

Direct to You

By Verna Mayers-McKenzie Director Area "A"
Wynndell/East Shore Kootenay Lake

With the Ashram's wonderful Strawberry Social on June 21st, I know summer has arrived. The day was sunny and everything went well. We also have a new set of Grads – congratulations to all of you!

New Parks: There have been several inquiries about what is happening to the proposed new parks. The unfortunate truth is "nothing". They have been caught up in the bureaucracy of the RDCK/MOT and until they work their way through the tangle of red tape we sit and wait. It has taken an unbelievable amount of time to sift through all of the problems. The proposed provincial park at Burden's Cut is caught up in provincial Red tape. Ah, such is life.

Grants: The good news is that the CBT Grants are in the mail and the organizations should have received them by now. Thanks to Trish at the RDCK who does a great job with this program. Some of you will be receiving contracts that must be completed before you receive all of the money. For other grants going through the RDCK, we are finding that there is a turn-around time of 4 to 6 weeks. It's holiday time!

Burning: We have had several concerns expressed over burning. There is not a burning ban in place at the moment. Burning will be allowed until June 30 at 8 p.m. After that time only campfires will be allowed. Hope that helps.

High Speed: High speed will be coming to Boswell in late summer it is already in Mountain Shores.

Changes in them thar hills: There are a number of private lands that are being logged, and I have heard through the grapevine that there are two more large areas further up in the hills that are planning on building trailer courts. When it comes to building permits we had 34 last month, but the Lister/Canyon area had 60. We are now the second fastest growing area - not the first. Our assessment is still higher than the Creston Valley. But things are slowing down and the sales in Calgary have come to a standstill, so this will affect us.

Abattoirs: A very large issue has reared its ugly head at a time when there is a lot of discussion and support for the 100 mile diet. Abattoirs are being closed down, not because they are unlicensed or do unsatisfactory work, but because the Ministry of Agriculture no longer licenses abattoirs. It now comes under the Ministry of Health. The Minister of Health wants all animals to be slaughtered only in government-certified abattoirs. Because of the cost of meeting the new standards, most fixed and mobile abattoirs will be closed. This severely limits our capacity to raise and process meats locally, requiring us to depend on factory-farmed and industrially slaughtered meat.

There is not a licensed abattoir in the Kootenays. Furthermore, in most of BC, there is no place to dispose of the parts of a cow that could carry mad cow disease. That now means all cattle farmers – even those raising a cow for their own use - must ship to Alberta, or face a \$35,000 fine. This not only has a huge impact on the organic farmer and those who make farm gate sales, but it makes the 100 mile diet impossible, at a time when shipping costs make the Alberta option uneconomic. See the action toolkit at http://www.fooddemocracy.org/docs/MIR_Action_Toolkit.doc

The RDCK passed a unanimous motion to go to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) on the need for local abattoirs and a regional disposal site. During the recent meeting in Vancouver of all the rural Directors in the province, seven concerns and motions were sent on to the UBCM - four of them came from the RDCK. Mine was the one on abattoirs.

There were movements to build a licensed abattoir in either the Slocan Valley or Ootischenia, but both have failed due to community opposition. In both cases, there were never any plans for holding pens or feedlots which would be the main offence to neighbours. For more info on the proposed facility in Lemon Creek, see <http://www.kootenay.coop/industry.php?id=148>

A couple of meetings & things to remember:

- Grey Creek Visioning on July 5th, 7p.m. at Gray Creek Hall
- Don't forget the Grey Creek Centennial – talk to Tom Lymbery to volunteer
- Sanca Creek water users meeting July 27 at 7 p.m. – location to be announced; for info call Mrs. Perrin 250-223-8315
- For those of you who are interested, the RDCK Community Services Committee will be meeting on a monthly basis to oversee the construction of the Creston pool. For times and dates, please check the RDCK web site.
- Highways will meet with the Elsie Holmes residents in early September (time and date to be announced) to discuss the options for their road which will be done at the same time they are doing the main highway.
- Recreation applications will be called for in early September and given out in October.

If you have any questions or comments, don't hesitate to contact me.

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