

Marigold, the umbrella under which the libraries in South Western Alberta operate, is most concerned about the pending tariffs. It will limit its buying power and throw uncertainty in their planning. There is perhaps an upside. Readers may turn more often to support and read Canadian authors.

There are many award winning Canadian authors. Some of my favourites are Alice Munro, Emma Donoghue, Margaret Laurence, Louise Penny and Joseph Boyden.

Marigold is offering digital bar codes in lieu of physical library cards for those who would prefer them. Patrons may have both if they want.

We are on the outlook for new board members. If you are interested in joining us, please speak to our librarian, Lynda Winfield, Longview Municipal Library, 403-558-3927.

Happy Reading!

Sylvia Binkley - [sliv@telus.net](mailto:sliv@telus.net)



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Roland Gissing DITCHED; 1925  
watercolour from the artist's estate

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## MILLARVILLE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Millarville Community Library was the scene of much laughter and literature last April 10 as the library hosted members from seven book clubs around the area at a Wine and Cheese evening. This gives each club an opportunity to share their favourite read, resulting in a list of reviewed books for all. A highlight of the evening was a visit from Erin Whaling of Spisherbocker Books, Diamond Valley. She regaled the group with a delightful and energetic spotlight on soon to be published books coming to her store this spring and summer. The new releases ranged from publisher's picks to feel-good fiction to calm and cozy fiction to intriguing truths along with non-fiction. Do visit Erin and find out the story behind her bookstore's name while finding a good read.

Mark your calendars for May 1 in order to hear a local author, Rob McWilliam, share his style of writing while participating in an exercise on how to write your own stories.

Your children may not be the only ones that would like to hear about their heritage. This is an opportunity to get started. Rob will be at the library at 7 o'clock, Thursday evening.

As you know Millarville Community Library is open for our patrons and community more days of the week because of our volunteers. We welcome Colleen Mortimer and Jill Munroe to our volunteer roster.

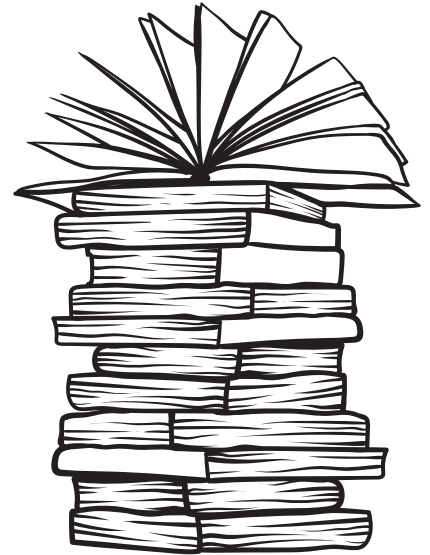
The library will be open during the Easter week holidays on Tuesday April 22 from 9-12 and Wednesday April 23 from 9-7:30. Regular hours will commence on April 28.

We are looking for interested community members to join our library board, so contact Natasha Grusendorf at 403-931-3919. As you know library boards are keepers of a community of readers. Libraries are no longer static depositories of books but rather places for all to gather and learn, while providing audiobooks, movies, and magazines as well as access to a multitude of streaming services. Library boards protect those privileges.

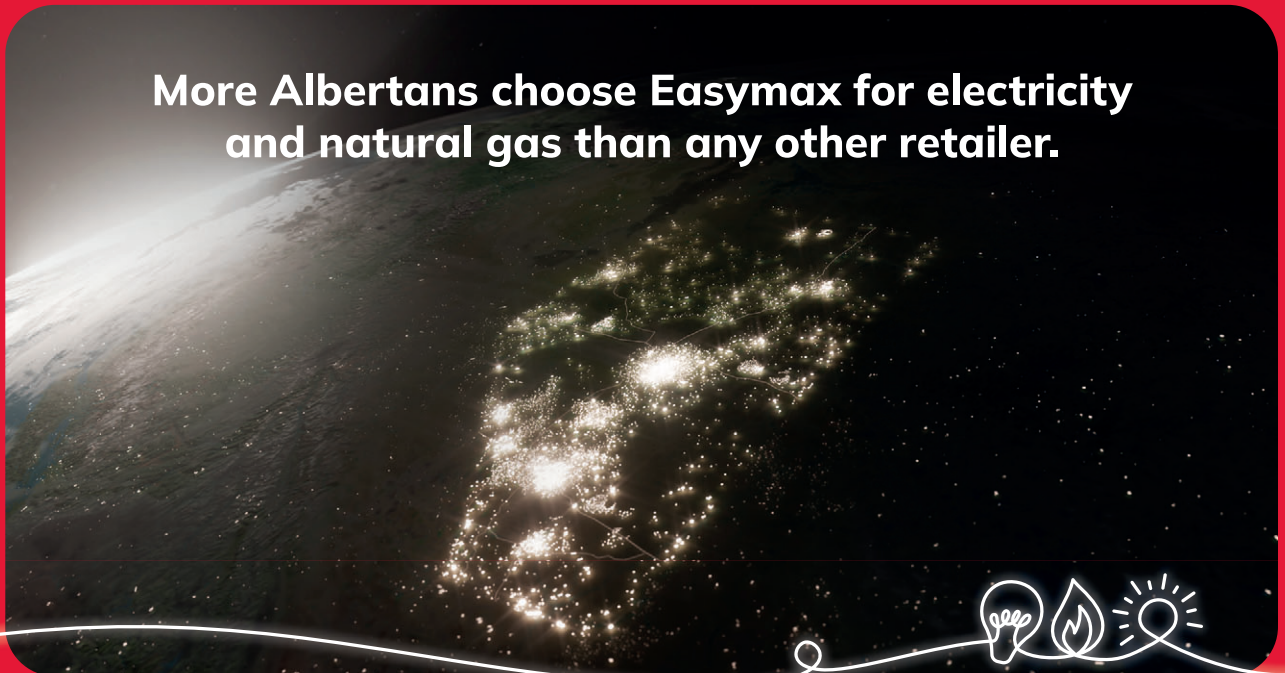
Erin Whaling's favourite book from last year is *Piranesi* by Susanna Clarke. The book starts out as a beautifully descriptive fantasy. *Piranesi* lives alone in a house of

corridors and vestibules, all marked by statues of mythical creatures, gods and goddesses, and the touching moments of everyday life. The house has its own ocean and *Piranesi* lives by the turning of the tides as they fill the halls of the house. There is one other living soul that visits *Piranesi*, and through their interactions we see the mystery of *Piranesi*'s true identity and his connection to the house revealed.

*Karen Whittier*



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## MILLARVILLE HORTICULTURAL CLUB

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month, September to May at 7 pm.

The meetings are held at the Millarville Anglican Church House on Hwy 549 East.

Tuesday May 13, 2025 meeting will have a flower and vegetable fair demonstration by Paul Rishaug. We will be having questions and answer session by the Priddis Millarville fair committee. Any questions you have will be answered.

The club is having a flower fundraiser in May. Check the website of [GreenhouseEffects.ca](http://GreenhouseEffects.ca) for the purchase of locally grown plants and planters. Check our website for the code. Pickup will be on Tuesday May 13, 4 to 6 pm at the Millarville racetrack.

Also Thursday June 5, 7 pm for our annual plant sale at the Millarville racetrack quonset. Come for plants grown by our club members, perennials, shrubs, annuals. There will be a raffle for a curly leaf jade plant and door prizes. Come early as the sale is over in 30 minutes !

If you are interested in attending any of our presentations, please contact Louise Patterson Bruns (our new President ) at [louisepattersonbruns@gmail.com](mailto:louisepattersonbruns@gmail.com) or at [millarvillehorticulturalclub@gmail.com](mailto:millarvillehorticulturalclub@gmail.com). Whether you are a novice or expert in landscaping or gardening, join our club; \$15/year for singles or \$20/year for a family. Check us out on Facebook as well.

*Millarville Horticultural Club*  
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[millarvillehortclub.com](http://millarvillehortclub.com)



## SQUARE BUTTE COMMUNITY

Hope everyone is in enjoying this lovely spring with walks in our Foothills, searching for beautiful crocuses & pussy willows. Our upcoming events.

**Square Butte Ladies Group is hosting at recipe exchange Monday May 5th 7pm.**

A fun evening of tantalizing food. Bring your favourite dish, can be an appetizer main course, side or dessert along with the recipe. We will be selecting our favourite dishes from many categories & remember there will be PRIZES! This popular evening has moved to Square Butte Hall. Mary Ann Watson is hosting with Susan Graham as co host. Come find out what the Square Butte Ladies Group is all about. Due to popular demand, we are once again opening this event up to anyone (or any ladies). They do not have to be a member.

**FireSmart Saturday May 31st 10am**

In conjunction with Foothills County Fire Department, Square Butte Community Association is hosting a FireSmart Event to help local residents become proactive in safeguarding their properties against fires. Door prizes, firetruck & hopefully a mascot!

**June 7th Saturday 10am  
Community Cleanup**

Come catch up with your neighbours at the spring cleanup. Please bring gloves & gardening tools.

More info [www.squarebuttehall.com](http://www.squarebuttehall.com)

*Square Butte Community Association*



## Millarville Horticultural Club's

# Annual Plant Sale

Thursday June 5th, 2025

In the Quonset at the Millarville Racetrack 7:00 pm to 7:45 pm

**Perennials, annuals and surprises ...**

**Very reasonable prices: all plant material is from our local Horticultural members.**

**We are also raffling off a stunning  
31" tall Curly Jade plant,  
Tickets are 3/\$5.00**



**CASH ONLY !!**





## SHEEP RIVER LIBRARY

Our Emergency Preparedness talks are just a few days away. The first session, FireSmart: Protecting Your Property from Wildfires takes place on Tuesday, May 6, at 6:30. The second session, on Wednesday, May 7 at 6:00 pm sees the Alberta BePrepared Team and Diamond Valley Emergency Management present, Be Prepared: 72- hour Kits and Emergency Planning. Come and find out why preparedness matters, how to build your own 72-hour emergency kit, vehicle emergency kits, preparing your pets, and contingency planning. The series ends on Thursday, May 8 at 6:30 with Insurance: Preparing and Recovering from Disasters. Information will be provided on what to do before and after a disaster strikes, disaster recovery and financial resilience, and community and insurance support resources. To sign up, please go to [sheepriverlibrary.ca/News](http://sheepriverlibrary.ca/News) and click on the links in this month's article. You can also register by phone or in person.

Summer is not too far away, May 1 is when you can register your child or grandchild for summer camp at the library. We have something for everyone; full descriptions of all the camps are available on the website. Trish Draper is offering five themed art camps. Teeny Tiny Treasures: A Faerie Garden Art Camp (July 14-18) and Jellyfish Jamboree: An Under-the-Sea Art Adventure (July 21-25), are both for children aged 5-12. In August, Trish is offering three camps for children aged 6-12: Craft, Catch & Create: A Minecraft & Pokémon Art Adventure (August 11-15); Wizards & Wonders: A Fantasy Art Adventure (August 18-22) and Superheroes and Villains (August 25-29).

Renee Boehmer is back to lead the Kananaskis Kids' Choir camp (July 7-11) and Next Gen Educare are providing a week of STEAM (July 28 – August 1).

We thank Foothills Energy Co-op for their generous sponsorship of our summer camps, which allows us to offer the camps at a lower rate to families.

Our bikes are out of storage and are ready to hit the road again. Bikes can be checked out on your library card, you just have to

complete a waiver that will cover you for the 2025 season. Helmets and locks are provided if needed.

Mark June 7 on your calendar for our annual used book sale. As part of the festivities on Discovery Day we will be set up along the front of the library. All sales are by donation. The sale runs from 11:00-4:00. Please bring your own bag to cart away your purchases. Doris is busy over the next month sorting all the donated items into categories so they will be easy to locate on sale day. There is something for everyone!

By the time this article goes to print, our solar panels should be up on our roof. If you're driving by, stop in and take a look as this fabulous project comes to completion. All funding for the project was provided through grants and donations.

The library will closed Monday, May 19 for Victoria Day but will be open Saturday, May 17 from 10 am to 5 pm.



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**Friday 9 AM – 5 PM**

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## RED DEER LAKE UNITED CHURCH

Join us at Red Deer Lake United Church where we come together and explore God together onsite and online (YouTube - [@RedDeerLakeUnitedChurch](https://www.youtube.com/@RedDeerLakeUnitedChurch)) every Sunday morning at 10:30 am. We are an affirming, safe space for all. Don't let our name fool you, we are closer than you think, located only 5 minutes west of Spruce Meadows!

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS! RED DEER LAKE UNITED CHURCH UPCOMING EVENTS:

- May 1 – 7 pm Soul & Sound – Theme: Victoria Day: The British Invasion
- May 2 – 7:30 pm OTE Concert - The Travelling Mabels
- May 4 – MMIWG2S / Red Dress Service followed by a soup lunch
- May 24 - 9 am - Men's Breakfast

### CONCERT SERIES

On the Edge Concert Series - Love live music? Different artists and genres are played throughout the year at Red Deer Lake United Church. Join us as we present The Travelling Mabels on Friday, May 2 at 7:30 pm. For more information or to purchase tickets, go online at <https://reddeerlakeuc.com/concerts>

### RENTALS

Red Deer Lake United Church is a 45,000 square foot facility that provides a variety of affordable spaces for rent on a one-time or recurring basis. For more information about booking an event, availability, and pricing, please contact the office at [office@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:office@reddeerlakeuc.com) or (403) 256-3181.

Visit us at [www.reddeerlakeuc.com](http://www.reddeerlakeuc.com) to stay up to date on all our events!

# Happy Mother's Day



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## HELLO DIAMOND VALLEY

Hello, Diamond Valley. Well, the month of May has arrived and as the saying goes, April showers bring May flowers. Or April snow as we did get some need moisture in the form of snow last month. Gardening season has officially come, as well as Parade Weekend which will be the first Saturday in June.

Our Parade will go on this year, which I'm glad as it is a tradition in our two towns. It is scheduled for June 7 and will be the 57th annual Parade, which starts at 10 am in Black Diamond. Turner Valley then takes over from 11-3 in Millenium Park with lots to see and do in both towns. Full details will follow next issue, but in the meantime, volunteers and sponsors are always welcome. If you are interested, please contact the Town via website, phone, email, or drop in.

The annual Hike for Hospice is coming up on May 4. This is a fundraiser for the Foothills Country Hospice and will go on rain or shine, with a 5 or 10 K run and a 2 or 5 K walk. It is wheelchair, stroller, and dog friendly so why not register and help raise some funds on this fun day. More information and registration can be found at [countryhospice.org](http://countryhospice.org).

I recently attended some of the series of Brain Health Catalyst at the Sheep River Library, for talks about dementia and Alzheimer's Disease. Jennifer was an excellent facilitator, and I learned many things about how these diseases progress and that it's not the end of a useful and full life. She holds a Conversation Cafe at the Library in Okotoks on the first Wednesday of the month, and they also have these

fantastic Memory Kits which you can check out. For more information on this very helpful program and others, visit [dementianetworkcalgary.ca](http://dementianetworkcalgary.ca).

The Alberta Highway Clean-Up Program is generally held on the first or second Saturday in May, weather permitting. Please watch for people on the sides of highways on your travels. All non-profit groups or clubs are encouraged to participate as a fundraising opportunity, as they could earn \$100 per kilometer cleaned. Organizers should contact Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors in advance to request the part of the highway they want to clean.

Speaking of garbage, the Town of Diamond Valley is changing our garbage pick-up to a bi-weekly schedule, starting May 1st. Apparently, we need to compost and recycle more, and send less to the landfills. I'm all for that but it's going to be more challenging to do so, and sometimes you just have more garbage. Black Diamond will have their blue and green bins picked up on Fridays now. They say our monthly bill will go down, which is always good, but I think it will take a while to establish patterns in our disposal of waste. Okotoks Eco Center does take glass jars, some styrofoams, used batteries and electronics, so that might help a bit, but for more information, go to [diamondvalleytown/waste](http://diamondvalleytown/waste).

A little more about the history of our area, about one of the buildings in Turner Valley, the Wray-McRae building on Main Street. Local author Holly Quan published her debut novel, the Sow's Ear Cafe, in 2018. The novel is set in this structure. It was originally built in Longview as a laundry and in the 1940s, the two sections of it were moved to its present location, and housed Wray's insurance business. In 1974 he retired and sold the business to Mary McRae. 1985 saw the business sold to a tea shop. Several restaurants have occupied the

space since then, including Route 40 Soup Company. Currently we have the Country Store there, but in Holly's book, the building follows characters in the fictional town of Sweetwater, and is available at the Sheep River Library or through [FriesenPress.com/bookshop](http://FriesenPress.com/bookshop). Sounds like a good read and will help support our local authors if you are interested.

Foothills County is looking for people to help with their Social Needs Assessment Survey. They are asking for input from all age groups to identify and understand the unique needs our County is facing. This information that is gathered will help to the Foothills County Social Services to make sure programs and services will be funded and used to the best extent. Please complete this community survey by May 15 by going to [foothillscountyab.ca/community/family-community-support](http://foothillscountyab.ca/community/family-community-support).

Always lots going on at our local Turner Valley Legion. You don't have to be a member to enjoy all the events and food and drink there, although it's only \$55 a year I believe to join. I love going to the Legion, there are seniors, children, and everyone in between and is just a really good atmosphere with a very reasonably priced menu and great volunteers. May 3 they will have the Dutch Canadian Choir come and sing, to help celebrate the Liberation of Holland 45 years ago. Drop by sometime and pick up a newsletter so you can see all the different events that happen at this wonderful Legion.

Any events or news for the month of June, please email me at [elaine.w@telus.net](mailto:elaine.w@telus.net) before the 15th of May.

Happy Mother's Day May 11th to all our mothers out there!

*Elaine Wansleben*



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## DE WINTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

### Wednesday night is Members Night at De Winton Hall!!

Please join us for Members Night Wednesday May 14 from 7-10 at De Winton Hall, as we celebrate YOU, our members, and our dedicated volunteers in the community.

We will be announcing our annual A. Walter Turnbull award to an outstanding member(s) of the De Winton Community. This award recognizes citizens from the DCA membership that go above and beyond for their fellow neighbours and community. There will be complimentary appetizers and dessert, and a toonie bar. Join us and come say "Hi" and see what being a DCA Member is all about. Please RSVP to Matt 403-938-2525 or [dwca@platinum.ca](mailto:dwca@platinum.ca) by Monday May 12.

**WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU!!!**



Are you passionate about community engagement and making a difference in the lives of others? Do you love to brainstorm creative ideas and see them come to life? We're looking for a dedicated and enthusiastic Volunteer Events and Programming Director to join our team at the De Winton Community Hall.

As our Event and/or Programming Director, you will work closely with, and be supported by, the hall manager, the Board of Directors and our Facility Manager. You'll play a vital role in helping us create a vibrant, welcoming space for all. You'll be the go-to point person for event and program hosts, ensuring they have what is needed to make sure everything runs smoothly from start to finish. Your responsibilities will include:

- Brainstorming and researching new ideas: Collaborate with our Board to come up with exciting, engaging programs and events that will inspire and connect the community.
- Supporting event hosts: Serve as the main contact for community hosts, helping them to plan, execute, and ensure seamless operations.
- Helping with promotion and outreach: Work alongside our communications team to spread the word about upcoming events, programs, and community opportunities.

#### Who We're Looking For:

- A creative and organized individual with a passion for community building.
- Strong communication skills, both in person and via email/phone.
- A self-starter who is eager to contribute ideas and make things happen.
- Someone who can work collaboratively with our board and with event hosts.

- Prior experience in event planning or community organizing would be a plus, but is not required!

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If you're ready to help us bring exciting events and programs to life and make a positive impact in our community, we'd love to hear from you!

Please contact us at [info@dewintonca.com](mailto:info@dewintonca.com) to chat with someone about this position or for more information. We are happy to entertain ideas about this position. We know we could do more for members if we just had more help.

Let's create something special together!



## CHECK THIS OUT!

Thanks to the hard work of our board member Mia, we have a **NEW** and **IMPROVED** WEBSITE! GO TO: [www.dewintonca.com](http://www.dewintonca.com)

Please check it out to see what is happening at the Hall for all our Members. The calendar is now up and running.



## ALBERTA ELITE HOCKEY LEAGUE EXPANDING, ADDING THREE NEW TEAMS IN 2026-27 SEASON

RED DEER - Hockey Alberta is excited to announce the continued growth of elite hockey in the province with the expansion of the Alberta Elite Hockey League (AEHL). Beginning in the 2026-27 season, three new AAA teams will join the AEHL, enhancing high-performance opportunities for players and strengthening the development pathway for Alberta's top athletes.

### **The AEHL will welcome:**

U15 AAA – New team in Cochrane

U17 AAA – New team in Cochrane

U18 AAA – New team in Spruce Grove

This expansion reflects the increasing demand for elite-level programming across Alberta and Hockey Alberta's commitment to delivering a structured, competitive environment for athlete development. The additions were guided by the principles of the Elite Hockey Model, which evaluates association readiness, registration trends, and the broader development pathway across the province.

"We applaud the members in both Cochrane and Spruce Grove for their commitment to be host communities in their designated Draw Zones and their commitment to provide athletes with the

opportunity to play at the highest level," said Aaron Rawlake, Commissioner of the AEHL. Rawlake emphasized that these additions are both earned and well deserved: "The AEHL exists thanks to the efforts of membership and the continued desire to provide the highest level of competition and development for young Albertans. Both these communities have proven track records of success and will continue to be valued members of the Elite Hockey model in the province. Congratulations to Cochrane 15 AAA/17 AAA and Spruce Grove 18 AAA."

In Cochrane, the news marks a transformational moment for the local hockey community. "We are incredibly proud that Cochrane and the Bow Valley draw zone have been approved to join the U15 AAA and U17 AAA divisions of the Alberta Elite Hockey League for the 2026-2027 season," said Cory Oaten, President of Cochrane Minor Hockey Association. "This is a major milestone for our association and community, and it represents an exciting step forward for our players and families. It gives our athletes the opportunity to chase their hockey goals while staying closer to home, developing alongside their classmates, teammates, and peers. It creates more choice in their development path and keeps the fun and connection in the game."

For Spruce Grove and the PAC Saints, the expansion is a celebration of years of grassroots effort. "The PAC Saints (Parkland Athletic Club of Spruce Grove Minor Hockey Association) are thrilled to

announce our acceptance into the AEHL U18 AAA league for the 2026-2027 season — a milestone powered by the unwavering grassroots development of our very own Parkland players," said Tom Tremain, Chair of PAC. "Our steadfast commitment to cultivating local talent has paved the way for this remarkable hockey achievement. Each drill, practice, and game has helped shape dedicated athletes who truly embody the heart and spirit of our community. This success is a testament to the passion and perseverance we see every day. We eagerly anticipate a future where our grassroots efforts continue to shine at the highest levels of U18 hockey in the province."

Since its launch in 2020-21, the AEHL has unified Alberta's top-tier hockey under one banner, aligning programs and ensuring consistency across the province. It has become the foundation for elite development in Alberta, setting a standard for competition and excellence.

The success of the AEHL led to the introduction of the AA model in 2024-25, a key layer in Alberta's athlete development system that ensures players grow within a level of play suited to their age and skill. Together, these systems work in tandem to prepare athletes for the next step in their journey, whether it's Junior A, Major Junior, post-secondary hockey, or Team Canada.

This expansion is more than just the addition of teams; it's a testament to the strength of Alberta's hockey communities and a bold step forward for the next generation of elite athletes.

# JOURNALING RETREAT

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MAY 3, 2025

with

**Allissa Blondin**

Writing Coach, Author, Founder of The Feathered Pen

**Sarah Golby**

Journaling Coach, Speaker, Facilitator at Achievement Club





## COUNCILLOR UPDATE Foothills County

### Suzanne Oel - Division 4

Greetings! Sharing my News Update...

#### Chainsaw and Tree Safety Workshop:

Join us on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, 7 pm, at the Priddis Community Hall. This event is a collaboration of Foothills County departments, guest presenters, and community groups. Whether its seasonal clean-up, clearing a treed area, pushing back the tree growth to FireSmart around buildings, or responding to the dead-fall of a windstorm, tree management is required every year. The focus of our meeting will be educational presentations and discussions with residents, where we can learn some safety and management tips on dealing with our west country treed properties. We'll start with an introduction to our Agricultural Services Department from Manager Keith Kornelsen. Then, accredited chainsaw instructor, Shane Rear, will inform us regarding awareness about safe chainsaw use, how to approach a clean-up, and where to take accredited chainsaw training. Certified arborist and tree risk assessor, Jacquie Randle, will present information about tree health and risk assessment. Foothills Fire Department representatives will add to the conversation with some FireSmart tips. A number of local area tree-services contractors will be introduced, inform us about services they provide and be available for discussions with residents. Q&A included throughout (Tools will not be used by residents.) Refreshments will be provided.

**Priddis Bridge Project News:** For over 10 years this project has gone through various stages of investigations. The Priddis Bridge is listed on the Provincial Construction Program at the "design" stage for a bridge replacement and an intersection improvement. The Fish Creek Bridge on Highway 22, 1 km N of Priddis (2047-1), is slated for a bridge replacement to support over-sized/over-weight corridor movement and enhance public safety. The safety and roadway improvement between E of Fish Creek to W of Fish Creek includes plans for road re-profile, climbing lanes, intersection improvement and overlay. After reviewing preliminary drawings, there appears to be room for left hand turns, north and south off Highway 22, and a lane beside in each direction (east and west). Foothills Council recently met with Alberta Transportation and a new update is provided as of April 16, 2025. Their goal is to tender the Priddis Bridge file in the Fall of 2025. Volker Stevin will be doing some pre-clearing in the bridge area during the summer of 2025. Looking forward to seeing this work begin.

**Recognizing 9-1-1 Personnel:** Foothills Regional 9-1-1 serves 25 municipalities, including Foothills County, across 36,000 square kilometers. The center supports 42 fire halls and 12 municipal enforcement programs. Dedicated team members manage an impressive volume of calls. Their work includes direct 9-1-1 emergency calls, coordinated transfers, and the processing and dispatching of Fire Services and Community Peace Officers. Our local professionals provide a calm and knowledgeable presence while triaging critical calls, dispatching emergency personnel and equipment, and rendering life-saving assistance to our residents. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to these professionals, who

often go unnoticed behind the scenes. During this year's National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, celebrated in April, several members were awarded the Alberta Emergency Services Medal, which recognizes the dedication and good conduct of emergency services personnel in Alberta. Our municipal partners, including Foothills County, appreciate the accomplishments of our Foothills Regional 9-1-1 Team. We send our gratitude to our frontline telecommunications personnel, who are there first when seconds count. Congratulations and thank you!

**Sharing The Road Safely:** Just a friendly reminder to be safe and keep a look out for other road users, including various types of vehicles, industrial equipment, agriculture equipment, moving of livestock, wildlife, local and visitor cyclists, and touring of all sorts. Transport Canada notes that more cars, buses and trucks are traveling on Canada's roads than ever before. As traffic increases, they say, so does the need for sharing the road safely. All drivers need to: understand how different vehicles operate and why other drivers take the actions they do, gain the knowledge and skill to behave safely around different types of vehicles, and show patience and courtesy towards all other road users, even those who demonstrate less understanding and skill.

<https://tc.canada.ca/en/road-transportation/publications/sharing-road-safely>

#### For Other News & Updates:

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/CouncillorSuzanneOel/)

[CouncillorSuzanneOel/](https://www.facebook.com/CouncillorSuzanneOel/)

Email: [Suzanne.Oel@FoothillsCountyAB.ca](mailto:Suzanne.Oel@FoothillsCountyAB.ca)

Visit High Country News online for my previous articles.

*With Best Regards, Suzanne*



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# HIGH COUNTRY News

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## COUNCILLOR UPDATE Foothills County

### Barb Castell - Division 3

Spring is here and I am looking forward to the May flowers!

#### Foothills County - Northwest

##### Foothills Recreation Board

NWREC is currently raising funds toward a Multi-Sport Field and Park Amenities (including Picnic Shelter and Natural Playground) in the Seaman Sports Park near Millarville.

To donate to these projects, please go to the web page below and complete the form. For a TAX RECEIPT, donations must be over \$100 with cheques made payable to FOOTHILLS COUNTY.

[www.foothillscountyab.ca/community/recreation-boards/north-west-foothills-recreation-board](http://www.foothillscountyab.ca/community/recreation-boards/north-west-foothills-recreation-board)

#### Millarville Spring Market and Garage Sale

The market will have over 150 vendors, many are new vendors. In addition, check out the garage sale in the Hall.

Saturday, May 10

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

For more information: [www.millarvilleracetrack.com/spring-market](http://www.millarvilleracetrack.com/spring-market)

#### Leighton Art Centre -

##### Spring Exhibitions

'Stillness and Flow' by Wanru Kemp

April 12 through June 1, 2025

[leightoncentre.org/event/stillness-and-flow-wanru-kemp](http://leightoncentre.org/event/stillness-and-flow-wanru-kemp)

'Erratic Sessions' by Sean Morel

April 12 through June 1, 2025

[leightoncentre.org/event/erratic-sessions-sean-morel](http://leightoncentre.org/event/erratic-sessions-sean-morel)

'Living Curtain' by Svea Ferguson

Is available for viewing through 2025

[leightoncentre.org/event/living-curtain-svea-ferguson](http://leightoncentre.org/event/living-curtain-svea-ferguson)

#### Save These Dates

It is going to be a busy year!

May 10 – Millarville Spring Market and Garage Sale [www.millarvilleracetrack.com/spring-market](http://www.millarvilleracetrack.com/spring-market)

May 11 – Mothers' Day

June 5 – Millarville Horticultural Club Plant Sale [www.millarvillehortclub.com/programs-and-events.html](http://www.millarvillehortclub.com/programs-and-events.html)

June 7 – Diamond Valley Parade [www.diamondvalley.town/477/Diamond-Valley-Parade-and-Festival](http://www.diamondvalley.town/477/Diamond-Valley-Parade-and-Festival)

June 7 & 8 – Leighton Art Centre – 38th Clothesline Art Sale [leightoncentre.org/events/art-sales](http://leightoncentre.org/events/art-sales)



*A Pansy of mine from a previous May*

June 15 – Fathers' Day

June 21 to October 11 – Millarville Farmers' Markets each Saturday [www.millarvilleracetrack.com/farmers-market](http://www.millarvilleracetrack.com/farmers-market)

July 1 – 120th Millarville Races [www.millarvilleracetrack.com/race-track](http://www.millarvilleracetrack.com/race-track)

August 16 & 17 – 119th Priddis & Millarville Fair [www.millarvilleracetrack.com/priddis-millarville-fair](http://www.millarvilleracetrack.com/priddis-millarville-fair)

If you know of any events that people should know about, let me know, and I will include them in future editions of my newsletter.

Happy Mothers' Day!

Barb Castell

Phone: 403-931-3690

E-Mail: [barb.castell@foothillscountyab.ca](mailto:barb.castell@foothillscountyab.ca)

Website: [www.barbcastell.com](http://www.barbcastell.com)

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## DUANE HARDER

### Spring Cleaning

For most of us, spring is associated with “spring cleaning.” We clear away what is not needed to make room for the new.

This spring I encourage you to open the closet where you have stored the things you would like to forget. The memories of painful failure, broken promises, unfulfilled dreams, and deep disappointments. The content of the closet gives us a sense of shame, guilt, despair, and insecurity.

But the closet must be emptied. You may say, “Just a minute, Duane. You don’t know what’s in my closet. If you did you wouldn’t make such a strong statement.” You are right. I don’t know what is in your closet. This leads me to the first step in spring cleaning:

#### 1. Say No to the Lie of Individualism.

You are not the first or only one who has experienced what is locked in your closet. That is an axiomatic truth. Individualism claims that what we have experienced is unique to us. No one else has gone through or had to deal with what I did. I have worked with people on every continent and multiple countries.

The cultural context of the closet changes but the root cause of what motivates our choices is the same.

2. Kill the giant of self-pity! Self-pity is destructive. It is like a creeping paralysis that slowly immobilizes us. Self-pity is a masquerade for pride. My wrong choices are not really a reflection of who I am. If you see what I have done, you will pass judgment on me and I’m really better than that. The real damage of self-pity is that it creates a negative focus — “I’ll never do that again!” That negative focus becomes the standard by which I measure what I am doing in the present. I end up duplicating the past but only in an inverse way.

3. Say “NO!” to the cancer of entitlement. Entitlement places me at the center of my world. It measures life in terms of the benefits that I derive. In other words, “What’s in it for me?” When this is operating, we will look for someone to blame. We fall into the trap of victimhood. I like how the Calvin and Hobbes cartoon puts it.

Calvin: Nothing I do is my fault. My family is dysfunctional, and my parents won’t empower me. Consequently, I’m not self-actualized. My behavior is addictive, functioning in a disease process of toxic

codependency. Nothing I do is my fault. I need holistic healing and wellness before I’ll accept any responsibility for my actions. Hobbes: One of us needs to stick his head in a bucket of ice water.

Calvin: I love the culture of victimhood!

4. Posture yourself as a learner. I have said this before and will say it again. Our places of failure are a treasure chest of learning. Success can lead us down the slippery slope of pride. Failure can bring us to the treasure house of wisdom. In the house of wisdom, we learn how to put the right piece in the right place at the right time for the right purpose. Did profit motivate me to act with expedience at the expense of principle? Was I using people rather than developing them? Did I care more about the bottom line than those who worked to produce the bottom line? Did I look for input from those whose character was reflected in the culture of their business? Am I a self-made man or can I acknowledge that I need the wisdom of God for my life?

Hopefully this spring you will have the courage to open the closet, bring out the skeletons and let God breathe new life into them.

*Duane Harder*



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### **Strong, Healthy & Loved:**

#### **A Mother's Day Reminder to Put Yourself First (Sometimes)**

Mother's Day is a time to celebrate the incredible women who do it all—raising kids, holding down careers, managing households, and somehow still remembering where everyone's shoes are. But in the midst of giving so much to everyone else, it's easy for moms to forget about their own health and well-being.

This year, what if we celebrated Mother's Day with something more meaningful than flowers or breakfast in bed, and give yourself (or the moms in your life) something more lasting—permission to put health and fitness back on the priority list?

#### **You Can't Pour from an Empty Cup**

Here's a little truth from one mom to another: when you take care of your body, your mind, and your overall well-being, everyone wins. You have more energy to keep up with your kids. You sleep better. You handle stress with more grace. And, maybe most importantly, you feel like you again.

And no—this isn't about being "perfect" or having a flawless fitness routine. It's about feeling strong, vibrant, and confident in your own skin.

#### **Move Your Body Because You Love It—Not Because You're Punishing It**

Let's take the pressure off looking a certain way and instead focus on how movement makes you feel. Exercise isn't about chasing perfection—it's about feeling energized, strong, and confident in your own skin. Whether it's walking the dog, joining a fitness class, lifting weights, dancing in the kitchen, or squeezing in a quick online workout between errands—every bit of movement counts and adds to your well-being.

Exercise is one of the best gifts you can give yourself. It boosts your mood, supports hormonal balance, builds strength, and can help reduce the risk of many chronic illnesses. And as we get older

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(yes, even in our 30s and 40s!), strength training becomes even more important for maintaining muscle, bone density, and metabolism.

#### **Mom Life Is a Workout—But You Still Need to Train**

Running after toddlers, lifting groceries, standing at sports games, and managing endless to-do lists... it feels like a workout—and in many ways, it is! But that kind of daily hustle, while exhausting, doesn't always give your body the focused movement it truly needs. That's where intentional movement comes in. This means carving out time to move your body on purpose—whether it's a strength session, a brisk walk, a yoga flow, or a quick circuit in your living room. Just 20–30 minutes a few days a week can improve your strength, boost your energy, support your posture, and help reduce stress. It's about moving with purpose to support how you want to feel, not just how much you do in a day.

#### **Fuel Yourself Like You Matter (Because You Do)**

Being busy isn't a reason to skip meals or live on your kids' leftover crusts. Prioritize real, nutrient-dense foods that fuel your

energy and support your goals. That doesn't mean you have to give up your favorite treats—it just means being mindful and intentional. Eat in a way that feels good, not like punishment or restriction.

#### **A Pep Talk from One Mother to Another**

Moms are strong, but strength isn't just physical—it's also knowing when to rest, when to ask for help, and when to invest in yourself. This Mother's Day, remind yourself that self-care isn't selfish—it's survival. And it sets an amazing example for your kids.

So, consider this your gentle reminder to put yourself back on the priority list. Take that walk, join the class, try the new workout, or carve out a few quiet moments just for you. Say yes to the things that recharge you and make you feel good in your own skin. You absolutely deserve that—not just on Mother's Day, but every day of the year.

*Jari Love is a certified trainer and creator of the successful scientifically tested Get RIPPED!® series. You can learn more about Jari Love at [www.jarilove.com](http://www.jarilove.com). You can follow her on Facebook at @JariLoveFitness and at @rippedjari on Instagram.*



## MORTGAGE MATTERS by Candace Perko

### Maximum Mortgage Flexibility With a FlexLine

A unique mortgage product, generally referred to as a FlexLine, combines a re-advancable HELOC home equity line of credit with a mortgage (term portion in an open or fixed rate), as a way to use your most powerful borrowing tool – your home. Because your home produces no income, home equity is useless unless you borrow against it (or sell), the saying “you can’t eat your house” comes to mind.

A FlexLine may be used to purchase a new home, refinance/transfer an existing mortgage, or take out equity on a mortgage-free home. A FlexLine is popular among those entering into retirement as well, as it allows individuals to tap into an additional stream of income by reinvesting the equity from a home. This product is also widely used by those looking to generate a wealth strategy structured to make your mortgage interest tax deductible (but speak to a knowledgeable financial planner before attempting this!).

Once set-up, a FlexLine allows immediate access to available credit without the need to reapply for additional credit. As you pay back the amount you owe, the amount of credit available to you increases until it reaches your approved credit limit. It allows:

- You to borrow up to 80% total loan to value (LTV) with a term portion or 65% at HELOC only, amounts of each fully customizable.
- One application and one registered charge on title.
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A FlexLine is a mortgage product where your home still acts as collateral. However, here are some key differences:

- With a straight mortgage, you receive a loan for a single amount. That amount plus interest must be paid back over time.
- With a FlexLine, you can have a term portion plus you gain ongoing access to credit HELOC portion. As you pay down your outstanding balance on the term portion, your available credit in the HELOC increases up to your credit limit.

**Term portion:** put all or a sum of your outstanding balance into a term portion and establish regular payments at a fixed or variable interest rate for an open or closed prepayment term. As you pay down your

outstanding balance, your available credit increases in the HELOC up to your credit limit.

**HELOC portion:** get a variable interest rate that changes with the Prime Rate. As you pay down your outstanding balance, your available credit increases up to your credit limit. You can pay at your own pace without prepayment charges - pay as little as interest only or pay any or all of your outstanding balance at any time.

### How much can you borrow?

You may borrow up to 80% of the value of your home. A minimum 20% down payment or equity is required.

### What do you need to qualify?

You may qualify if you meet minimum acceptable credit score & ratios and can show proof of adequate income.

### Which documents do you need?

Depending on your situation, you will need your most recent statements for any mortgages, loans, property taxes as well as proof of income.

Your favourite mortgage broker can assist with a FlexLine application. Ask about all options as a few lenders offer this distinct product. \*BONUS\* one lender has a cash-back promo right now, giving cash- back from between \$500-\$100 (conditions apply!)

Candace Perko, Mortgage Broker

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## WHAT IS A "COPYRIGHT?" by Bill Stemp

Copyright is the means by which you can prevent anyone from copying, reproducing or using any "work" or anything that you have created. Examples of items that could be protected by copyright would include architectural blueprints, drawings, photographs, sculptures, computer software, books, poems, music, videos, audio recordings and similar items.

### HOW IS COPYRIGHT CREATED?

Copyright is not created by filing any document with the Canadian Copyright Office. Rather, it is "created" by virtue of creating the item in which you are claiming copyright. In other words, if you take a photograph or create a recipe, you own the "copyright" in that item immediately upon completing or creating the "work." This means that you are not required to file anything with the Copyright Office in order to own the copyright in the thing that you have created.

The filing of a Declaration of Copyright with the Canadian Copyright Office is the most public means by which you can file or give notice of your ownership of the copyright and the work that you have created. This may become critically important if you were to become involved in a dispute with anyone else over the "authorship" of the thing or work that you have created. Thus, we always recommend that you file a Declaration of Copyright in the Canadian Copyright Office in order to give notice of your claim of copyright and to secure your legal rights in the thing that you have created and to prevent it from being reproduced without your authorization.

### HOW DO I ENFORCE MY CLAIM TO COPYRIGHT?

You would enforce your claim to copyright by commencing legal action, i.e., a lawsuit

claiming that someone has infringed your right of copyright by reproducing, without your authorization, the thing that you are claiming copyright in. In such legal action, you are entitled to several legal remedies including seeking an injunction from the Court and seeking damages against the alleged infringer as well as your legal costs.

### CAN I TRANSFER OR SELL MY COPYRIGHT TO ANYONE?

Yes. You can transfer, sell or assign your right of the copyright to anyone of your choosing. For instance, when an author completes writing a book, he or she would usually transfer the right of copyright to the publisher to enable the publisher to reproduce the book. The second way this can be handled would be to "licence" the copyright to the publisher. Licencing your copyright means that you give permission or authorization to the publisher to reproduce and sell the work (in this case a book) but you have not sold or transferred ownership of the copyright to the publisher. In that case the publisher would pay you a royalty which could be based upon how many books were sold or it could be an annual royalty or it could be a one time payment to you.

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## CARING FOR OUR WATERSHED FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

Congratulations to all the students, teachers, and schools across Alberta's watersheds who participated in the 2025 Caring for Our Watersheds contest! We were thrilled to receive many amazing proposals in which students answered the question "What can you do to improve your watershed?" and described the real changes they hope to make in their community.

This year's competition had 128 proposals from 264 students at 9 schools across the province. Participants represent six of the 11 major watersheds in the province, including the Battle River, Beaver River, Bow River, North Saskatchewan River, Red Deer River, and South Saskatchewan River.

### 2025 Finalists

We are excited to announce the Top 10 finalists! These students represent schools from Calgary, Lloydminster, Medicine Hat, and Millarville.

Their proposals included ideas such as watershed board games and children's books, reward programs for recycling,



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planting rain gardens and riparian buffers, protecting native pollinators and fish species, developing a snow-to-water filter system, and suggesting eco-friendly alternatives to commonly used products.

These projects showcase the creative ways that students have proposed to make a positive impact in their watersheds.

### Final Competition

Finalists will now present their solutions to a panel of judges at the Reynolds-Alberta Museum in Wetaskiwin, Alberta on May 9. They have the opportunity to win a cash prize as well as a matching amount for their school. Nutrien, the contest sponsor, also provides an additional \$10,000 to help all contestants implement their ideas.

Thank you - The success of Caring for Our Watersheds relies on teachers, students, and community volunteers, including the judges who spend many hours reviewing student submissions. Thank you to everyone who participated this year.

### Get Involved

If you would like to be involved in the 2025-2026 contest, please visit [caringforourwatersheds.com](http://caringforourwatersheds.com) or contact us by phone at 780-672-0276 or email [education@battleriverwatershed.ca](mailto:education@battleriverwatershed.ca).

The Alberta Caring for Our Watersheds contest is sponsored by Nutrien and hosted by the Battle River Watershed Alliance.

CARING FOR OUR Watersheds® Alberta		
2025 Top 10		
PROJECT NAME	TEAM MEMBERS	SCHOOL
BEE INN	LAUREN & LILY	CRESCENT HEIGHTS
BUBBLE TROUBLE	ELLY & SLOANE	CRESCENT HEIGHTS
CAPTAIN CLEARWATER	ELLA & KAITLYN	TRINITY CHRISTIAN
GET TROUT OF HERE	IKALE	MILLARVILLE
LIFE ON THE EDGE	DARIUS, GRAYSEN, & EASTON	TRINITY CHRISTIAN
LIFESTREAM	HUDSON & EVAN	BISHOP LLOYD
RAINWATER GARDENS	MANDY, ANDIE, & OLIVIA	TRINITY CHRISTIAN
RIVER RESCUE	DUTCH	BISHOP LLOYD
SNOW-TO-WATER FILTER	AVA & BRANDON	JOANE CARDINAL-SCHUBERT
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## SOMETHING NEW by Andrea Kidd



I love my coffee percolator. Part of my joy is how I came to buy it.

We were fixing up a rented house in a small Alberta town and my husband said to me,

"Take a break from the cleaning, love! I need to get a new lock for the back door so I can finish that job. Do you wanna come?"

"Sure!" I said, and threw the scrubber into the pail. "That store has neat stuff you don't find anywhere else." I wiggled my fingers free from the rubber gloves.

Strolling the aisles in the hardware store, stretching my cramped leg muscles, my eyes roamed the shelves of interesting gadgets. It was a nice change from peering into grubby cupboard corners! I was not looking to buy anything, but there it was!

Her elegant, gleaming body invited me to touch, her pouting spout made me smile and her sensible handle drew my hand to pick her up.

I savoured the moment. This was an unexpectedly good thing! In a troubled world it is good to stop and savour such moments.

And it happens from time to time: you meet someone, and the relationship feels 'just right', or you make a plan and everything 'falls into place'.

She felt familiar, comfortably cradled in my hands; and somehow mine. I removed her lid to peer at her inner self, took out the basket and spindle. This coffee pot was just like the one my mother used, a real percolator. Of course, Mum percolated coffee on a low flame on the gas cooker and this one was electric. But it was a real percolator; not a coffee maker with buttons to push for computerized options that meander endlessly through pathways of selections.

I hugged her to my bosom and went to the check-out.



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Back at home the next day, I brewed our first pot of coffee. We watched as the first glug sent a shot of water up into the clear round plastic bubble on the knob of the lid. The glugs became more frequent, more violent, now shooting spurts of rich, brown liquid in a constant stream until exhausted; she took deeper, slower breaths and came to rest with a few wheezes. The aroma of her labours filled the kitchen.

It's the same with a friendship or a plan of action. Good things in life need time to perk. It's good to let them take all the time they need.

Our coffee pot served us with elegance and efficiency and drew admiring comments from our friends and family until, one day, the plastic knob caved in and crumbled in my fingers.

Sometimes life is like that! Mistrust erodes a beautiful relationship. Memories and disappointment are all that remain. A great plan fails; something is missing and it can't work.

Determined to make my percolator whole again, I fashioned a new knob out of tin foil. It was tricky to do. I fed it through the hole in the lid, put my pinkie finger through the hole and moulded the tin foil around the end of my finger. When I withdrew my finger I flattened the edges. We had coffee again, but as she gurgled I noticed water seeping out around the edges of the foil cap.

"You can't use that coffee pot anymore," said my kids, "it's done! Better throw it out and get a new one."

But I was attached to my coffee pot. It's the same with a relationship that has gone sour, or a plan that fails. It's hard to let go.

We ordered a new knob but it was too big and didn't fit in the opening on the lid.

Life can be tricky like that. It doesn't always work out neatly. It can be awkward and uncomfortable.

However, I have a husband who doesn't give up easily. He gnaws away at impossible problems until he finds a solution. He made the opening big enough for the new knob and sealed it with a rubber ring.

And a thorny relationship or plans that don't move forward just need time, patience and ingenuity too. We humans have more resources within us than we give ourselves credit for.

Our coffee pot is better now than when it was new! The glass knob is clear and solid as only glass can be, whereas the plastic became cloudy with use and disintegrated.

And life is like that, too. Each new day brings fresh challenges and opportunities.

*If you enjoy my High Country News submissions, please see my substack for more:*  
[andreakidd.substack.com](http://andreakidd.substack.com)



## OUT OF THE RUT

### Chapter 177

May the days be bright, beautiful and laced with grace in all you do. This is the season to shrug off the last vestiges of winter, to get excited about growing things, watching flowers burst to life and the landscape change before our very eyes. Calves are already dotting the fields as I write and young creatures will be springing out all over the place. This is also the season of camping in snow storms and similar surprises.

On one memorable Victoria Day weekend we travelled down to Belly River Campground by Waterton. It's a lovely place, peaceful, wild, sites to camp nestle between trees and hedges around the edges of the Belly River. It was glorious, warm enough to plunge into the mountain stream and emerge spluttering and refreshed, bouncing in and out with the dogs, having fun.

I remember pitching our small mountain tent, not bothering with the extra guys designed for intrepid adventurers to keep this ergonomic shelter adhered to the side of a mountain in a gale. That was not something we ever intended attempting. Our friends pitched their tent close by and we all snuggled into sleeping bags with various assortments of dogs to keep us warm and cosy overnight.

Early in the morning I was rudely awakened by my then partner shoving me and crying somewhat hysterically:

"I can't breath! The tent's collapsing!"

"Ugh.... no it's not, there's nothing wrong where I am".

As I roll over and get my ridiculously early morning bearings, I can see that the tent is somewhat droopy, but certainly not collapsed. However, above my partner's



head the tent does make a bit of a swan-dive towards his face. He was sleeping towards the more sloping back aspect so it was making contact with his rather prominent proboscis.

"Don't be ridiculous. I'll have a look and see what's happening" I say.

I squirm around and manage to get my head out the zip door to see... not very much. There is a veritable blizzard blowing. Flakes the size of soup spoons are swirling before my eyes. When I crank my head around I can see that the snow has built up on the tent and where I eschewed the additional guys, the weight of the snow has caused some drooping to occur. Not a biggie.

I retreat to warmth and reassure my less than robust other half while bumping the interior roof of the tent to dislodge the accumulated snow.

Not long after, my body, having been awakened from a cosy snoozy sleeping bag night, decides since it's morning it must be time to get up and go through the morning ablutions and associated rituals. Drat.

I need to navigate my way to the toilets in the middle of the campground in a whiteout. It was a fun way to start the day. Snow piled up several feet deep in drifts here and there, I have to rely on my snow-addled sense of direction and memory and

am fortunate to make the journey relatively directly and in good time.

On my return, others have stirred, dogs are ready for adventure and we all relocate to the nearby group shelter where a steel barrel stove is soon stoked and burning to thaw out our frozen extremities.

We make breakfast and laugh at ourselves. From glorious sunshine to deep snow. Such is Alberta. A few hours later we hear the snowploughs making their way up the mountain and around the campground allowing us access to the rest of the world. We are free! Liberated once again, it's a swift trip down into Waterton village before heading to Red Rock Canyon for a walk with technicolour geology for entertainment.

On our way home, we encounter a Grizzly lolloping across the road in front of us, there is a dirt track off to the right so we make a sudden ninety degree turn to parallel the jogging ursus who casually demonstrates that 40kmph is a gentle amble for the great beast.

Never a dull moment. May all your weekends in the wilds of Alberta be as wonderful.

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## SKUNKS HAVE EARNED THEIR STRIPES

by Laura Griffin

One of my favourite neighbours is not afraid to stand out in a crowd; their plume of a tail bobs fluidly behind as they waddle across my path, jet black fur accented with bold white stripes loudly announcing their presence. It is the Striped Skunk. Some people see a skunk and run in the opposite direction. Perhaps the name *Mephitis mephitis*, which translates to noxious smell twice, elicits this response. I am undeterred. I have spent countless hours following and watching these beautiful creatures, I even had one raise a litter under my duck coop and have yet to be sprayed. Am I just incredibly lucky or is this kind of coexistence the norm?

The eccentric colouration of the skunk is what is known as an aposematic signal. It warns would be predators that the skunk has an undeniable ability to defend itself. In this case it is two anal glands that can shoot a noxious smelling fluid up to 20 feet, and

up to 10 feet with incredible accuracy. This can cause predators temporary blindness, nausea and ruins their ability to hide or hunt for several days. It is an effective deterrent and the skunk is aware of this. It also only has about six shots available until it has to reload; it takes several days to replenish this fluid. When they do spray, it is a last resort because you have not heeded their foot stamping and posturing telling you to back off. This leads me to believe it is not luck, but rather an understanding between myself and the skunks I have met. I am not your threat because I value you greatly as a neighbour.

Skunks play an incredibly important role in our ecosystems. As small omnivores, they eat an immense number of insects and rodents that some may view as pests. Some studies estimate over 50% of their diet is insects and gastropods like slugs. This can be of huge benefit to gardens. The resourceful skunk can also happily take out wasp nests, killing them as they emerge from the nest by rolling them in their leathery five toed feet. Their small size means that the skunk will not put your own furry pets at risk of predation. If your pets are well mannered, they will also avoid a smelly reminder of their place. The rest of

their diet consists of plants, fallen fruits, and even carrion. They are little custodians cleaning up the yard and keeping pests in check naturally.

Coexistence with skunks is also aided by their nocturnal nature, opposite to us diurnal humans. I have neighbours who have happily lived with skunks under their front step for years. They take care not to startle the skunk and the skunk takes care of any mice that might be setting up shop by the bird feeders. As they are seldom in the yard at the same time of day, everyone gets along just fine.

May is the month when you might be lucky enough to see some skunk kittens emerging from their dens. They rely heavily on their mother for the first few weeks, and can forage with her all season, some even sharing a winter den. Keep your eyes and nose peeled for these delightful additions to your neighbourhood.

*Photo by Jackie Sills*

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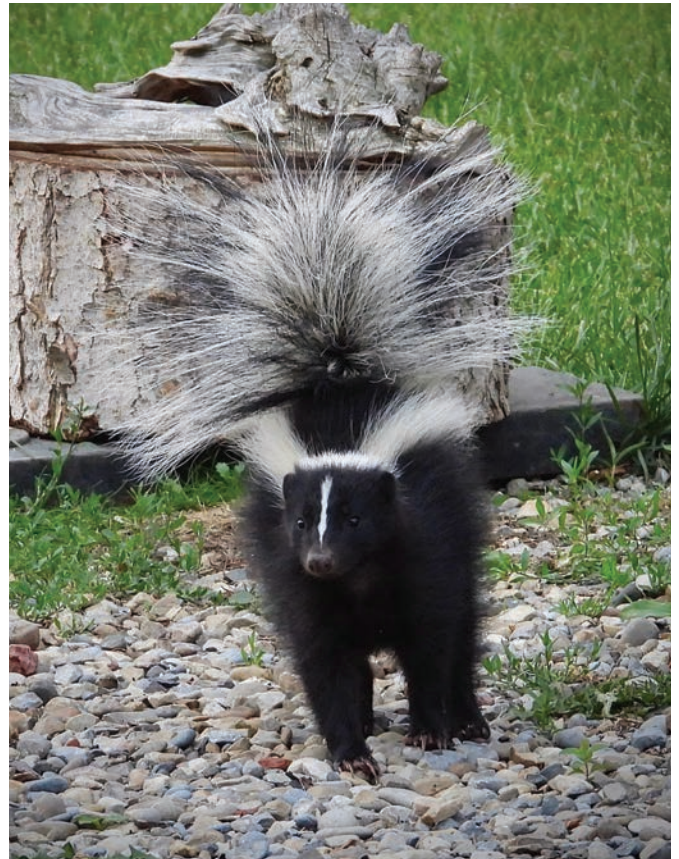
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# KIDS ZONE

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## Skunked Out Word Search

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Smell	Den
Omnivore	Noxious
Spring	Waddle
Flowers	Manners
Spray	Coexist
Skunk	Forage
Tails	Garden
Cute	Toes
Neighbour	Pets
Nocturnal	Ecosystem

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## ADHD AND HORMONES

### ADHD AND ESTROGEN – IS IT A THING?

Let us talk about hormones - everybody's favourite topic. Well, what about hormones? We know that the brain is a target organ for estrogen and that estrogen has a profound effect on mood states and memory. It does this by enhancing the monoamine (about 30% of serotonin and dopamine) release at the synapse. That is the result of estrogen enhancement. It happens for both men and women. Men have estrogen which stays relatively stable in their bodies up to a late age. Women on the other hand, have fluctuating estrogen.

### HOW DOES IT AFFECT WOMEN OVER A LIFETIME?

Starting in puberty we will see the cyclical fluctuations of estrogen during menstruation. During pregnancy we have very high levels and with post-partum, the estrogen levels fall again. Symptoms may include sleep problems, forgetfulness, brain fog, irritability, depression and anxiety. Some women notice a shift in their mood and mental capacity almost

immediately when they become pregnant. Ever wondered where "baby brain" and "baby blues" come from? Peri-menopausally, the estrogen levels start to decrease. Most women's estrogen levels start to fall about a decade before they go into menopause. This may be late 30's, early 40's and gradually coming down until menopause. In their 50's, women's estrogen levels are very low. Men continue to have higher estrogen levels well into their 70's.

### WHAT IS THE CONNECTION?

Women with ADHD are especially sensitive to lower estrogen levels. It helps to understand that whenever estrogen levels fall below what scientists call the 'minimum brain estrogen requirement', then brain dysfunction happens because the amount of neurotransmitters decrease by 30%. Dopamine decreases before a period, with peri-menopause and lower serotonin right after having a baby. That is why we see Pre-menstrual Syndrome (PMS) in women as serotonin decreases, an enhancement of ADD symptoms before their period, with peri-menopause and in menopause. It is called pre-menstrual magnification of ADD symptomology or magnification of ADD symptoms in peri-menopause.

### DOES HRT LESSEN ADHD SYMPTOMS?

While menopause causes ADHD like symptoms (or makes existing ADHD worse), Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is complicated. It has pro's and con's. Some women will consider it to keep their estrogen levels up or simply to prevent them from fluctuating. The effects of HRT on ADHD can vary. It depends on the age of when the person begins therapy, what menopausal stage she is in, her activity level, any previous estrogen therapy, socio-economic status and the form of HRT used. Each case needs to be discussed individually with a health care professional, based on each person's risk factors.

### WILL MY ADHD MEDICATION STILL BE EFFECTIVE?

Several studies investigated whether medications used to treat ADHD are becoming less effective. Very often women in their late 30's, early and mid 40's will say: "My meds just don't seem to work as well as they used to." One of the things to consider is whether a person is in peri-menopause or entering menopause. As their estrogen levels decrease, they may not be as responsive to their stimulant medications as they had been before. Alternatively, their symptoms have increased and their current level of medication may not be as effective in treating those increasing symptoms.

There are multiple clinical trials and published studies are available on the internet for reference.

#### Sources:

Hallowell, E. (2019). *Next Steps: After The Adult ADHD Diagnosis*.

Sinfield, J. *Untapped Brilliance Blog: Five Stages of the ADHD Emotional Journey*.

Please note that due to a server issue my email has had to change to [rocheherbst1@gmail.com](mailto:rocheherbst1@gmail.com) I appreciate your patience on this matter.

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Help wanted at the Priddis General Store. Must be OVER 18. 3 Afternoon shifts from 2:30 to 7:30. Drop off resume at the store located or email. 186007 Priddis Valley Road, Priddis

**PART TIME GARDENING HELP** at acreage home near Priddis. 1 day per week, approximately 4 to 6 hours per time, duration - June, July, August and possibly 2 days in September. Predominant workload would be weeding, minor soft plant trimming and clean-up of debris. E-mail [cindy.r.k@hotmail.com](mailto:cindy.r.k@hotmail.com) for further discussion using Subject line: Summer Garden Help

**ATTENTION HORSE OWNERS:** If you have any old hay, bottom bales, moldy water damaged bales, etc. that are no longer suitable for horses, please give me a call. I may be able to pick it up and use it for cow feed. Call 403-651-5852

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### Part Time Attendant Required

Part time site attendant required immediately for the Bragg Creek transfer site. Wednesdays 11am to 7pm and Saturdays 9am to 5pm. Must be 18 years of age and have own transportation.

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[michelep@awrrecycle.com](mailto:michelep@awrrecycle.com).

## WANTED

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**COUNTRY LANE QUILTERS GUILD** meets the first Saturday of the month at 9:30AM at Christ Church, Hwy 549 Millarville Ab. Business meeting followed by projects. We make quilts for the local charities in the Foothills Division. Contact [clgmillarville@gmail.com](mailto:clgmillarville@gmail.com) or stop by to see what we are up to.

**LOST FRIDGE VENT COVER** for Triple E trailer. Contact: Pat Phone: 403-271-7686  
Lost on Highway 22 near Millarville, aluminum fridge vent cover for Triple E trailer. White in color. Approximately 10" high x 20" long

### HORSE BOARDING OPPORTUNITY AT PRIVATE ACREAGE NEAR CALGARY

Looking for a quiet, senior horse as a mate for our older retired gelding. Opportunity for outside board at this very nicely set up, quiet setting acreage just 10 minutes to Calgary in Red Deer Lake area SW. 5 different well-maintained pastures, 2 large shelters and very caring owners. Reasonable board for right horse/owner. Call to discuss 403 863 7920.

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Contact Mark Farris Phone: 4035544747  
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old shotguns wanted by retired engineer and collector, any gauge, prefer Hammer, single or double barrel, not for resale, please phone 403-201-7181, valid firearms license holder.

### LOOKING TO RENT

Contact: Simone Phone: 403-771-9475  
I'm looking to rent an apartment or small house in Diamond Valley. I'm a female and a senior. I have references, don't smoke and have no pets. Thanks in advance.

## WANTED

### ACCOMMODATION

Contact Dawn Phone: 587-434-2443  
Do you have a clean older house or mobile home on your property you might rent to an older/ healthy/responsible/non-smoking/independent/ senior FEMALE with a small/gentle cocker spaniel dog. Terms?

## FOR SALE

**ESTATE SALE** 40 Rowland Lane, Okotoks 403 995 3363 Friday, May 9 and Saturday, May 10, 2025 9:00 - 5:00 p.m.  
Moving must sell all household items (collectibles etc.) Furniture (dining and bedroom suites, TVs, occasional pieces) antiques, collectibles, 1945 Viking Radio, record player, 1930's full length mirror/storage cupboard (original finish) Artwork, Heirloom linens/bedding, Garage & Garden tools and much, much more!

**FOR SALE:** (1) Folding ping pong table 5 ft X 9 ft. Includes net and paddles. \$200. (2) Black leather recliner/rocker with separate rocking foot stool. \$150. (3) Solid oak table/desk 34 inches X 58 inches. Includes rolling padded office chair. \$200. (4) Fold up tread mill with incline. Encore (SES) 3500HR 5ft X 25 inches. Includes solid rubber mat 6 ft X 4 ft. \$200.  
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Contact Warren 403 949 3452 or email [cwmcnabb@telusplanet.net](mailto:cwmcnabb@telusplanet.net)

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