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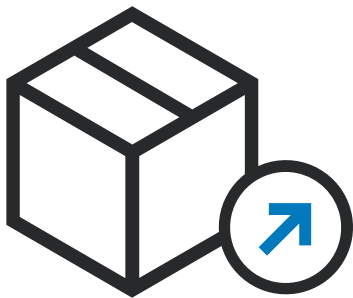
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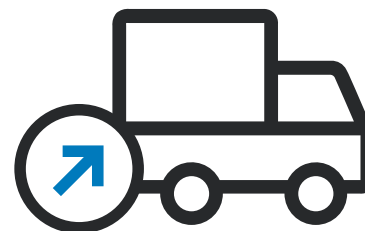
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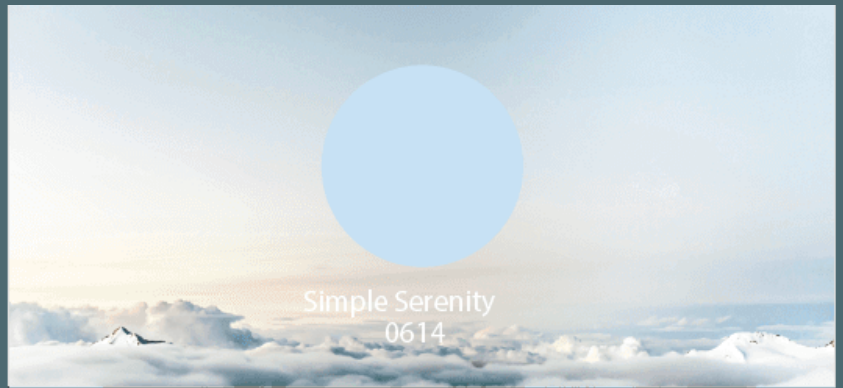
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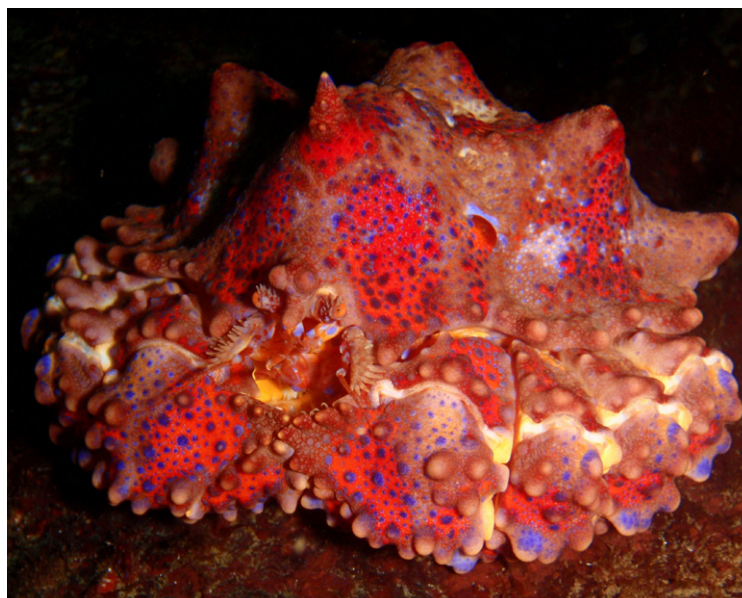
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Boxing match

Though named the Puget Sound King Crab, *Lopholithodes mandtii*, this crab is found from northern California all the way to Alaska. Despite their brilliant orange, red and purple colouration, when the water's absorption disguises most of those colours they're often difficult to spot, camouflaged among the kelp, sponges and boulders of Powell River's rocky reefs. They're sometimes confused with their less-colourful cousins, the box crab, *Lopholithodes foraminatus*, because both resemble a rough box when their claws and legs are folded against their bodies. [PRL](#)

Photo by Sean Percy



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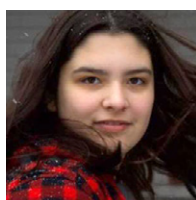
ON THE COVER:

Jill Marie Bronson counts rings on cedar and hemlock that were felled this summer up on Mount Freda. She, along with two other members of qathet Old growth, found many newly-cut stumps that are at least 600 years old; the oldest, more than 1,200. See story in PRL's Build Back Better section on Page 7.



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ANNA BYRNE is a Master of Theological Studies student and the author of Seven Year Summer, a memoir about her cancer journey. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Powell River Hospice Society.



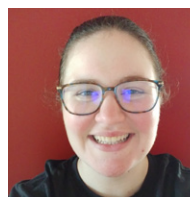
ABBY FRANCIS attends Grade 12 at Brooks. She is planning to go into photography and journalism after graduation, as she loves to write and has been doing photography for the past four years.

BILL LYTLE-MCGHEE is a retired teacher with a Masters' Degree in Special Education. His undergraduate work was in Outdoor and Environmental Education with a major in Geography at UVIC. He is also a certified Level 3 Canadian Ski Instructor. Throughout his 30 years of teaching he has kept a close watch on what was first referred to as the 'greenhouse effect', then 'global warming', then 'climate change'.



JANET MAY is a retired forester who loves hiking through the green shades and moist spaces of old forests. She has lived in Powell River for 25 years and worked in silviculture and forest education. She is heartened that the BC government wishes to change forest practices to protect biodiversity and habitats, but knowing what a big job it will be, she thinks they will need public support to get it done.

MORGAN PÉPIN is a fourth-year Journalism and Human Rights student at Carleton University in Ottawa, and is staying in Powell River with her parents while classes continue online. When she's not working in the meat department at Mitchell Brothers, she enjoys hiking, fishing, and camping.



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IN THIS ISSUE

Building back better is a team effort; what's your part?

As I put the last bits of the magazine together before press time, my eyes keep flicking to the top of this page.

Volume 16, Number 1.

Next month, this magazine will celebrate 15 years of publishing. PRL is entering its 16th year. (February is our actual anniversary, because back in 2006 and for the first few years we didn't have a January issue.)

Sometimes it seems just yesterday that I joined the team that puts this magazine together, but that was nearly 13 years ago now.

While one year rolls into another seemingly more quickly as I age, there are certain dates that serve as milestones: getting married, leaving Powell River to move to the Northwest Territories, moving back to join PRL. These dates, far more than years or birth days, are milestones that mark growth and the passage of time.

There's no doubt that the year that is just ending as I write this, will be another of those dates. Though the virus is COVID-19, the year it brings to mind will be 2020. Time will be broken into pre-COVID and post-CO-

VID. And we hope that 2021 will be the year that we come out of COVID - the year that we "Build Back Better."

"We're all in this together" we keep getting reminded. In that, we have little choice. But what will really test the mettle of our communities is whether we come out of this together. And particularly *how* we come out of this together.

This issue collects a number of stories that look ahead at how we'll come out of this - how we will "Build Back Better."

These are not stories about desperately looking ahead and hoping that it's better - dreaming of better days ahead.

Rather, these are stories about people *making* things better - doing the work so that we can build back better.

It's about women climbing into high mountain forestry cutblocks, meticulously counting rings on fallen trees, and calling out that the studies of our forests are underestimating how old the trees are - and then offering solutions for how to make forestry better. (Page 7.)

There are stories about what we can do to fight climate

change (be sure to take the "What kind of environmentalist are you?" quiz on Page 9), how recycling actually makes a difference and what else you can do (Page 10), and how government programs and budgets are helping (and sometimes hurting) local residents and what work is being done to help those affected.

The folks who wrote these articles or were interviewed for them don't want to just build hope in you for a better post-COVID build back. They want you to be part of building back better. Whether that's making healthier food choices (Page 28), having a better understanding of what economic realities you and your neighbours face (Page 15), contributing to planning for the City's budget (Page 11 & 29), the roll-out of internet in rural areas (Page 28), or simply reading more (Page 36); there's lots that you can do to ensure that when we're back together, we're better.

SEAN PERCY | sean@prliving.ca

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TIMBER MART

BUILD BACK

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the words "Build Back Better" have been used by visionaries, who hope that the pause will help shock the world into environmental, social and economic justice. A reset. A once-in-a-lifetime (we hope) chance to recover.

For the New Year 2021, *Powell River Living* has gathered a series of stories designed to help us imagine how we will Build Back Better in our own community. They are:

Page 7 **BC's Forest Practices
Must Get Better**

Page 9 **Quiz: What kind of an
environmentalist are you?**

Page 10 **Recycling is getting better**

Page 13 **Decent welfare rates and
a Guaranteed Annual Income:
hopeful, but no guarantees**

Page 17 **Better at Brooks: some changes
have been welcome**

Page 19 **Finding a Future
for Powell River's Mill**

**Greener
Stronger
Safer
Smarter
Closer**

Millennia-old cedars felled on Mount Freda



Our forestry practices must get better

BY JANET MAY

Mount Freda wears a forest mantle on her wide shoulders and it's often trimmed with a band of white cloud. Into this cloud, three women drove, just before the snow flew last year.

Crews built the road in the summer, and several logging blocks had just been cut on the mountain 30 kilometres north-east of Powell River. The women wanted to see for themselves how old Freda's forests are, or were.

Janet May, Rachael Sherstad and Jill Marie Bronson were on a mission on behalf of qathet Old growth (qOg), a group that believes that clear-cutting ancient forest is not in today's public interest. Members of qOg question the economic value of logging and forest regeneration at high elevations. They suspect that the values of habitat, carbon storage, and even financial return will be greater if old forests are left intact. They are not

"The oldest yellow cedar is 1,233 years old. This puts the fallen forest in company with Caren Forest, 44 km to the south, which has been cited as possibly the oldest living closed canopy forest in the world."

against logging: they want change.

And they are not alone. After a four-month engagement process and scientific review, a government panel found that the public is not satisfied with the way old forests are managed. The report, *A New Future for Old Forests: A Strategic Review of How British Columbia Manages for Old Forests Within its Ancient Ecosystems*, makes 14 recommendations to reform BC forest management (see sidebar, left).

Presently, although forest managers follow BC law, provincial goals for protecting biodiversity and habitat are not met. Forest companies, such as Western Forest Products, the largest licensee operating near Powell River, are obliged to log their annual cut (a volume of timber determined by the Province), which includes a proportion of old growth. Companies have to manage for biodiversity, wildlife and soils "without unduly reducing the supply of timber." This inevitably leads to the erosion of biodiversity goals.

In contrast, the 14-recommendation report promotes new forest laws to manage for ecosystem health, including an increased proportion of old forest.




Climbing out of the Jeep, the three women peer through Freda's fog. Fallen mountain hemlock and yellow cedar remain in the cut-block. Using tape measure and hand lens, they record diameters and count very tight annual rings. Tree growth is slow at 1,100m elevation.

They are astonished at what the rings tell them. The oldest yellow cedar is 1,233 years old. This puts the fallen forest in company with Caren Forest, 44 km to the south, which has been cited as possibly the oldest living closed canopy forest in the world.

According to the report, government forest data is deficient in many areas of the province. Indeed, government data suggests that Freda's forests are 351 years old, but the qOg team recorded an average age of 656.

qOg member Jill Marie Bronson says, "It's time to ground-truth our forests and embrace the recommendations in this report so that we can make responsible decisions for the future of our community." Jill believes the report is in our best interests. "There is a way to increase labour force and diversify economies when you manage for biodiversity. This is about a secure timber supply and creating stability for our forestry workers."

The report concurs: old growth forest is diminishing and "cannot be replaced in any reasonable time frame," but we have opportunities while communities still have choices. "It is much better to be proactive and manage this transition when we still have options versus reacting to a crisis when it is upon us," reads the report.

"We need to be honest with ourselves... and make difficult choices to ensure future generations can benefit from our magnificent forests." 

WHAT THE PUBLIC SAID

Top 5 Recommendations from the Province of BC's *A New Future for Old Forests*, that affect qathet:

- Engage the full involvement of Indigenous leaders and organizations to review this report and any subsequent policy or strategy development and implementation.
- Give local governments and stakeholders a greater role in decisions that affect them.
- Support forest sector workers and communities as they adapt to the changes.
- Immediately defer development in old forests where ecosystems are at risk of irreversible biodiversity loss.
- Improve mapping and classification of old forest.

Full report is at: engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/563/2020/09/STRATEGIC-REVIEW-20200430.pdf

RINGING IN 2021: Left, tight growth rings on this harvested yellow cedar speak to its advanced age and high elevation. Above, qathet Old growth (qOg) member Rachel Sherstad measures an ancient hemlock that was harvested from Mount Freda in Summer 2020. The local advocacy group is lobbying for greater protection for BC's unique forests. *Photos by Janet May*

Make a greener post-COVID world:

This is our chance



BY WILLIAM LYTTLE-MCGHEE
Climate Action Powell River

So how does climate change fit in to 'build back better'?

It is centered on the fact that COVID-19 has shattered many parts of the established economic systems that sustain us. A lot of money is and will be spent on bringing those systems back to health. We have also been given the message that all of humanity can be existentially vulnerable under unexpected or even unaccepted circumstances. We need to listen to the science!

At the same time we hear 'we need to get back to normal' which can be translated into 'business as usual'. In terms of climate change and its implications, that wasn't and isn't working in our favor, short or long term.

The thinking is, if we are going to dedicate a lot of resources to restoring our social support network, which is basically what an economy is, we need to allocate those resources to change that will mitigate and adapt to the climate problem as best we can at this late date, in order to minimize the damage.

So where are we now with the climate 'problem'? Without a doubt it is a planetary dilemma. The atmosphere has no borders and flows and mixes indiscriminately. It, along with the oceans, is the ultimate common property of all life as we know it.

At present we are NOT on course to avoid the worst predictions. According to NOAA and NASA, the most prominent agencies monitoring the gas content of the atmosphere, we have exceeded and continue to exceed 400+ parts per million CO2.

Antonio Gutiérrez, Secretary General of the UN, re-

"It is time we started acting seriously to deal with the climate situation as an emergency. Building back better is a guiding principle that may well help achieve that."

cently announced a series of 'demands' to the countries of the world:

- Put a price on carbon.
- Phase out fossil fuel financing and end fossil fuel subsidies.
- Shift the tax burden from income to carbon, and from taxpayers to polluters.
- Integrate the goal of carbon neutrality into all economic and fiscal policies and decisions.
- Help those around the world who are already facing the dire impacts of climate change.

The clear message is that all of us need to get a firm grip on our own carbon emissions, and manage our individual situations much as we manage our money. Efforts by governments and corporations can only achieve so much. Each of us now needs to make changes in order to minimize our personal emissions.

Many communities, such as Powell River, have declared 'climate emergencies'. It is time we started acting seriously to deal with the climate situation as an emergency. Building back better is a guiding principle that may well help achieve that. [PR](#)



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Quiz: What kind of an environmentalist are you?

Building Back Better begins with self-knowledge. No matter how much you recycle or what you drive, how you think about climate change matters.

This quiz, created by Climate Action Powell River, seeks to help you understand your own motivations and actions.

1. Your last Facebook post:

- a) "Just figured out my carbon footprint. Feeling proud. Checked out Climate Action Powell River Facebook page. There is so much climate action going on in the world. Time to get on board!"
- b) "ENVO D-35 voted best overall electric bike by ebikebc.com."
- c) "Instructions on how to build an underground bunker, stocked for two years in case."
- d) "Who invented carbon calculators? They are so annoying. Who has time to drag out their gas bills?"
- e) "What's the point of climate action when politicians care more about the needs of corporations than the future of the planet?"

2. The state of your home recycling / compost / garbage:

- a) I have a fantastic composter in my back yard. Best in the neighbourhood. I am an expert. Call me.
- b) I am reusing plastic bags for my kitchen garbage which happens to be minimal.
- c) Some cities have banned plastic bags. Lot of good this will do. Too little too late.
- d) Recycling puts more money in the pockets of big business.
- e) Why bother? Didn't we just get a shipload of recycled stuff returned from overseas?

3. What's in your fridge?

- a) Lots of veggies, no meat, no dairy. Don't you know that each cow belches 220 pounds of methane per year? Have you seen Paul McCartney's video about factory farms and glass walls?
- b) Oat milk and stuff from the Farmers' Market.
- c) Not much in the fridge but lots of canned and freeze-dried goods – just in case.
- d) Some Alberta beef, bacon and eggs.
- e) Whatever I'm craving – lots of comfort foods.

4. What I last protested:

- a) Subsidies for oil and gas.
- b) The time it takes to arrange car pools or cycle to work.
- c) The lack of climate action leadership.
- d) The absence of replacements for electric car batteries. How stupid is this?
- e) Complaints about my truck idling.

5. What your kids say about you?

- a) My parents are fanatical about climate action. I got a tree for my birthday.
- b) My Mom and Dad care about the climate crisis but they are always so busy. They both work and there are three kids in our family. At least they recycle stuff and the electric car is cool.
- c) My parents are prepared for anything. We have a family disaster plan.
- d) My parents can be embarrassing. Their Facebook posts just stir up trouble.
- e) My parents believe in climate change, just not in their lifetime. It's just too scary to think about.

6. What book you might check out of the library:

- a) "A Good War" by Seth Klein.
- b) I have a subscription to the *New Yorker* and the *Globe and Mail*. They often have excellent articles about climate change. No time for the library.
- c) "Global Catastrophes" by Bill McGuire.
- d) "Confessions Of A Climate Change Denier", by Stephen Wells.
- e) "The Essential Calvin and Hobbes" by Bill Watterson.

7. Your favourite show:

- a) "Emergency Brake" by the Students in the Brooks Film Club.
- b) Attenborough nature films
- c) "Rebellion" documentary on the Nature of Things, narrated by Greta Thunberg.
- d) "Planet of the Humans" by Michael Moore.
- e) "The Masked Singer"

8. What you gave everyone for Christmas:

- a) Bamboo toilet paper.
- b) Experiences rather than material gifts.
- c) SAS Survival Guide.
- d) Dollar store gift card.
- e) Day at the Spa.

9. Where you'd go on vacation:

- a) A local eco-retreat.
- b) Our cabin on Powell Lake when we have time.
- c) It's not safe to travel.
- d) None of your business.
- e) A Caribbean cruise.

10. How you get around town:

- a) Electric car.
- b) Sometimes I car pool. Not always convenient though.
- c) 4x4 truck that can transport supplies and handle the backroads.

- d) Electric cars have lithium batteries so sticking with my gas guzzler.
- e) I collect cars so it depends on my mood.

11. Where the world would be in 100 years, if everyone acted like you:

- a) The world would be fine. Children would have a future.
- b) More green technology i.e. wind mills, solar shingles, geothermal heating.
- c) Between a rock and a hard place.
- d) Fine.
- e) No idea.

13. Your favourite quote:

- a) Greta Thunberg, "We can't save the world by playing by the rules, because the rules have to be changed. Everything needs to change – and it has to start today."
- b) Bernie Sanders, "I believe climate change is the single greatest threat facing us today."
- c) Ralph Waldo Emerson, "One of the illusions of life is that the present hour is not the critical, decisive one."
- d) Pace Smith, "Politics are a waste of time." "Activism does not work."
- e) J.R.R. Tolkien (in *Lord of the Rings*), "The whole thing is quite hopeless, so it's no good worrying about tomorrow."

14. Where do you get your clothes?

- a) At the thrift store.
- b) Usually online – but we give used clothing to second-hand stores.
- c) I make my own clothes.
- d) It depends.
- e) Courtenay or Vancouver.

15. What "build back better" means to you:

- a) An end to the climate crisis; green jobs; sustainable food practices and a Planetary Diet so all are fed; smaller population; caring politicians and leaders.
- b) Economic prosperity; healthier planet for my children.
- c) A war against climate change.
- d) It is a left wing conspiracy.
- e) Prosperity for everyone.

16. What about sucking carbon out of the atmosphere (drawdown)?

- a) It is the only thing that will save us. Plant more trees.
- b) Sure, if someone else does it.
- c) Maybe after the apocalypse.
- d) It's all a hoax. Carbon is natural.
- e) Not a problem. My car makes lots of it.

17. What is your view on carbon off-setting; i.e. paying a small amount for your energy consumption?

- a) Sure...let's all be carbon neutral.
- b) Never heard of it.
- c) Too little, too late.
- d) It is a socialist conspiracy.
- e) I have to buy gas.

18. If someone summed up your climate habits at the end of your life, what would they say?

- a) Thank you for caring.
- b) Thanks for trying.
- c) Good instincts.
- d) What the...?
- e) "Denial is the shock absorber for the soul. It protects us until we're equipped to deal with reality." (C.S Lewis)

Mostly A's Climate Atlas

You carry the weight of the environment on your shoulders... and think you should, too. Tend to be preachy.

Mostly B's Busy Beaver

Trying to do your part, one recycled Ziploc at a time. But is life too busy to really make a difference?

Mostly C's Doom Nostradamus

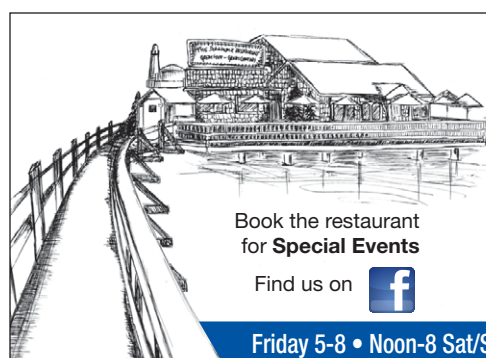
You doubt that technology, ideology, politics can save us. Only catastrophe will.

Mostly D's Devil's Facebooker

You fight online against climate science and political action... for fun? Might have a "Save a cow, eat a vegan" bumper sticker.

Mostly E's Not-So-Secret Sinner

You throw cans in the garbage. What difference does it make? I can't change anything, so I do what I want. **RRL**



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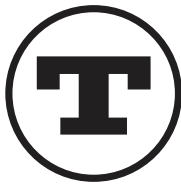
Jan. 25 – Robbie Burns Dinner: Scottish Music, Menu & Drinks

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GOOD DOG: Jigs, the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever, has been well-trained in recycling. *Photo by Isabelle Southcott*

Our recycling really gets recycled

WITH THE LET'S TALK TRASH TEAM

Are you one of the many people who have been rethinking recycling lately? Do you find yourself questioning whether the effort to rinse items destined for your curbside blue bin or recycling depot is worth it? If you've become somewhat disenchanted with recycling as of late due to recent news stories on boatloads of recycling being turned away from international ports, headlines about low plastic recycling rates, and tales of recycling ending up in landfills, it's no wonder you're wanting to know if all your efforts to recycle are worth it.

While it is true there have been recent changes in global recycling markets, what has been missing from these reports is the story of British Columbia. BC's unique 'Extended Producer Responsibility' (EPR) programs are an environmental policy approach in which the *producers of a product are responsible* for reducing environmental impacts and the end-of-life management for material within their program. This non-profit system is an integrated approach to waste management and is a studied model throughout the world.

The most significant advantages of EPR programs are the rigorous processes it demands; the requirement to report verified results, annual reports, the commitment to transparency and, most of all, the steadfast focus on environmental outcomes—all of which is overseen by the BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. This is a robust recycling system that demands accountability.

Recycle BC is one of BC's many EPR programs and is likely the recycling program we are most familiar with and use daily. Recycle BC took on the arduous challenge of managing the Province's residential packaging and printed paper in 2014. Green recycling collection bins that were placed throughout Powell River disappeared and our local region experienced massive changes to residential recycling nearly overnight with monitored depots cropping up.

Rather than loads of contaminated recycling – up to 40 per cent – being sent to landfill, suddenly there was depot staff available to help with sorting, a more traceable recycling “trail,” and strict program regulations mandating low rates of contamination.


Recycle BC conducts more than 1,800 material au-

"...recycling is not what we should be focusing our efforts on. Reducing our consumption is much more effective. Think un-packaged produce and goods and eliminating single-use items."

ditions per year to determine the composition and quality of material that is collected at the curbside and in depots. Overall, 90 per cent of what is collected through Recycle BC's program is managed by recycling and eventually turned into another product or recycled packaging.

Recycle BC must approve the end markets for all of its materials. In the case of plastic, 98 per cent remains in British Columbia and the majority of paper, glass and metal are all recycled within North America. Visit recycle.bc for details on what each of these materials are recycled into. The newer flexible plastic packaging stream of notoriously problematic plastics laminated together is currently being collected for research into its recyclability. What is not used for research and development is made into engineered fuel used as a coal replacement for industry. Relying less on foreign end markets and more on domestic processing facilities is a key component to what makes this program resilient, even in the face of the unprecedented changes to the recycling market that are currently being experienced globally.

You can do your part to ensure both our curbside and depot programs are successful by avoiding “wish-cycling”. Ask staff or use the City's new Waste Wizard search engine to find out if items are accepted before tossing them into a bin.

While Recycle BC's statistics may be heartening to some, even a grade schooler knows recycling is not what we should be focusing our efforts on. Reducing our consumption is much more effective. Think un-packaged produce and goods and eliminating single-use items. Buying secondhand also circumnavigates packaging altogether and helps to create a circular economy. 



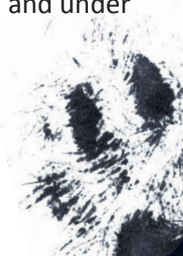
DOG LICENSE FEES DISCOUNT

Until February 28, 2021, the City is offering a **\$6 discount** on the annual \$30 dog license fee. Licenses purchased at any time are valid for the full calendar year.

Licenses can be purchased at the City Hall cashier counter at 6910 Duncan Street.

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For more information on Animal Control, go to powellriver.ca



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Your Local Government



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REGIONAL DISTRICT

qathet Regional District holds regularly scheduled Board and Standing Committee meetings at #103 – 4675 Marine Ave, Powell River. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with Ministerial Order No. 0192, members of the public are invited to view meetings virtually via webcasts available at qathet.ca. Closed meetings are conducted by resolution in accordance with the *Community Charter*.

Planning Committee

4:00 pm

January 12, 2021 *
February 9, 2021
March 9, 2021
April 13, 2021
May 11, 2021
June 8, 2021
July 13, 2021
August 10, 2021
September 7, 2021
October 12, 2021
November 9, 2021
December 7, 2021

Finance Committee

4:00 pm

January 20, 2021 *
February 17, 2021
March 17, 2021
April 21, 2021
May 19, 2021
June 16, 2021
July 14, 2021
October 20, 2021
November 17, 2021
December 8, 2021

Committee of the Whole

4:00 pm

January 14, 2021 *
February 11, 2021
March 11, 2021
April 15, 2021
May 13, 2021
June 10, 2021
July 15, 2021
August 12, 2021
September 9, 2021
October 14, 2021
November 10, 2021
December 9, 2021

Regional Board

6:30 pm

January 28, 2021
February 25, 2021
March 25, 2021
April 29, 2021
May 27, 2021
June 24, 2021
July 29, 2021
August 26, 2021
September 23, 2021
October 28, 2021
November 25, 2021 *
December 16, 2021



POWELL RIVER REGIONAL
HOSPITAL DISTRICT

Regional Hospital District Committee of the Whole

3:45 pm

January 14, 2021*
March 11, 2021
April 21, 2021
September 9, 2021
November 10, 2021

Regional Hospital District Board

6:15 pm

January 28, 2021
March 25, 2021
April 29, 2021
September 23, 2021
November 25, 2021 *

*Inaugural Meetings

Additional meetings may be scheduled for special purposes.

For more information, please contact
Michelle Jones, Manager of Administrative Services

Notice of 2021 Budget Meetings

The qathet Regional District will meet to consider the 2021-2025 Financial Plan at the Finance Committee and the Regional Hospital District 2021 budget at the Regional Hospital District Committee of the Whole meetings between January 2021 and March 2021. Meeting dates and times can be viewed on the Regional District website at qathet.ca.

Linda Greenan, Manager of Financial Services

Toughing it out til Spring

More-liveable welfare rates and a Guaranteed Annual Income: early COVID crisis responses made it seem like a better safety net was within reach. But December 2020 brought a vicious CERB claw-back and the reduction of the \$300 supplement for BC's most vulnerable. Is there still hope?

BY PIETA WOOLLEY | pieta@prliving.ca

In Powell River, Joyce Percey is who you call if you've got a problem with a government office. Usually, the Poverty Law Advocate answers about 900 calls a year, mostly from people struggling with money. But over the last nine months, as thousands of locals have lost jobs and qualified for newly-dreamt-up benefits, she's been scrambling to offer accurate advice in the middle of what is not just a health crisis, but an ever-changing economic crisis with ever-changing government programs aimed at mitigating the worst of it.

In 2020, nearly half of Powell River's working-age population was either on CERB, Income Assistance or Disability Assistance, at least part of the year. On the phone from her office above the Library, Joyce's voice scratches and rasps after a morning of constant client meetings just before Christmas.

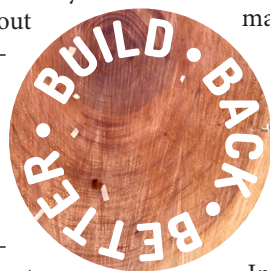
"Taking money away is really wicked," Joyce said to PRL, referring to the newly-reduced Income Assistance

and Disability cheques, and the expectation that many locals pay back CERB in the middle of a pandemic. "There's going to be some real shocks here."

Indeed, Joyce will spend her January helping many locals navigate an even-crueller "new normal," as part of the Powell River Community Services Association. At the very end of 2020, with no lessening of COVID's tight grip, the federal and provincial governments both tossed thousands of us into new financial strain.

On December 8, Powell River's 1,567 Income and Disability Assistance recipients learned that the \$300 a month supplement – in place since the beginning of the pandemic – will be reduced to \$150 a month for January through March, with no promises after that.

In mid-December, many of Powell River's CERB recipients received letters demanding they pay back the money, as they received it in error. (About 220 people here in qathet will have those pay-it-back letters, if local numbers are true to national and provincial statistics.)



BUILDING US UP, BETTER: Poverty Law Advocate Joyce Percey in her office above the Library. She is one of a handful of local front-line workers helping people navigate through an ever more complicated and changing set of regular and COVID-era social supports.

This the opposite of what many were hoping the COVID-19 crisis would yield, in terms of social justice. In terms of building back better. In terms of eliminating extreme poverty.

When Victoria announced the \$300 a month supplement for Income Assistance and Disability Assistance in April 2020, groups such as the Disability Alliance of BC and the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition dared to hope that this would be the first substantial increase in the rates in decades. Rates for "employable singles" on Income Assistance are \$760 a month, including a \$375 "shelter allowance." For singles on Disability Assistance, rates are \$1,183, including that \$375 for shelter. Joyce says that \$375 for housing hasn't been adequate in decades.

When Ottawa announced \$2,000-a-month CERB in March, groups such as UBI Works dared to hope this



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was the gateway to a Guaranteed Annual Income – a payment that could replace many hoop-jumping bureaucratic social support programs with a single, substantial, universally-accessible benefit. Even Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's own Liberal Party of Canada had "Guaranteed Annual Income" at the top of its priority list for its annual convention in November 2020 – and several advocates for it sitting as MPs. That gathering was, of course, postponed due to COVID-19. The party now won't meet until April 2021 (if even then), long after many low-earning

Canadians must grapple with this new debt of up to about \$15,000.

Powell River's elected provincial and federal representatives are in difficult positions on these payments, though for very different reasons.

Our representative to Ottawa, Rachel Blaney, is in opposition as an NDP MP, rather than in government. She is using her office to lambaste the Liberals for targeting struggling Canadians to re-pay CERB, a program that put money in their pockets during a precarious time, with less-than-clear and changing rules.



YOUR REPS: MLA Nicholas Simons recently became BC's Minister for Social Development and Poverty Reduction. MP Rachel Blaney is the federal NDP Whip. Both Powell River representatives have backgrounds in front-line work and poverty advocacy.



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Beyond welfare: How the provincial NDP is trying to fight poverty

After 16 years in power, the BC Liberals handed power over to Premier John Horgan's NDP in 2017 (as a coalition with the Greens), and the party was re-elected in 2020 (as a majority).

Here's some of what they've done in the past three years:

- Minimum wage increased from \$11.35 per hour in 2017 to \$13.85 per hour in 2019 and is currently \$14.60 per hour. By June 2021, the minimum wage will be \$15.20 per hour.
- More than 25,000 new affordable homes are completed, under construction or in the approvals process in communities throughout BC.
- Introduced stronger protections for renters, including cutting the maximum annual rent increases.
- As of August 2020, almost 63,000 licensed childcare spaces are seeing a fee reduction through the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative. More than 53,000 families have been approved for support through the Affordable Child Care Benefit.
- Implemented \$300 COVID Crisis Supplement for people who have been receiving

Income Assistance, Disability Assistance, a Comforts Allowance, the BC Senior's Supplement.

- In response to the pandemic, the NDP housed more than 600 people living in encampments in Vancouver and Victoria, providing safe, temporary accommodations with wraparound services.
- To support people hardest hit by the pandemic, government is providing \$20 million in funding for employment programs that will support people with disabilities and people facing multiple barriers who lost their jobs due to the pandemic.
- Froze rent increases until July of 2021.
- For those on Income Assistance (IA), they removed the requirement to apply for early Canada Pension Plan retirement benefits
- Removed the two-year independence requirement for young adults to receive IA.
- Income Assistance and Disability rates have been increased twice since 2017, for a total increase of \$150 per month. These were the first rate increases to Income Assistance rates in over a decade.

HOW POOR / RICH ARE YOU? HOW POOR / RICH ARE ALL OF US?

To help enhance my reporting about COVID-era social programs in PRL, I ordered some data from Statistics Canada. I wanted to know more about incomes in Powell River. What is the context in which hiccups such as the Western Forest Products strike, the curtailment at the Catalyst Paper Excellence mill, the quasi-legalization of the marijuana industry, COVID's lay-offs and business losses, and other local, money-shifting events take place?

I asked the federal department for median individual incomes and family incomes, broken down by age group. And then, within each age group, I asked for income quintiles: how much the top 25 percent make, the middle quarters, and the bottom 25 percent.

I'll be writing about income issues more in the next few months, as we look forward to the vaccine's promises and aim to recover from COVID's impact on our economy, and our lives.

These are all 2018 numbers—the most recent available—and are all pre-tax.

Here are 5 things I've learned so far:

1. 75 percent of people living in the Powell River region have incomes low enough to have near-zero discretionary income, depending on their situation.

For example: Among those Powell Riverites in their prime child-bearing and child-raising years—25 to 34 year olds—the top-income 25 percent of families have a median family income of \$93,580. Three-quarters of this age group have a median family income of \$55,430 or less. The second bottom-earning quarter has a median family income of \$36,950, and the lowest-earning families bring home a median of just \$20,980. Other age groups have very similar income spreads.

2. Incomes do not rise very much between about age 35 and 55.

In the Powell River Region, median individual incomes are as follows: under 25: \$16,170. Age 25 to 34: \$33,420. Age 35 to 44: \$41,160. Age 45 to 54: \$43,180. This surprised me, as I had assumed most of us would experience big income gains through our middle and senior working years. I guess not.

3. An exception: median incomes do continue rising for those in the top-earning 25 percent.

For example: Median individual incomes in the City of Powell River's top 25 percent of earners rise from: under 25: \$29,920. Age 25 to 34: \$62,310. Age 35 to 44: \$76,190. Age 45 to 54: \$85,550. Again, I was surprised by this, as rising incomes represent a minority of workers... not the majority.

4. Incomes decline at 55 to 64 – for many, their last decade in the workforce.

For example, median family incomes in Area A (Lund) drop from \$54,950 at age 45 to 54, to \$40,120 at age 55 to 64.

5. About eight percent of people in this region are on Income and Disability Assistance benefits.

As of October 2020, there were 1,567 receiving these benefits, out of a total population of around 20,000. We can assume then that most folks struggling with depressed incomes in Powell River are working.

If you would like a copy of the original documents I'm working from, I am happy to send them to you. My guess is that especially for policy-makers and advocates, these will be useful numbers. And if you're like me and just like data, they're a full afternoon of educational entertainment.

They're in PDF and Excel documents, mostly.

Email me at pieta@prliving.ca and I'll send them.

That's particularly ripe, Rachel says, when large businesses have taken billions in tax dollars through COVID programs such as wage subsidy, and funneled the funds to shareholders as "profit."

"This is exhausting and scary for people. There is no recovery anywhere in Canada," said Rachel on the phone from her home in Campbell River, noting that we are in the middle of a second wave—not the time most people can rustle up \$15,000 in debt repayment.

One big COVID-era win, she said, is securing the right for two weeks of paid sick leave for all workers.

"This was one of my most proud moments of my life," said Rachel. "It helps so many people. They can stay home when they're sick and not go into abject poverty."

Rachel's biggest role is that of critic. And, her office's role is to help mop up damage from insufficient or con-

"My goal is that we establish permanent ways of reducing poverty."

- MLA and Minister for Social Development and Poverty Reduction Nicholas Simons

fusing federal programs. Change, she said, is far from over; she believes a federal election is coming this spring.

Conversely, long-time Powell River MLA Nicholas Simons was handed a Ministerial portfolio for the first time in late November, just before his government announced the \$300 supplement would roll back to \$150. His ministry: Social Development and Poverty Reduction. Nicholas, in other words, is in charge, is having to be the spokesperson, and is shouldering responsibility for his NDP government's decisions.

It can't be comfortable for him; Nicholas comes from a social work and social justice background, and thoroughly understands the dire consequences for individuals and families when money is very, very tight.

"My goal is that we establish permanent ways of reducing poverty," he said in a phone conversation from his home in Townsite.


Nicholas pointed to BC's new Child Opportunity Benefit you may have seen on your federal Canada Child Benefit cheque starting in October, benefitting lower-earning families most (up to \$2,600 a year for two children, for example).

In addition, his government will release a Basic Income Study in the new year. The NDP's working document, Together BC, promises to "reduce overall poverty in BC by 25% and child poverty by 50% by 2024." Some goals have already been met, including building affordable housing and investing in childcare.

Nicholas points out two small, immediate rays of hope. First, combined with the universal \$500 Recovery Benefit, those on Income and Disability Assistance won't actually lose money over the next three months. They'll still receive the \$150 supplement on their cheques, plus the equivalent of \$150 a month over three months, and another \$50 (adding up to \$500), through the Recovery Benefit (though the Recovery Benefit does not come automatically; people must apply for it). Second, he says, by then, BC will have a new budget.

Nicholas can't say what might be in the new budget, but on December 15, Premier John Horgan gave this clue at a press conference: "I will be advocating for a permanent increase [to income and disability assistance in

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In the Townsite Market

“Taking money away is really wicked. There’s going to be some real shocks here.”

– Joyce Percey, Poverty Law Advocate

April’s budget.] I am one voice at the cabinet table. The Minister of Finance makes the ultimate decision on this, that’s how our system works.”

In the meantime, front-line workers are bracing for the impact of a winter with potentially less money in the hands of those who need it most.

At the Powell River Action Society Food Bank, manager Savanna Dee says the changes will “definitely affect” her stock, as “numbers go up for us when government money goes down.” With the \$300 supplement, she said, many of her regulars were, for the first time, able to afford rent, hydro and food. They didn’t use the food bank. However, over the past nine months, new people came. In fact, she didn’t get a day off in the first weeks of December.

“We were absolutely slammed,” Savanna said, noting that she’s very grateful for the community’s generosity to the Food Bank. “December through April are our busiest months.”

In her office on Marine Avenue, Drewen Young has also been seeing worried people. She is MP Rachel Blaney’s constituency assistant, responsible for helping locals deal with federal bureaucracies, such as immigration, Employment Insurance and, of course, Revenue Canada. Since COVID began, her phone has been ringing constantly.

“People were waiting outside my office,” Drewen recalls from the early days of the pandemic. “Lots of scared, worried people. That was at first. Then as the

feds made changes to CERB as a response to real people’s needs, they became happier, supported people. It was an incredible process – exciting to have been a part of it, really. And now, this ‘educational’ CRA letter sent out to thousands of CERB recipients? Now there’s lots of freaked out constituents again, lots of phone calls and emails.”

And at Poverty Law, Joyce continues to help people sort through CERB, Old Age Security, SAFER, and the myriad of other programs aimed at helping those who are suffering due to low incomes.

She isn’t surprised by the COVID confusion that led to the claw-backs, or the reduction in the supplement and addition of the Recovery Benefit.

“Every program the governments have rolled out has been tweaked,” Joyce explained. “I give clients advice on one thing, and then it’s tweaked the next week. Everything is fluid; the advice they get one moment may be right, but everything is changing constantly.”

That chaos may change, with a permanent increase to Provincial Income Assistance and Disability Assistance in April, which Premier John Horgan hinted at in December. And, the chaos may abate with a Guaranteed Annual Income, which the Liberal Party may discuss at its annual convention in April... whether or not they are still in power by then.

In other words, we may be building back better. But many Powell River folks have to get through one hell of a scary winter first. [PRL](#)



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SPARSE STAIRS: Brooks Secondary student Abby Francis appreciates some of the COVID-era changes at her high school – including less-crowded hallways. *Photo by Abby Francis*

Healthy High

BY ABBY FRANCIS

A long time ago, in the month of March, I had planned to raise my unsatisfactory grades after Spring Break was over. Well it turns out my plan did not work out because of COVID-19.

We never went back to school, and raising grades through an online system no one was used to was very challenging. I only ended up raising one of my class grades, ending all four of the subjects with B's.

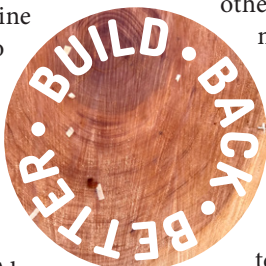
COVID-19 has had an enormous impact on the school and how it functions. Although an alarming number of kids

do not like the changes the school has gone through, there are some exceptional benefits.

I have not appreciated many of the changes COVID-19 has brought. A lot of the time in my first term classes, I felt extremely overwhelmed with the amount of work I had to get done each night. I had two academic classes that were both trying to cram in as much knowledge as they could to finish the courses without cutting out too much of the content (to ease COVID protocols, Brooks has gone to the Copernican system – four 10-week terms with two classes each, for a total of eight classes).

The classes I have this term are a lot more relaxed; one is academic and the other is not. The balance makes me appreciate the quarter system more than I had previously. For other students however, their course load did not get easier – meaning their opinions may not be as optimistic about the new system as mine are.

One change that has occurred



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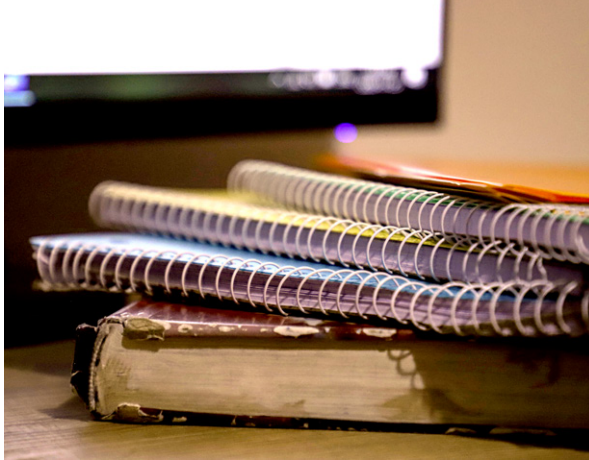
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POPULAR: A later start for senior highs, vastly increased health measures such as hand-sanitizer stations, and much more flexibility on assigned work: these are just a few of the COVID-era experiments Abby Francis has enjoyed at Brooks. Will they stick around after the end of the pandemic?

Photos by Abby Francis

to the school due to COVID-19 is that the once four-subjects-in-five-months known as a semester, have turned into two-classes-in-three-months called the quarter system. With this new layout, it takes out the stress of having to deal with four classes in a quarantine type situation, if that were to happen again.

The format of each class has changed as well, allowing students to have more flexibility. It is as simple as logging onto a computer to see what was done in class and how to do it. If someone is sick at home, there is far less worry about missing or not understanding because everything you need is in reach of a keyboard.

Another notable change is that the school halls are somewhat less crowded

"Trekking up the main stairs was a nightmare, there were many kids rushing up and down to get to wherever they had to be next."

than before. Trekking up the main stairs was a nightmare; there were many kids rushing up and down to get to wherever they had to be next.

Now, the only kids going up or down the stairs are the ones who share classes together, on their way to eat lunch.

Everything seems less crowded now; the school is almost silent. This makes sense, considering the older grades are

on a different bell schedule from the Grade 8s and 9s, who start at the normal 9am bell, have lunch early, then get off school 10 minutes earlier than the older grades.

For Grades 10, 11, and 12, they start at 10:30 am, eat lunch at 12:30 pm, and end school at 3:20 pm. I enjoy this because it is overall more easygoing in the morning, especially when arriving before 10 am.

When doing this, it is almost as if you are having an open center block. Open centers are free blocks where students can work on anything from any class. Those have been lost as our days are taken up by two, two-hour long classes everyday.

Many students really dislike the two-hour long classes. For me however, I en-

joy the longer classes far more than the hour-long classes we had before.

One concluding change that has happened, that is remarkably good, is the health factor.

There are hand sanitizer dispensers everywhere, the washrooms all have limits on the amount of people entering, and the amount of people interacting with each other is decreased due to the grades being on different bell schedules.

The mental health factor has also improved vastly. The amount of flexibility the students receive is much more than what it was before COVID-19.

These are a few examples of the changes that have delivered positive effects to the schooling system because of COVID-19. [PRL](#)

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Who • Categories for teens and adults.

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How to submit • Send your stories to contest@prliving.ca by 4 pm.

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Winning entries will be published in the April 2021 issue of PRL.



It's not bedtime yet for this "sleepy" mill

BY MORGAN PÉPIN

The deep waters of the Salish Sea gently rock the Salish Orca as it glides through the early morning mist.

Foot passengers are spread around the ferry's lounge area, filling the 90-minute journey with mundane activities. Some have books open, propped up on the nearest available surface.

Others hold cellphones in their hands, fingers swiping across the screen, or furiously typing away. The veteran travellers have wedged themselves into corners or claimed whole rows of seats to lie across, attempting to catch a few extra minutes of sleep. First-time riders sit near the front, staring out the huge windows at the stunning view.

When the ferry rounds the end of Texada Island their destination will be in sight – the City of Powell River. Squeezed in between immovable mountains and unpredictable ocean, the city spreads long and narrow along the coast.

North of the marina and ferry ter-

minal, a line of First and Second World War era concrete ships – affectionately known as the “Hulks” – form the breakwater for a cluster of industrial buildings that make up the paper mill, owned by Catalyst, a Paper Excellence company. Its steam and smoke stacks stand sentry, anchoring the city in the sprawling wilderness of coastal British Columbia.

It's a romantic view of the mill, seen by locals in practical terms – both a blight on the waterfront and a necessary part of the region's economy.

Like mills across the country, this one sits on a junction between water and wood – two resources Canada has in abundance. Construction of the mill by the Powell River Company began in 1910 and the first roll of newsprint came off paper machine number one in 1912. The town of Powell River popped up around the mill soon after, like many industrial towns around the world.

As the mill grew, so did the town, supplying employees with houses, grocery stores, clothing stores,



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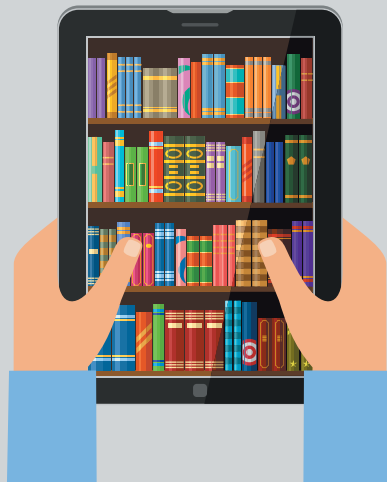
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schools, a bank— the list goes on. For over a century the mill has supported the town, and the town has supported the mill. A mutually beneficial relationship. One that has been cultivated over decades into something strong and deep.

The threat of a permanent shut down has brought all these details into focus. The far-reaching and sometimes invisible fingers of the mill, into the city of Powell River, are being examined more closely as residents consider what is next for their community.

If Paper Excellence parts ways with Powell River, will this small coastal city survive the separation, or is the connection too deep?

“It’s a collaborative, communicative, and understanding relationship,” says Dave Formosa, the mayor of Powell River. “We work together for the well-being of our citizens and their business.”

This includes three million in taxes paid annually by the mill to the city, making the company the largest taxpayer in the community. In return, the City gives the mill tax breaks to keep it viable when it falls on hard times. As the largest private employer in Powell River, the city has a vested interest in keeping the mill’s gates open.

“The mayor’s office is kept abreast of things as they happen – before they happen,” says Dave. When changes – such as a curtailment or shutdown – are imminent, the mayor is the first to hear, before the news is even broken to employees. This way the two can lean on each other as needed, like two friends who have been neighbours their entire lives.

Although the paper mill does not employ very many people from the Tla’amin Nation, the relationship has a more historical nature. The land the mill sits on was the village site of the Nation, *tiskʷat*, from which the colonial government forcibly removed the Tla’amin people from in the 1800s.

“It’s something that we would like to deal with eventually through the specific claim process, to try and reconcile that forceful removal from our main village site,” says Tiy’ap Thote (Erik Blaney), a member of the executive council for the Tla’amin Nation.

This also means that the mill is sitting on invaluable archaeological records that could help paint a picture of life of Tla’amin people before they were removed.

“I would like to get as much information as possible and get access to that site with a machine and do some exploratory digging to see if we can find the extent of the remnants underneath the mill,” said Tiy’ap.

The web of support between the City of Powell River and the mill is mirrored by industrial towns around the province. The number of indirect jobs generated



WHAT LIES BENEATH: Tla’amin Nation Legislator Tiy’ap Thote (Erik Blaney) looks forward to uncovering archaeological evidence under the current mill site – which sits atop Tla’amin’s original village, *tiskʷat*, from which his ancestors were removed by the colonial government more than a century ago.

Photo by Anji Smith

by a paper mill can often outnumber the direct jobs. Industries such as transportation, logging, legal and accounting services, building and trades contractors, entertainment and hospitality for visiting workers and administration, and so on are centred around a community’s mill. A single paper mill can have a large impact on the community it’s attached to.

In 2019 the paper industry in Powell River purchased \$31 million in goods and services from about 50 local suppliers. Each supplier in turn employs anywhere from five to 50 people, according to Alexa Young, the VP of government and public affairs with the BC Council of Forest Industries (BCCOFI) – a lobby group for the forest industry.

“That’s a lot of people who rely on a healthy forest industry to support their families,” says Alex.

The complicated web of inter-dependency is not limited to mills and towns. Forest products account for one third of BC’s exports, mostly to the United States, with a growing market in Asia, says Alex. The regional supply chain depends on suppliers across the province.

Last year, Vancouver was the biggest spending location in the forest industry in terms of goods and services bought. In 2019, the forestry industry in BC spent close to \$7 billion on about 10,000 local suppliers in 340 communities across the province, according to a supply chain study by the BCCOFI.

“It’s not just a rural industry. It’s an industry that connects both urban and rural communities alike,” says Alex.

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These local and provincial connections have faced challenging times recently, however, and are looking at a future that is unknown and unpredictable. The COVID-19 pandemic has permeated every corner of life – including the operation of the Powell River paper mill. In April, the mill announced it would be curtailing production until mid-summer 2020, laying-off most of its workforce (about 350 full-time workers directly employed by the mill) and sending others home with reduced salaries. The paper machines have yet to start rolling product.

A mere nine months ago, the mill site was a bustling hub of activity. It was so loud that ear defenders were mandatory pieces of equipment. Even in the relative quiet of the back offices, the steady roar of the machines provided constant background noise. There were people everywhere, moving from one task to the next with purpose. The smell of pine gum was so thick it clung to clothes, following a person home.

But now, the mill is quiet. “Sleepy,” as one employee described it. With only about 50 workers during the day and a scant 10 at night, a whole shift could go by without a worker ever seeing another human. With not a scrap of paper shipped in nine months, some residents of Powell River are becoming nervous. Because what happens to the mill happens to the city.

If the mill closes permanently, there is the possibility of a new industry taking over the mill site. A different kind of production company that could transform the machines into something viable, such as a processing plant. However, like any big changes, “by the time we see an effect from that it would be a number of years,” says the mayor.

By press time, after multiple attempts, Paper Excellence had not made anyone available for comment.

“Our biggest fear is that they will eventually gift us back that land because they know it’s going to be in the multiple millions of dollars to deal with the environmental clean up down there,” says Tiy’ap of the Tla’amin Nation. “The mill would have to work with the government to clean up the site so it’s environmentally safe for us to take over.”

The global pandemic coupled with the decreased demand for paper in an increasingly digitized world does not need to spell the end for this small coastal city and its biggest employer.

It is time for Powell River’s mill to move on from its antiquated products, says Orlando Rojas, the director of the Pulp & Paper Centre in the University of British Columbia’s Faculty of Applied Science. He encourages paper companies to consider making recycled paper and other sustainable products, and developing new processes, such as bio-refining.

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Bio-refineries convert biomass (algae, crops, and more) into energy and other products. Pulp and paper mills in Europe have successfully transitioned to this type of processing, says Orlando who did his post-graduate work in Sweden.

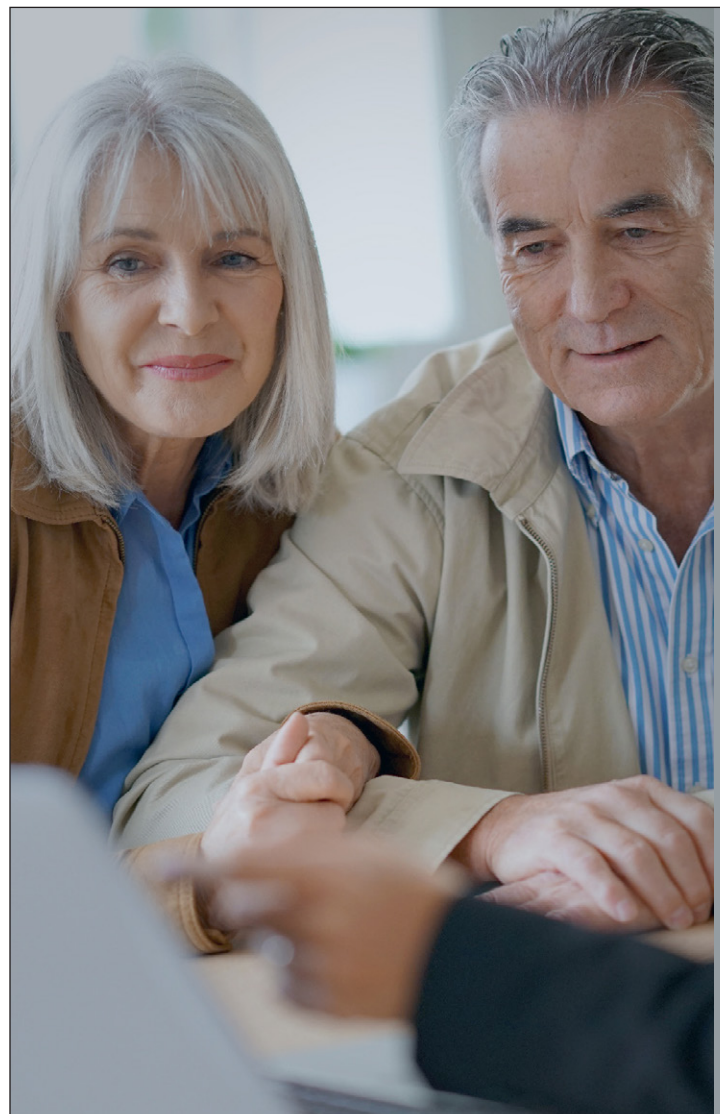
Community leaders, Indigenous community leaders, governments, environmental groups, and of course pulp and paper companies need to work together to diversify in a transitioning industry. Expanding into environmentally friendly practices, like bio-refineries, is a logical next step for this industry.

“Otherwise we will continue to see the closedown of many mills,” Orlando says.

After a treacherous climb up a steep set of stairs hewn straight out of the mountainside, sturdy picnic tables offer a rest at the summit of Valentine Mountain. A spectacular view makes the climb worth it.

The ocean sparkles in the sunlight and far in the distance the hazy outline of Vancouver Island is just visible. The *Salish Orca* is now approaching the northern point of Texada Island, ferrying its passengers to the distant shore. Townsite sprawls across the hillside below, its houses marching down the steep hill to the water.

The paper mill stands guard at the mouth of the river. Just as it has for over a century. And hopefully for a century more. [PR](#)



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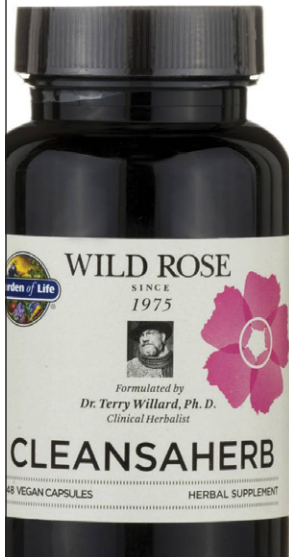
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Chilly Fest

Swimmers, Skaters and Sledders: For over a century, Townsite residents have made the most of the cold and snow.

BY JOËLLE SÉVIGNY

When thinking of the month most associated with winter and icy cold weather, January tends to be at the top of the list. Historically in Powell River, January often brought about the first snowfall of the year. Some typical snowy scenes around town were the never-ending snowball fights at Henderson School during recess, skiing on the golf course, and perhaps a few lucky days when Cranberry Lake was frozen enough for skating and hockey.

What doesn't usually come to mind for most people when thinking of January, is to go for a refreshing swim in the ocean! Surely enough, that is exactly what was started at Vancouver's English Bay in 1920; the Annual Polar Bear Swim on New Year's Day.

Closely following Vancouver, the first ever recorded Polar Bear Swim in Powell River took place in 1938 when the Polar Bear Club as it was called then, (or sometimes referred to as "Shiver-up-a-Sweat" Club) bravely jumped into the Pacific Ocean at Hansen Beach. Members of the club were mostly young boys nicknamed the local polar

bears and was originally composed of Tommy Urquhart (the President), David and Ivan Hansen, Gordon Fullerton, and Fred Gibson.

Sometimes, the swim also took place on Christmas Day, but most years, the "de-hibernation of the hardy polars" (January 7, 1938 *PRNews*) began at 2:30 pm sharp on January 1st. In the 1940s, the event started taking place at Willingdon Beach where locals could watch participants gaining the honor of being first to swim in that particular year.

One of the most popular Polar Bear Swims in Powell River took place in 1971, BC's centennial year, where 500 spectators filled Willingdon Beach and 27 swimmers splashed into the surf. That year, the swimmers took pledges and the funds raised went towards the construction of a municipal swimming pool – the same pool that is still in use today at the Recreation Complex!

Blast from the Past is a monthly historical column written by the Townsite Heritage Society's coordinator Joëlle Sévigny. The THS tells the history of Townsite from 1907 onward. [PR](#)



HALE & HARDY: Top: a Christmas Day swim in 1938. Centre line, starting from left: bridge at Willingdon Beach after the first snowfall of 1929. Snap the Whip on Cranberry Lake, 1943. Edith Graff with her sleigh, 1943. Edith Taggart, skiing on the golf course near the Mill, 1943. Snowball fights at Henderson School, 1945. Bottom row: New Years Day 1953, Pat Reavie emerging from the ocean. Townsite covered in snow. Sleighing down the big hill towards Mowat Bay.

All photos from the Townsite Digester

Mask-erade

Making the most of 2021's hottest accessory



Alane Wilson (left)

"This is cheating a bit because this is a balaclava not a true mask. But it cracks me up so maybe it will others. I would only wear this outside, or inside with a real mask underneath."

Bill Hopkins (top right)

"Lynda Agur-Hopkins made the mask for me to use working in the schools. I'm an Education Assistant at Brooks Secondary, and yes, many teens still love Olaf."

Kim Miller with Robert Skender

(bottom right)

"I went with the classic disposable 3-ply, but Robert is a little more fun with the Dracula mask."



Goat on the Roof

"I'm on the roof, so I am socially distant from everyone at Springtime Garden Centre. But I still gotta wear this thing."






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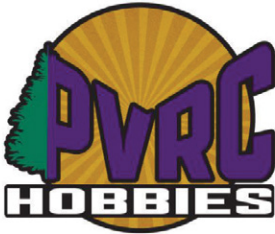
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Laura Passek (top left)

“This mask was given to me by a very generous person. With me being clear again for seven years now, I think this mask is appropriate for me. Thanks to Loretta Cameron for making me a special mask. This is also for all my tough fighters going through cancer as well. As I say to them, let’s have our cry then let’s kick some cancer ass!”

Mohinder Singh (bottom left)

“My favourite mask has served me many purposes from neck bandana to a head gear and stopping in between to be my emergency mask.”



Ren and Saoirse Jager (right and below)

“They’re all from www.makevancouver.com. It was my idea to face swap (each mask has a picture of the others' mouth and nose on it!) I thought it would be fun and silly. And it was.”



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The Story of Plastic

A searing expose, uncovering a cohesive timeline of how we got to our current global plastic pollution crisis and how the oil and gas industry has successfully manipulated the narrative around it.



Monkey Beach

A film about reconnection with the land, its denizens and the secrets it holds, Monkey Beach is also a testament to Indigenous women’s ability to not just endure trials but emerge from them empowered.

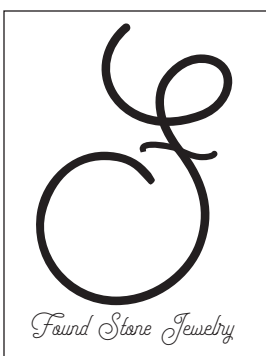
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Making good choices a little easier

Plant-Based R.H.N. is owned and operated by Emma Levez Larocque, Registered Holistic Nutritionist, Certified Plant-Based Chef and Food for Life Instructor with the Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine.

Emma is passionate about helping people live their best lives and realize how empowering it can be to take charge of their own health by eating more whole, healthy, plant-based foods. She normally teaches plant-based cooking and nutrition classes and workshops and offers private nutrition consulting.

She has been operating Plant-Based R.H.N. as a solopreneur since January 2016. Find out more at plantbasedrhn.com.

What concerned you most about your business as the pandemic began?

Emma • Most of my classes were in person, and it was evident very early on that I wouldn't be able to teach cooking or gather people into groups for nutrition classes for an unidentified amount of time – so it basically shut my business down overnight.

What opportunities did you see?

Emma • I had been thinking about how to provide affordable support to people on an ongoing basis for about a year at that point, and I saw this as my opportunity to design and start the Plant-Based Eating Support Network Group, which is a subscription-based group that costs \$25 a month with a minimum 6-month subscription. Each month there is a different theme and participants get delicious whole foods plant-based recipes, with live (and recorded) weekly online cook-along and nutrition classes, chal-

lenges, and lots of cooking and nutrition tips – and most importantly, ongoing support and inspiration for healthy plant-based living.

What have you been doing that you haven't done before the pandemic?

Emma • The Support Network Group is the big thing, but I have also started the Plant-Based Eating Online Speaker Series in which I feature a monthly guest – and this is possible because it's online! We have had guests from around BC and as far afield as Chicago. I would say there has been a wonderful response to the changes in my business. I know some people miss the live classes, as I do – but this still gives us a chance to stay in touch and see each other's faces – and the ongoing nature of this program is a huge benefit, as opposed to my live classes which were typically 5-6 weeks long.

Which pandemic-response government programs have been helpful to you? What do you wish was provided?

Emma • For the first couple of months the CERB benefit was very helpful because it allowed me the time and space to design and get the Support Network Group platform up and running.

Have you received support?

Emma • I am very lucky to have ongoing support from my husband, sisters and some close friends, especially encouragement. It's scary to make these changes sometimes, but they are always there to buoy me up – and to bounce ideas off of, which is very important when you're a solopreneur! The people who have been part of the Support Network Group are a constant source of inspiration to me too



VIRTUAL VEGAN: Emma Levez Larocque, RHN, moved her vegan cooking and nutrition classes online, and added an affordable subscription support group.

– their courage, interest and successes are why I do what I do!

How has the pandemic impacted your customers?

Emma • I think it's been more difficult for people to make healthy choices in this stressful time, and that's one of the reasons I think coming together in a support group like this one is so powerful. People share recipes, questions and ideas – I think it helps them to stay inspired as well!

How has it impacted you and your family?

Emma • We have had our struggles, like everyone. But mostly we have been reminded of how lucky we are to live in such a beautiful natural environment where we can get outside. It has been a very busy, strange year, but we feel more grateful than ever to be in Powell River!

If you could go back to January, what advice would you give yourself?

Emma • Be brave, be creative, and go for it. Fortunately I had others giving me that advice when the pandemic hit!

What changes will you retain?

Emma • I look forward to teaching in person again, but I will also keep the Support Network Group and the Speaker Series going online because they have allowed me to reach and involve people outside of Powell River. Also, the Support Network Group provides an affordable way for people to get support with this healthy lifestyle change.

What's surprised you during this time?

Emma • I was surprised at how easy it was to put the Plant-Based Eating Support Network Group together, and how well it was received, too. It has been a saving grace for me because it gave me something positive to focus and work on. It helped me stay connected to others in the community, in a distanced way.

What are you looking forward to most about getting your business back to normal?

Emma • Being able to share food with people who participate in my live classes. [PRL](https://www.prliving.ca)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

2021 First Credit Union Board of Directors Election

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Scholarship application tips from Brooks Grade 12 Student (and future King's College Student) Kaylie Keays

Make a plan ASAP

I was lucky enough to have figured out where I wanted to go to school pretty early on. This allowed me to explore all the opportunities my school has. For example, I attended an introduction webinar to King's and I got a waiver that allowed me to apply for free. I'm sure other schools have opportunities like this, too, so I highly recommend keeping an eye out for them, even if you don't know where you want to go yet.

Be prepared to research

So far, scholartree.com and scholarshipscanada.com have been the most useful resources.

Be prepared to write

Most scholarships require essays but a lot of them have a small word count, about 500-1,000 words. The bigger scholarships, like the Loran Award, require longer essays, reference letters, several written responses, and other information, too.

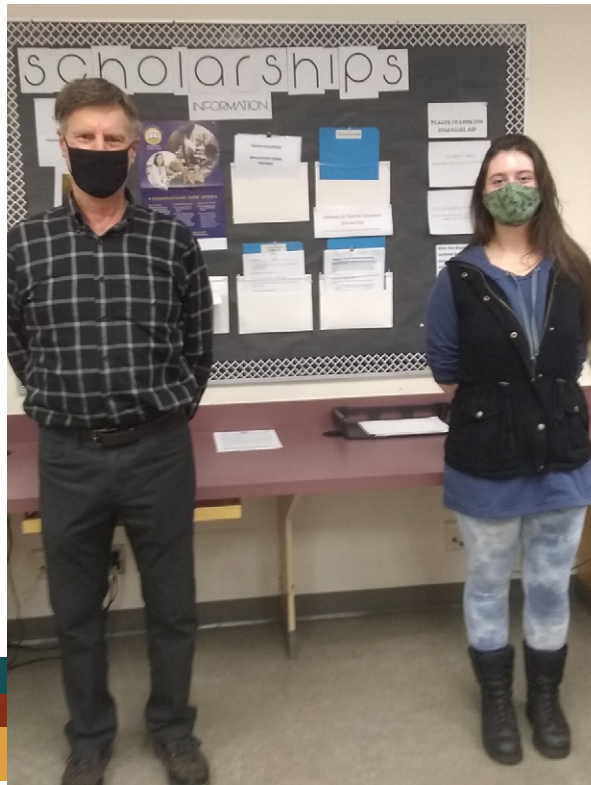
It's personal

I learned that what most scholarship judges look for is the applicant's voice and original ideas.

Think small... and big.

Personally, I like the smaller scholarships because they often have more interesting essay topics. There are a lot of scholarships that just ask for an essay and basic information. Most of them range from \$500 to \$3,000. I've noticed that essay contests are really good opportunities, as well. They don't require a lot of info and are worth quite a lot. I've applied for the Dalton Camp Essay Contest which is worth \$10,000.

How to have a very Successful Scholarship Season



Scholarship search tips from Brooks Counsellor Gerry Brach

Email Brooks

Brooks Grade 12 students and their parents/guardians who would like to receive regular emails about scholarships and other post-secondary tips, please email: collegecrew@sd47.bc.ca.

For more information about scholarships, please contact Gerry Brach at gerry.brach@sd47.bc.ca.

Search the Web

Gerry's two favourites are scholarshipscanada.com and scholartree.ca. A parent can also make a profile for a student and filter some of the scholarship matches.

Every post-secondary institution has its own scholarships and awards program. These can be found on the website of the institution.

BC provincial scholarships: information is available at www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/scholarships/provincial-scholarships

Use Google or another search engine to search for scholarships and awards.

Visit Brooks Counselling Department

Check out the scholarship board in the counselling office on a regular basis. Incoming scholarships and awards are also posted on the school's website.

Local scholarship postings are available along with a general application form from the main office in early March.

Ask your employer

Some workplaces offer scholarships to their student employees and some unions and associations offer scholarships to the children of their members, so check that out too.

A lot of mystery and confusion surround scholarships for post-secondary school.

Help is available. Gerry Brach, a School District 47 school counsellor at Brooks, says one of his roles is to help Grade 12 students find scholarships, and to make sure they have the knowledge and confidence to create their best applications.

A scholarship is education funding that is offered by an organization. "Scholarships are based on merit or achievement. A student has to do something to earn them in some way. You don't always need top marks. Every scholarship has different requirements such as: demonstrated financial need, community involvement, volunteerism or writing an essay. Volunteering is the most probable requirement on a scholarship. If you don't have any volunteer experience, you close a lot of doors on potential scholarships."

For a variety of reasons, many students do not apply for scholarships. It takes time and effort. Often, Grade 12 students have part-time jobs, family commitments, or a heavy academic course load.

Students who want to win scholarships have to make applying a priority.

"I like telling the story that a student who works 80 hours at a part-time job at minimum wage would earn about \$1,000, but a student who puts in an hour or two of solid scholarship research and application completion has the chance to earn the same amount or much more. There is no guarantee, but your odds are pretty good depending on the types of scholarships you are applying for and the quality of your applications. You need to treat your scholarship research and application process like a part-time job," says Gerry.

Gerry spends a lot of time explaining to students that



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Grade 12 is their best opportunity to win scholarships. There will never be another time with more opportunity and less competition. Grade 12 is the "golden window," he says.

Some students may be reluctant to apply for scholarships because they feel they haven't done anything special.

"My most important tip that I give to students is for them to make the time to research and apply for scholarships. If they don't schedule the time in their calendar, then it won't get done. Scholarships are offered every month of the year so students need to search regularly, year-round.

Every year, millions of dollars in Canadian post-secondary funding goes unused because qualified students don't apply for scholarships. You can't win if you don't play, advises Gerry.

Scholarships turn dreams into reality

It's only January but Grade 12 Brooks Secondary student Kaylie Keays has already spent many hours working on scholarships. She has to in order to attend the University of King's College in Halifax this fall.

"I'm hoping to become a fiction editor," says Kaylie. "This sounds cheesy but it's because I've always loved reading. Fiction has always been my favourite genre and I thought it would be amazing to be paid to read all day.

"I like editing because there are so many different parts to the process. There are technical errors like grammar and punctuation, but then there are storyline errors like plot holes and inconsistencies.

"My favourite part is collaborating with the writer and hearing their ideas about why they wrote what they wrote and where they see their writing going."

At King's, Kaylie plans to major in English and minor in Journalism. She has already been accepted, and estimates it will cost about \$22,000 for her first year.

"I chose King's because I have distant family in Nova Scotia that I would love to meet and I strongly believe that university should be an adventure, so why not make it a big one and move all the way across the country?"

Kaylie knew that university would cost a lot so she met with counsellor Gerry Brach in September and began looking at scholarships.

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WHAT'S UP

Firefighter recognized for service

Malaspina volunteer firefighter Eugene Zago was recognized for 35 years of service to the department last month.

Eugene joined the department in 1985. He's currently in the supervisory role of Lieutenant.

Eugene was awarded a long services bar by the province for his service.

"Our region is very fortunate for the dedication that Eugene and our volunteer firefighters continue to provide," said Ryan Thoms, Manager of Emergency Services for qathet Regional District.

Collection schedules go online

The City of Powell River won't circulate paper Curbside Collection schedules for garbage, recycling, organics and waste guides in 2021.

Instead, they've made the schedule available online and are making limited printed copies available at City Hall. Not only is going paperless cost effective, but it is also another one of the City's initiatives to improve efficiencies in solid waste collection and recycling, says Rod Fraser, the City's Manager of Operations.

Electronic reminders can be set up using the City's curbside system which sends a text, email or phone call of your collection day and waste wizard, a new tool, will help you search where a material or item can be recycled or reused.

Curbside collection will be bi-weekly in 2021 but a Route E (Westview-Grief Point) will be part of a six-month weekly curbside recycling pilot project starting in mid-January.

Public input needed

The City of Powell River has opened its annual citizen budget to obtain public input into the 2021 municipal budget. Information gleaned from this survey will help the City's finance department develop the 2021-2025 financial plan.

This marks the fifth year that the City has invited people to look at the books and create their ideal budget. The Citizen Budget increases awareness and understanding about the budget, taxation processes and financial operations of the City.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented the City with a whole new set of challenges to ensure that appropriate services continue to be provided while remaining financially stable. Fee-related revenue decreased due to the cancellation of programs and limited use of the Recreation Complex, while public health and safety costs increased.

The Citizen Budget is open until January 14 and can be found on the City's website at powellriver.ca. Free access to the internet and computers is available at the Powell River Public Library and paper copies are available at the library and City Hall.

City Transfer's Gift

A huge shout out to City Transfer for going above and beyond to help connect a nurse in Vancouver with an old piece of equipment at Powell River General Hospital.

Through personal connections, the nurse reached out to *PRL* editor Pieta Woolley, wondering how to get this bulky and breakable equipment from Powell River to Vancouver, during a travel ban. City Transfer rose to the challenge, and did it for free.

The Lions Gate Hospital nurse is working with adults with physical and brain injuries. The piece of equip-

ment is a tilt table and it helps patients get into a standing position safely, by helping to stretch their body out. For some, it's a stepping stone to re-learning to stand and walk.

Administration sent this statement:

"The Lions Gate Hospital would like to send a big thank to City Transfer and Powell River Hospital for their help in getting a piece of equipment to Lions Gate Hospital. This equipment will be used to improve outcomes for the Rehabilitation patient population in the Coastal Community of Care."



Banff Film Fest goes online!

Although many hard-core Banff Mountain Film Festival lovers are disappointed that the pandemic means the festival they look forward to all year can't happen as usual, they'll be pleased to know that the film festival's world tour will be held virtually.

That's right, all is not lost because you can still view a great selection of films online.

By signing into the virtual tour using the affiliate link, Brooks Secondary School will still benefit from part of the proceeds from the world tour. Money raised from the film festival is used to support students in need at Brooks throughout the year.

There are two virtual programs to choose from. The Amber has eight films, and the Onyx has nine (Jim Palm, organizer of the Banff Mountain Festival for Powell River recommends the Onyx, which includes the Canadian-made, Himalayas-based film *Madman Trails of Bhutan*, above).

The cost is \$15 US for a three-day rental of either virtual program or \$28 US for a bundle of both for 14 days. Visit filmfest.banffcentre.ca/?campaign=WT-161095.

Acclaimed

Director Patrick Brabazon was acclaimed as Chair of the qathet Regional District Board for 2021 and Director CaroleAnn Leishman was acclaimed as Chair of the Powell River Regional Hospital Board for 2021. This marks the seventh year in a row that Patrick has been chosen as chair of the qRD.

Strategic plan approved

The qathet Regional District's board of directors approved the 2020-2023 strategic plan at a recent board meeting. The plan's priorities include climate change, economic enhancement, recreation and culture, social planning and governance. The strategic plan is updated annually and informs the qRD's organizational vision, mission and values and highlights regional priorities.



All the best in 2021!

Fiona Butula, RD

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qathet wants to connect

Residents of the qathet Regional District are invited to participate in a broadband internet connectivity survey before January 15. The survey is part of the qRD's continued focus to have quality internet service available throughout the region and will help determine the types of servicing options available. To participate, visit surveymonkey.com/r/driftwood-qrd-survey. Paper surveys are available for download at qathet.ca.

This project is supported through funding from Island Coastal Economic Trust.

Completion of the Last Mile Internet Connectivity plan will be before June 31. At that time, the board will be presented with options and costs for bridging gaps in our region.



SD47 gets new chairperson

Dale Lawson was acclaimed as the board of education's new chairperson at the December 9 meeting. At the time she recognized the many challenges faced by outgoing chairperson Aaron Reid who has led the board through the COVID-19 pandemic while raising a family and running a business at the same time.

"Your commitment and diligence in keeping our board informed and connected has been appreciated immensely. Thank you for your leadership over the last two years and thank you for continuing to help make our community stronger," Dale said to Aaron.

Dale said that although she is "excited and a bit nervous about pushing out of my comfort zone and filling big shoes," she is also deeply honored to have the opportunity to sit at this table with and represent the voices of our community.

"Thanks to each of you for your support and for believing in what we can achieve as trustees together."

Dale was first elected to the board in 2018 and currently works in BC Public Service with the Ministry for Children and Family Development.

Definitely not a Slacker

Did you know that one of the wealthiest executives in the world originally hails from Lund?

Stewart Butterfield, who was born in Lund, recently sold his company Slack (a team-messaging application), to Salesforce for \$27.7 billion. Stewart also co-founded Flickr, a photo sharing website, in the early 2000s. Flickr was sold to Yahoo for over \$20 million in 2005.

Although Stewart left Lund to move to Victoria with his family at a very young age (rumour has it that he was three at the time), Powell River and Lund still lay claim to this famous entrepreneur! [PRL](https://www.powellriverliving.com)

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A peek behind the mask

Dr. Amy Sawchuk is the first feature for Faces of the Pandemic, a Powell River Division of Family Practice campaign that starts this month. Each week a different face will be featured with a short Q&A, showcasing and highlighting the experience of healthcare and other essential workers in our community during the pandemic.

To see the weekly features, visit prcomplexclinic.com or find us on Facebook @prdivisionoffamilypractice

Our facial expressions help to define us. They provide others with signals about how we are feeling and are an important part of our ability to communicate. So, what does it mean when we cover our faces with masks as the pandemic has required?

Sometimes it can be hard to recognize people you know. Sometimes it can be difficult to really “see” someone. But it doesn't mean that the person behind the mask has changed.

People all over our community are reaching out and helping to support one another – family and friends, but also acquaintances, colleagues, and even strangers. From doctors and nurses to firefighters and teachers to business owners and support staff, the strong fabric of our community is something we can all appreciate and celebrate.

Indeed, we have likely all had the opportunity to support or lean on someone else as we experience the challenges the pandemic has presented. Every segment of the population is struggling in some way, says family physician Amy Sawchuk.

“Social isolation is one of the major challenges for my elderly patients,” she says. “In the working population, I see more difficulties around stress with job insecurity or finding a balance between working at home and having children at home more. For youth, it's anxiety – about what they're missing out on, the future and jobs, or doing university online. They've lost an important social aspect of their lives.”

Everyone has lost something, but Dr. Sawchuk is heartened by the resilience she sees in her patients, too.

“A lot of my patients speak of hope for the future.” Listening, she says, is more important in her practice than ever.

“During the pandemic I have really focused on listening – on being a human and hearing people's stories and their struggles. I want to be a safe place for my patients to come. I don't know what the future is going to look like, but I encourage people to take one day at a time and to stay positive.” **RL**



Faces of the Pandemic: Dr. Amy Sawchuk

If you had to describe your experience of the pandemic in one word, what would it be?

Amy • Remarkable.

What is one way you have helped/reached out to someone else during the pandemic?

Amy • I have tried to be an empathetic listener in both my personal and professional life.

What is one way someone has helped/reached out to you?

Amy • When my resilience fades there seems to be someone sending a card, text, email, food, stopping me in the office or hospital corridor to acknowledge and check-in and say thanks, this has kept me going.

What would you say is the most important thing that is helping you get through the pandemic?

Amy • My family, friends and colleagues who have worked so hard to keep each other safe.

What has been the most difficult thing about the pandemic for you?

Amy • The mental fatigue and the constant change that is needed – especially in my family practice to keep my patients, staff, colleagues, and myself safe.

What advice would you give to someone who is struggling?

Amy • Take one day at a time and trust there are bright days ahead, get out into nature and move!

What is a good thing that has happened to you because of the pandemic?

Amy • Coming home to Powell River to weather a pandemic has only strengthened my belief that this is an amazing community in which to live, work and play.

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I MADE THE MOVE

Once a mill man, always a mill man

Bob Grantham was born in the Powell River townsite and attended Henderson, Brooks and Max Cameron before leaving town to study mechanical engineering at UBC.

Due to his experience working the summers at the local paper mill to pay his way through university, the best job he could get as a graduate engineer was at another mill in Campbell River. This was despite his best intentions to never live in a mill town again.

After working in more pulp mills in Prince Rupert and Squamish as well as with consultants to the industry in Vancouver and Nanaimo, he went overseas in 2004 to work in countries where the industry was growing. These included Indonesia, China, South Africa and Chile, where he met Elayne Reina Agredo. Later they went together to live and work in Austria, Russia and Slovakia.

Elayne is a native of Colombia and worked a number of jobs in retail, security and insurance, while raising her two boys, Miguel and Sebastian. She did this mostly as a single mother. Eventually she too became an expat to make ends meet, moving to Santiago, Chile to take a job as a supervisor in the food delivery industry.

They got married on Bob's older brother Rick's boat on Okeover Arm in 2017. Bob and Elayne spent the next three years in Slovakia. Sebastian lived with them and attended high school in Slova-

kia and Miguel stayed in Cali, Colombia to attend university.

Why did you choose to move here?

Elayne • Bob had a great childhood growing up in Powell River. Active in ice hockey, Sea Cadets and the Highland Laddies Pipe Band he also has fond memories of boating on the lakes and ocean and roaming the forests. With the contract in Slovakia coming to a close, we had to



HIGH FLIERS: Sebastien, Elayne, Miguel, Samantha the dog, and Bob Grantham.

decide where to move to next. Wanting to have Sebastian enjoy the benefits of a Canadian school for his graduating year, it was just a matter of deciding which town to move to. Family considerations and memories of a great childhood drew Bob back to Powell River, supported my fond memories of our wedding and the annual Blackberry Festival reunions with

Bob's family. On top of that, Bob's sister, Kathy, had returned to Powell River early in 2020 after a similar long absence and his brother, Bill, retired after a lengthy career with the Powell River Fire Department. Unfortunately, their father, Jack, a long-time teacher at Brooks and Max Cameron, passed away in March.

What surprised you once you moved?

Elayne • With the paper mill's production and employment having decreased so much since Bob worked there as a teenager, he was surprised that the town's population level had remained consistently steady over the decades and that the current real estate market is so active.

Where is your favourite place here?

Bob & Elayne • We really enjoy walking the paths around the Recreation Centre

What aspect of your previous community would benefit Powell River?

Bob & Elayne • We really enjoyed the European traditional outdoor Christmas markets held annually in most village, town and city squares. Besides giving the local craftspeople and the economy a big boost, they were great for buying small gifts, enjoying the winter air and mingling with others.

What challenges did you face in trying to make a life for yourself here?

Bob • Elayne has started up a small business importing leather goods, such as handbags and shoes, from her native Colombia. She has learned a lot already about overseas purchasing, shipping, duties & taxes, market research, pricing and selling, with much more to be done. With a soft start at a mall kiosk during the Christmas buying season and an Instagram presence, Ella's Shoes & Bags has had some success so far.

If you were mayor of Powell River, what would you do?

Bob • There are many people in town with great talents, knowledge and life experience. So, as Dave Formosa is already doing, I would invite and encourage such people to volunteer their time in the interest of the community.


What are Powell River's best assets?

Elayne • Location, location, location... nestled between the ocean and the mountains, buttressed by the lakes and the great outdoors.

What is your greatest extravagance?

Bob • Building an airplane that in six years, has yet to roll out onto a runway, let alone take to the sky.

Which talent or superpower would you most like to have?

Elayne • To fly like Superman in case the home-built plane has some problems in the air. 

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Leader leaves First

Sandra McDowell has left First Credit Union after 23 years. The former credit union vice-president has had her online business grow so much that she has decided to give that her full attention. "My time with First has been wonderful. I'm grateful for our work together over the years," Sandra told *Powell River Living*. Sandra runs **e-Leadership Academy**, an online training company that combines brain research and human behaviour science with leadership training. You can find out more about her company at e-leadershipacademy.com

A wee double double

The local **Tim Hortons** franchise has new ownership. **Kim and Mandeep Kandola** have been running Tim Hortons restaurants for 12 years, and with the recent purchase of Powell River and two locations in Courtenay, they own 14 of the franchises. "When the opportunity came up in Powell River," said Kim, who is based in the Lower Mainland, "we got on the ferry and took a tour and I was amazed by Powell River. I grew up in a small village in Scotland and it really brought back memories of being surrounded by water and I could see myself getting a house here." A house purchase may be in the near future, she said, providing difficult-to-find housing for staff – and possibly as a holiday home for her and her husband. When the former owners left, the local managers also left, so Kim and Mandeep imported two managers from Vancouver. But most of the rest of the staff, including the two daughters of the previous owners, have stayed on, said Kim. "It's critical to have the right team. We're not looking to change anything. The team already there works so hard, and it's a very family-oriented group."



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Helen sees PR clearly now

After 10 years away, **Helen Whitaker** has returned to Powell River, and she is bringing her **Secure Vision Mobile Optical** business with her. Helen landed in Powell River in 2007 when she first immigrated to Canada from the UK, and lived here for nearly five years. She has now returned with husband Bart McDonald (who was born in Powell River). "We decided it was time to return to Powell River, our town, as our hearts still belonged here," Helen said. Helen has been a licensed Optician since 2011 and for the past three years has been travelling here from her home in the Comox Valley to serve optical clients in Powell River. "Secure Vision began as a completely mobile service to allow more flexibility and choices for everyone, with frames and lenses to suit all budgets," said Helen. "How cool would it be to try frames on at your own private frame consultation appointment in a private hygienic environment and on your schedule? I book these private one-hour appointments at 4699 Marine Avenue, on certain days of the month. Just bring your valid prescription and I do the rest. There is never an obligation to buy! I just love giving out free advice." Visit securevisionoptical.ca or call 250-792-5199.

PR tops on tourism board

Powell River has strong representation on the **Sunshine Coast Tourism** board after the organization held a virtual annual general meeting on November 25. **Jack Barr** remains the president of Sunshine Coast Tourism. Jack, who represents both the Town Centre Hotel and the Beach Gardens resort, is in the second year of a two-year term on the board, and now enters his third year as president. **Christine Hollman** of Terracentric Coastal Adventures, who was re-elected to the board this year, was chosen as vice-president. **John Hermesen** of Footprint Kayak and Hike Explorations is in the second year of his term as a member at large of the 11-member board. **Chris Tait** of the Klahooshe Wilderness Resort (formerly Homfray Lodge), which is expected to open this spring, was re-elected for another two year term, representing large accommodations in the north part of the region. The executive director is Powell River's **Paul Kamon**.

Pop-up on Point

Point Group Hospitality's pop-up kitchen is expected to re-emerge later this month. The take-out only operated out of Culaccino's at 4701 Marine Ave for a few weeks before Christmas with noodle bowls and other Asian fare. It may have a different look when it pops up again, say the folks behind the pop-up. When it does, you can order at pointgrouphospitality.com or call 604-414-8598.

Book corner

The corner of Marine and Alberni just can't give up its love affair with books. A new book store has been established inside Ecosentials Local Market. With Oceanside Books and Games just across the soon-to-be clock tower park, there are now bookstores in each of Breakwater Books' old locations. Add the free-book

library attached outside of Ecosentials and nearby book collections at Paperworks and the Nutcracker, it seems "Clock Corner" will be a destination for book-lovers. The newest addition is the aptly-named, **Pocket Books**, in a pocket corner of Ecosentials. It grew from **Stacey Forbes'** love of books. A long-time customer of Ecosentials, she has for the past couple of years pared down her personal collection via a used-book shelf at Ecosentials. When she drove up to Cole's Books this spring and found it closed, she was heartbroken. "Books are a huge part of my life," she told *Powell River Living*. "I thought, 'What am I going to do now about books?'" So this fall she arranged with Ecosentials owner Melissa Call to have more space, including the front window, to open Pocket Books. There's still one bookcase of pre-read books, but the rest of the shelving contains new books. "I hand pick every book," said Stacey. "I love helping people with great books." The book selection has perhaps a disproportionate number of cookbooks (not surprising inside a food store, or from a cook), but is otherwise diverse, with a broad range of titles. "I am loving every part of this."

DQ delayed


COVID-19 played havoc with Powell River's hopes of enjoying a Blizzard this past summer, as the virus has stalled renovations on the local **Dairy Queen**. Original plans were to have the restaurant at the Town Centre opened already. "Considering everyone's safety in Powell River we stopped the construction for a while," said **Gitish Bhalla**, the franchise owner. But he says crews are resuming work in the New Year and, if all goes well, ice cream and burgers could be served as early as late February.



New owner dives in

After four decades with **Powell River Divers**, Ken Stephens is retiring. Ken took over the business from Bob Briggs 20 years ago and is now passing it on to another long-time local diver. **Sasha van Kessel** has purchased Powell River Divers. Sasha says the commercial diving operations will be moving from Ken's home and shop, and there will be other internal changes, as he folds his own business, Dive Corps, and Powell River Divers into one business. Sasha will be using his new boat *Shoal Point* (pictured above) as the dive support vessel and Dive Corps' smaller 30-foot aluminum as a dive tender. You can reach Powell River Divers at 604-485-4526 or Sasha directly at 604-413-0814.

Light it up

Your locally made fire starter has a new name. **OneLight** is made from 99% recycled materials right here in Powell River. It was formerly K-Lumet, and is still based in the Townsite Market. The product is inclusive by design, lights your fire every time and supports employment here. OneLight is a social enterprise operated by Powell River Model Community Project, supporting inclusive employment for people with and without disabilities. Lookout for the new box and new logo at local stores or buy online at OneLight.ca. 

3

Things to look forward to that are not vaccines


1. Gardening season

We don't have many events this month, but this will have you dreaming about dirty fingernails and sweet-smelling shoots. On January 23, Zoom into "Saving Seeds" and a discussion of biodiversity, through the Library.

2. Eating more things

If you're still foraging after 10 months of pandemic snacking and the holiday season, you can start planning your home menus to celebrate Robbie Burns Day (haggis n' oat cakes), Super Bowl (chips n' dips) and the Lunar New Year (dim sum n' moon cakes)

3. Reading and writing for fun

Put down your phone for like five minutes; there are whole other non-Facebook worlds contained in books. Take an online writing class with Megan Cole starting January 7, participate in PRL's three-hour "Quickie" writing contest February 20, and join a book club (see Page 37). –PW 

January

January 4

Schools re-open after winter break
SD47 classes are back in session

January 6

Epiphany

January 7

Getting Creative: Exploring Creative Nonfiction
6:30pm, Zoom. Megan Cole will introduce writers to the world of creative non-fiction in four weekly classes. To Register mmerlino@prpl.ca

January 15

Tech Savvy – Hosting a Zoom Meeting
11 am, Zoom. Learn the ins and outs about how to host your own meeting on the Zoom video communications platform. To Register mmerlino@prpl.ca

January 16 & 17

Dining Adventures in Cuba
Boardwalk Restaurant. See ad on Page 9.

January 23

Saving Seeds – A Home Gardener's Guide to Preserving Plant Biodiversity
2 pm, Zoom. Heirloom plant and seed-bank expert Dan Jason will present his latest book: Saving Seeds – A Home Gardener's Guide to Preserving Plant Biodiversity. Register mmerlino@prpl.ca

January 24 to 31

Family Literacy Week
See ad on Page 20

January 25

Robbie Burns Day
RBD Dinner at the Boardwalk. See ad on Page 9.

January 28

Tu B'Shevat (Arbor Day)

January 30

Tarot Readings Fundraiser for the Townsite Heritage Society
See ad on Page 44.

International bestselling author Ian Hamilton

2 pm, Zoom. Mystery writer Ian Hamilton will read from his riveting new novel Fortune and will discuss his award winning crime fiction series. Register mmerlino@prpl.ca

February 2

Groundhog Day

February 5 to 16

PR Film Fest
See ad on Page 25 and go to prfilmfestival.ca

February 7

Super Bowl
Super Bowl LV 2021 from Tampa, with half-time show by The Weeknd

February 12

Lunar New Year
Year of the Ox!

February 20

The Quickie 3-hour Writing Contest
Find the theme posted on Facebook at 1 pm, then write! Submit your writing to contest@prliving.ca before 4 pm. See ad on Page 18



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Scorekeeper

Maestro Arthur Arnold releases CD of rare compositions

BY ANDY RICE

“Score” is one of those interesting words that can take on different meanings depending on how it is used. Sometimes, even at the same time.

Just ask maestro Arthur Arnold, who scored big in tracking down two virtually-unknown scores from Russian composer Alexander Mosolov and recording them for a world premiere CD. Released on December 4 on the Naxos label, it features the Moscow Symphony Orchestra (MSO), the ensemble he conducts when not busy helping the PRISMA Festival in Powell River.

American harpist Taylor Fleshman, a PRISMA student in 2018 and 2019, is the soloist on Mosolov’s “lost” Concerto for Harp and Orchestra, which comprises the second half of the disc.

It all started three years ago with an email from Russian arts entrepreneur Max Gutbrod who had begun a search for rare Mosolov works and was looking for conductors to bring them to life. He introduced Arthur to renowned musicologist Ina Barsova, who then steered him toward the Lenin Library where there was talk of a mysterious box that had been dropped off several months earlier by the younger boyfriend of Mosolov’s deceased widow.

“I asked the librarian if she’d show it to me and at first she didn’t budge,” Ar-

LISTEN HERE:

To hear the CD or purchase a copy, visit naxos.com and search “Mosolov.” It is also available for streaming on Apple Music. More information about Arnold and the 2021 PRISMA Festival—a special strings-only edition—can be found at prismafestival.com.

thur recalled. “Eventually, I persuaded her to go get the box and I found dusty manuscripts in there that had never been performed. I was taking all these pictures with my iPhone as she sort of grinned and looked the other way.”

Individual parts for each of the orchestra members were nowhere to be found, so Arthur had to create them. Several months later, Mosolov’s 5th Symphony was ready to present to the MSO. After only a single run-through it was already clear that they had something special. Mosolov may have been censored and relegated to the Gulag during his lifetime, but Arthur wasn’t about to let his music fall into silence.

He is now in the process of digitalizing Mosolov’s original handwritten scores of the 3rd and 4th symphonies as well, and will premiere and record them for the Naxos label in 2021. An official edition of the harp concerto is soon to be published by Compozitor in St. Petersburg. Beyond that, Arthur has even further ambitions.

“In 2023 it will be 50 years since his death,” said Arthur. “I hope that somewhere in the world I can do a Mosolov festival to commemorate that, give it some attention and make more people aware of his music. More orchestras should perform his works.” [PR](https://www.prliving.ca)



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From the Powell River Women in Business executive

Powell River Women in Business would like to send out a heartfelt thank you for all the support that we have received during our ongoing initiative “Support Local.”

The response has been overwhelming! Thank you to the community, businesses and WIB members for your ongoing support and making our first step in this process a success.

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PRL asked our leadership to share their thoughts on surviving the COVID pandemic in 2020, and their hopes for 2021. Here's what they said:

Happy New Year!

Tla'amin Nation Hegus John Hackett

Greetings from the Tla'amin Nation. I would like to take this opportunity to send our gratitude from our Nation and Leadership. We all pulled together during the challenging times, this 2020 – our Nation along with the City of Powell River, and qathet Regional District.

Tla'amin is just entering into our second term as a Self-Governing Nation, a very exciting pathway our Nation has chosen to move forward. We are obviously making adjustments to organizational structure, as well as amending laws, regulations, and policies to get them more traction in our ever-changing Governance and Administrative structure to serve our community fairly, plus hold the cultural integrity of the Tla'amin Nation.

It is a great situation, that City of Powell River, and qathet Regional District have a working relationship so good that some of us have each other's text number... The communication is always encouraged.

Overall, our wish is for everyone's health and safety, always use social distancing outside your bubble, and mask up. Please wash and sterilize your hands as much as possible. Happy New Year from Tla'amin Nation.

City of Powell River Mayor Dave Formosa

The pandemic made 2020 rough on everyone, but I am very proud about how our community responded. Our residents were kind, thoughtful and supportive neighbours and local business owners and I am sure that this will continue in the year to come.

Although there are many obstacles to overcome in 2021 I am hopeful that we will all come through this together and our community will continue to grow and prosper. The Citizens of our City and region have always worked well together to get things done, and I hope that the last year has taught us how important that quality is.

Beyond this I hope that the interest in our community continues to grow. Despite the pandemic, many people from the urban centres have decided to buy property here and make Powell River their home, which has helped to continue the increase in construction of new housing in our community. We look forward to welcoming more new people to our shores in 2021.

From my family to yours...A Happy New Year to all! God Bless.

Powell River-Sunshine Coast MLA Nicholas Simons

Happy 2021, I hope it is a good year for the emotional and physical health of everyone. I know the impact of the pandemic has and continues to take a personal, financial and emotional toll on many, and I share our collective grief over the losses we're all experiencing. We have nonetheless shown our ability to persevere through difficult times while learning and adapting quickly to the science and evidence as it evolved. With vaccines being administered, the light at the end of the tunnel is welcome.

For everyone, the road ahead is uncertain, but it has

been shown that our robust public health response and our Province's approach have combined to reduce many of the challenging impacts seen in other places. We'll all have a list of activities we want to take part in after vaccinations make them possible – I look forward to seeing my siblings for the first time since my mother died in May. I know it's sad that I couldn't visit when she became ill, and that nobody could be at her side when she died, but I'm glad I could play my Saturday night concerts for her, and fortunate to have a strong partner and wonderful siblings, and wonderful memories.

One thing that will be different for me in 2021 is that I was appointed to Cabinet and will be in Government as the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. I am honoured to have been asked to take on this task, especially as it demonstrates a confidence in me during a particularly difficult time. It is always important – and noticeably more important now than ever – to make sure that people living in poverty have access to supports and programs and services in their communities. I am aware of the importance of providing children with access to quality care and education and passionate about the need to ensure their success is supported in all the family circumstances children find themselves.

Thank-you to everyone who has worked hard to make sure our communities could come through the pandemic and remain as strong as possible. Our health-care workers, our front-line workers, our teachers, our neighbours, our elected officials, our friends and our families. There are so many reasons to have confidence in our system of governance, of the importance of public health, in public servants who do a wonderful job to keep our Province running, and in each other. Happy 2021!


North Island-Powell River MP Rachel Blaney

As we move forward in 2021 we need to take lessons from the pandemic. There have been clear shortcomings in the way we care for our elders, and the way we protect workers and value their work, particularly in sectors like retail and care work.

The experience in 2020 has also highlighted inequalities in our society. You can't stay home to keep you and your family safe without adequate housing, and without a job where that's possible, or an adequate income replacement program. While many families and individuals and small businesses struggled, some of the richest Canadians and corporations made even more money.

As we look to pay for the damage COVID-19 has caused, they should be the one's paying the biggest share.

We also need to turn our attention to other crises that have continued to grow through the last year: the opioid crisis and climate crisis. We need to take them on with the same determination and will to act as we have shown together during COVID.

A new year always brings new hope, especially when the outgoing year has been such a difficult one for so many. I hope you share in that hope, and also determination for a great 2021. 

SPRINGTIME IN WINTER

*The woods are lovely, dark
and deep,*

*But I have promises to
keep,*

*And miles to go before I
sleep,*

*And miles to go before I
sleep.*

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Yes! You can still join a book club

Unique book club "a gentle, inviting way of exploring our beliefs around dying"

BY ANNA BYRNE

In the spring of 2018, a group of Powell Riverites completed an eight-week course to become hospice volunteers. Curiosity about the mysteries of death and dying inspired us to continue delving deeper into the subject. We wanted to explore the impacts of loss and grief on our lives and to learn how to become better supports to those who are dying or grieving.

Reading books together seemed an easy and enjoyable way to do so, and the Death and Dying Book Club was born.

At the beginning of every year, we each suggest books to read, agree on a list and arrange for copies through interlibrary loans with the helpful staff at PR Public Library. We read one book a month and meet for an evening to talk about it over tea and goodies.

We have now read over 25 books on a variety of topics. We've read memoirs, practical guides, novels and chil-

JOIN US?

After two and a half years, we are now in a place to share our experiences and resources. If you are interested in starting your own Death and Dying Book Club, and would like an introduction package and book list, please contact julia.adam@gmail.com or annabyrne@hotmail.com. ~ Anna Byrne

dren's books. We've learned about cultural practices, questions to ask, burial options, how to support family members, and rituals. Over the years we've added movies, podcasts and poetry. Some months have been humorous and others, heartbreaking.

You would think we've exhausted the topic. We haven't.

Reading books together has been a gentle, inviting way of exploring our beliefs around dying, our personal experiences and losses, and our hopes, plans and fears for our own deaths. The club



WHAT THE BEREAVED ARE READING: *The Five Invitations: What Death Can Teach Us About Living Fully*, by Frank Ostaseski, was on the Death and Dying Book Club list.

has been a space to wonder, to ask questions, to express and hear a diversity of thought.

One conclusion we've drawn is that thinking about death informs our lives. Many times, we end up talking about how our increased understanding and acceptance of death positively impacts the way we live. We are learning that life and death are inextricably linked. We eat and laugh and talk together, feeling what it is to be alive.

Another unintended but welcomed outcome is the deepening of our friendships. Our ages span half a century — late-30s to late-80s — and we have each

experienced grief in painful ways: our parents are aging, family members have died, some of us are providing care to sick loved ones.

One of our original members has died, and some of us live with our own health issues. We've grieved together, held memorials, taken each other to hospital appointments. We've put into practice what we've learned.

During this extraordinary time, the conversations and connections we share have become even more important to us. We've continued meeting during COVID-19, either outdoors or virtually.

Winning or losing,
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NFL playoffs in January.
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Other options: Check with the Library for online reading and writing groups and events this winter.

The Tuesday Afternoon Book Club

With Dolores Lema

Can anyone join?

Dolores • Anyone is welcome to join, although she/he must be a library patron. Our current Zoom membership hovers at around ten members (not everyone attends each meeting) and fifteen members is our maximum.

What kind of books do you read?

Dolores • Books are chosen by the members; each month's meeting is hosted by one member who begins the meeting with a five to ten minute presentation of the author and written work that she/he selected (novel, memoir, non-fiction or other). Books must be available within the BC library collection (Interlibrary Loan) in a sufficient number for all members and published prior to the current calendar year.

How often do you choose a new book?

Dolores • Books are selected once a year for the upcoming year, according to member contributions.

When did your book club start?

Dolores • January 2018.

Where do you usually meet, and what are your meetings like?

Dolores • Pre-COVID we met in person at the library (in the large community meeting room). Unfortunately, not all of our members have access to technology at home. Also, some members are uncomfortable about participating online, or are reluctant to do so. As such, since October about six of us meet via Zoom with expert technical help provided by Mark Merlino (Adult Services Co-ordinator, PRPL).

What do you personally get out of this book club?

Dolores • A few things. One: the ability to share insights with others. Occasionally a person might read a book on their own — one that contains difficult themes, for example, and be moved or impacted as a result. But, the reader will have no one to speak to about their thoughts or feelings. A book club allows readers to share their personal reflections with others. Two: the opportunity to read books you wouldn't normally read, for example, books written in another genre, like speculative, mystery, or non-fiction. A book club opens the door to reading something somewhat new or, in some cases, startlingly different.

The Thursday Afternoon Book Club

With Bob Butkus

Can anyone join?

Bob • Yes.

What kind of books do you read?

Bob • About half fiction and half non-fiction.

How often do you choose a new book?

Bob • About once a year we all bring our choice of a book that we think all of us would enjoy.

When did your book club start?

Bob • At least 15 years ago.

Where do you usually meet, and what are your meetings like?

Bob • We usually meet in a seminar room in the Library. We have now tried meeting while using Zoom on our computers at home. Also, once a year we meet at someone's house and bring our choice of book for the next year. We hope to please as many members as possible. Also, we all bring something to the potluck lunch.

What do you personally get out of this book club?

Bob • Through the discussions, I get to hear how differ-

ent and interesting people are in choosing their books. Fiction? Non-fiction? Historical? Short? Long? Illustrated? Academic? People are very interesting. I am sure that many friendships have developed through the years of our Library Book Club.

The Write Together writing group

With Megan Cole

Can anyone join?

Megan • This group is open to older teens, young adults and adults.

What do you write?

Megan • In this group we write from a prompt for 20-25 minutes. Then time is given for people to share their writing. Writers in the group write memoir, fiction, poetry and everything in between.

When did your group start?

Megan • I had been offering a weekly Young Writers Group at the Library and when we all started spending time at home due to COVID I decided to create a space for people to write together.

Where do you usually meet, and what are your meetings like?

Megan • We meet online on Zoom every Friday from 4-5 pm. The meetings are informal and drop-in. The focus is on creating space for people to write in a supportive, fun, welcoming and safe environment.

What do you personally get out of this book club?

Megan • For me it's been an opportunity to meet new people and to foster a creative space. It's been so fun to see how people's writing has changed and grown over the weeks. And seeing how each writer interprets the prompt is a lot of fun too. Writing can often feel like a very solitary act and it's been really wonderful to build a small creative community around free writing. [PRL](#)

What will *you* find at the Townsite Public Market?



- Art
- Gifts
- Clothes
- Groceries
- Bakery
- Toys
- Beauty
- Housewares
- Jewelry
- Climbing
- Children's Clothing
- Coffee & Treats
- Music & Art Classes
- ...and so much more!

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January Clearance!

Armitage mens wear

VOTED #1 Best Men's Wear



604 485-9493
in the Town Centre Mall

New Year? Yes please! It is time to celebrate a new start. Wishing everyone a Joyous New Year. I'm looking forward to working hard for your real estate goals in 2021.



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Have you set up your 2021 marketing plan yet?

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Powell River LIVING

Go where the readers are.

Thanks for supporting the 2020 Stuff the Trailer & Pallet Challenge

Presented by **95.7 Coast FM** and sponsored by **Fresh Co** and **City Transfer** in support of the **Powell River Action Centre Food Bank**, this revised annual event raised more than **\$60,000** – nearly two-thirds of the Food Bank’s annual food costs. Corporations and individuals were invited to purchase a “pallet” of food for the Food Bank, and some **85 pallets** worth of food were donated. Thanks to all those donors listed below for your generosity!



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Glacier View Plaza Group
Cranberry Heights Neighbourhood
Texada Transfer
Mill Town Transport
*and a special thank-you to Designer Signs
and Powell River Living magazine
for promoting the event.*



MYPowellRiverNow.com

And the winners were...

POWTOWN PUMPKIN PEOPLE FESTIVAL



In case you're wondering why you didn't hear who won the second annual Powtown Pumpkin People contest it's because we didn't run the winners in the December issue of *Powell River Living*.

That's right, December was so busy with Christmas, we decided to wait until January so we could cheer you up with memories of our socially distanced event!

Judges had a tough time choosing the winners because they had way more entries and people were so creative! But they finally agreed on who the top entries were.

Residential

The Desilets Family (right)

They won \$75 worth of pizza from Paparazzi Pizza and two great books from Tourism Powell River!

Runner up: Shelley, Harvey and Ryan Fairgray.

They won \$25 worth of Paparazzi Pizza and a ghost book from Tourism Powell River.



Commercial

Sharlene Reid (left)

Miss Kentville: Trophy and \$100 gift certificate from Mother Nature and a book from Tourism Powell River.

Runner up:
Ludvig van Pumptoven – PRISMA.

A huge thank you to everyone who entered the contest this year and to our sponsors!
Powell River Living Magazine, Paparazzi Pizza, Mother Nature and Tourism Powell River



January is

Just for me

Plan Adventures

1. Tweet this

Two recommended Field Guides from the **Powell River Visitor Centre** make this month's list – designed to bring you closer to nature.

2. Not a fanny pack

Cycle with what you need, with the Lookout Pack from **TAWS**. For just \$115, you get a built-to-last pack made of waterproof materials, invincible construction and smart, simple details. One Bottle Rocket is included with an option to add another for \$15 (regularly \$20). There are three interior pockets and a weather resistant external zippered pocket. Just don't call it a fanny pack. The packs are made just down the road in Bellingham.

3. Protect your space

Make your space feel, and smell, better with Enlighted Oils Clearing and Protection Spray. It contains essential oils of juniper berry, cedarwood, and sage, with essence of yarrow flower. Available from Robin Morrison at **Powell River Massage** – ask her during your massage how best to use it in your home or workspace.

4. Tan fan

Sadly, you won't be taking a tropical vacation this winter. But you still need your tan, so treat yourself to a visit to **Simply Bronze** for some light therapy and Vitamin D.

5. The wet look

Rains from **Fits to a T** are seriously waterproof for all seasons, making them the perfect Sunshine Coast jacket! Find them at Fits to a T.

6. Cocktail hour

Vancouver's Mad Laboratory Spirits produces a variety of products and are famous for their rich caramel flavours. You can treat yourself to some of their favourites in the cocktail sampler four-pack available at **Capone's Cellar**. It includes 50mL each of S'mores Old Fashioned, Blue Negroni, Godfather, and Chocolate Spiced Mad Dog.

7. Keep on truckin'

The TRX-4 Sport combines the unbeatable ground clearance and driving dynamics of Traxxas portal ax-

les, sticky Canyon® Trail tires, and a lightweight pickup truck body. The Sport's unique bumpers, wheels, and body were designed for increased climbing versatility. Whether it's a fun trail run or a hardcore technical crawl, the TRX-4 Sport's capability and performance-built approach takes your outdoor adventure to a new level. The TRX-4 is available for \$519.99 from your buddies at **Paradise Valley RC Hobbies**.

8. Ms. Dress up

Look your best with a sleeveless printed lace A-line dress with a V-neck, V-back, natural waist and flowy skirt. And the best dress feature of all – they have pockets! Ask Guadalupe at **Perfect Fit Sewing and Alterations** for details.

9. Barely there

You can't have this. Yet. This is a sneak preview of one of Debra Bevaart's latest carvings. The artist behind **Tug Guhm Gallery** at the Lund Resort at Klah Ah Men curates an amazing collection of West Coast art, and her own sculptures of seals, eagles, bears, otters, whales and other wildlife are a highlight. When this bear is finished, you'll want it. In the meantime, visit to check out her other works and you'll probably find her in action, perhaps even putting the polish on this grizzly.

10. Stepping out

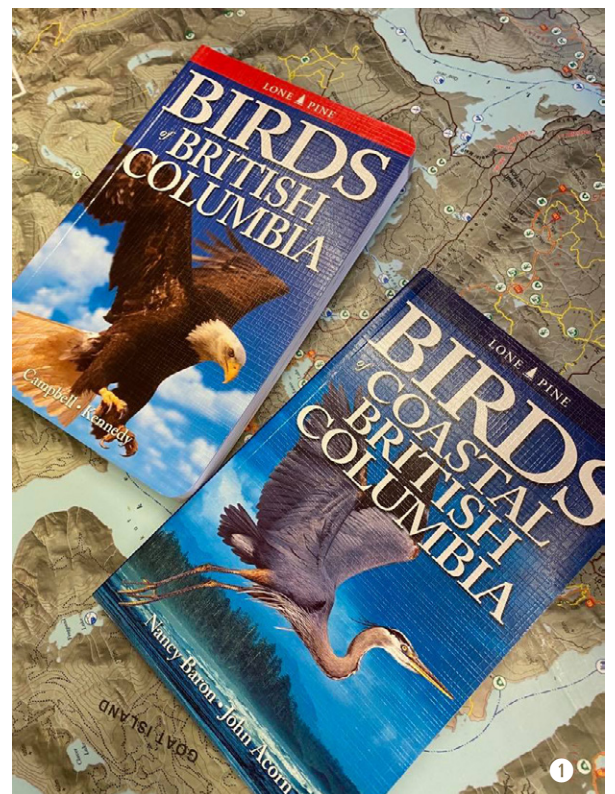
Step into lines at **Pagani & Sons Shoes** with a Blundstone Original Chelsea. Reward your hard-working feet with total comfort and a little fun on the side. Stand all day, dance all night.

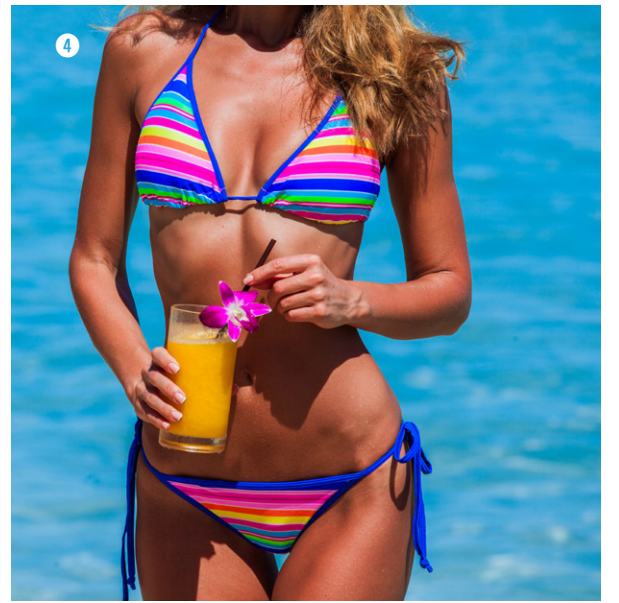
11. BYO sandwich

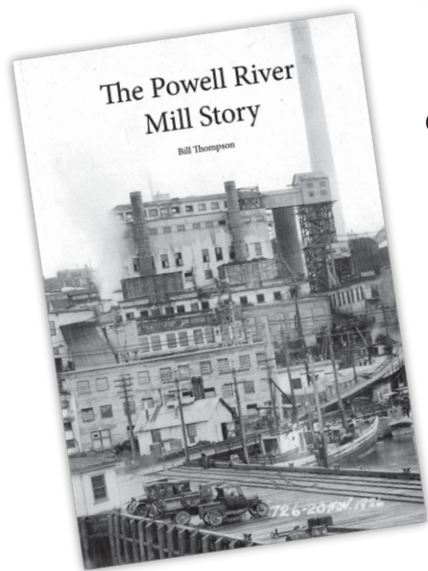
Lunch kits are a perfect way to start off the year, and you can find this stylish one at **Westerly Studio**. Meal planning is a great New Year's goal – why not keep it functional and cute?

12. Pocket safe

The arrival of high-tech cards caused a rapid replacement of these traditional means of payment, coins and paper money. This new era of technology calls for an innovative type of wallet. The Secrid wallet, available at **Armitage Men's Wear**, protects both your privacy and your money with style.









Plan Cozy Times

1. Straight goods

The platinum+, a ghd flat iron so intelligent it predicts your hair's needs and constantly adapts the power to ensure the optimum styling temperature, at all times, says Linda Hall from **Hair 'n' Dipity**. Featuring ultra-zone with predictive technology, this advanced ghd flat iron is guaranteed to deliver consistent results while you style.

2. Light up your work life

The M18™ ROCKET™ Tower Light provides 2500 lumens wherever you need it. The LED light tower has dual power capability and can be powered by M18™ batteries (for up to 13 hours) or by an extension cord. The tower light head can extend from 4 to 7 feet to light overhead work or minimize shadows when casting light downward. Built for the demands of a job site, the LEDs never need to be replaced and are backed by a limited lifetime warranty. The LED light towers supply both task and area lighting as well as provide light overhead to reduce shadows in the workspace, and they're \$239 while supplies last at **Valley Building Supplies**.

3. Gem water

The ERA Decanter is a sleek and modern new way to serve gem-water. The stainless-steel spout that is specially designed to hold your VitaJewel Gemstone Vial in place so you can safely pour and refill without removing the Vial. Find them and other VitaJewel products at **Kelly's Health Shop**.

4. Get your own sweater

Santa didn't bring you a **Pollen Sweater** again this year? You're just going to have to get your own. Living in Powell River without a Pollen Sweater is kinda like going to Disneyland and not having a Mickey Mouse souvenir. It's just not done. Become a real Powell Riverite, and get yourself a sweater! Check out the styles and colours at pollensweaters.com, but for the fullest Powell River experience, go for the placket.

5. Looking up

Dark winter days got you down? Let some light in to brighten your outlook with a skylight from **Modern Windows**. Columbia's Energy Star Skylights come in a variety of sizes, opening and non-opening models.

6. Chill out

When you're trying to reduce the number of trips to the grocery store, and put up some of your own local food, you don't want to be messing with a tiny freezer. Get yourself a convenient 15.5 cubic foot Frigidaire Upright Freezer from **RONA** for just \$745. This freezer will keep food frozen even if your power goes out for two days. It has an audible alarm if you leave the door open, and with a frost-free design, you won't find yourself chipping away the ice. And for peace of mind, a floor-

projected power-on indicator lets you know at a glance that your freezer is keeping your favourites safely frozen and fresh.

7. Company Man

Whether you work at the mill, you're a former employee, or you just want to be in the know about Powell River's largest employer, Bill Thompson's 2001 book, *The Powell River Mill Story* is a fascinating tour through the company's history. Find it and other history books at the Powell River **Historical Museum and Archives**.

8. Sprout this

Get your dose of green all year long with a Nanodome Mini Greenhouse. It's a complete indoor garden available at **Mother Nature**. The grow light garden is ideal for growing microgreens, herbs, or just showcasing your favorite plants while ensuring they get all the water and full spectrum natural light they need to grow and thrive.

9. Beachy keen

After combing local beaches for glass and naturally-polished stones, Suzanne Wiebe creates whimsical art, decorative cairns and these beautiful necklaces and bracelets. Find them at **Found Stone Jewelry** in the Townsite Market.

10. Big Mac Deal

Apple products have a reputation for being pricey. But what they may lack in affordability, they more than make up in longevity. Which means buying yourself a refurbished or second-hand MacBook from **PR Macs** can give you years of reliable, hassle-free computing. Call or visit to find out what gems Corey has in stock.

11. Cleanse anew

Start the new year off with a traditional cleanse from **Tla'amin Convenience Store**. The traditional smudge basket includes an abalone shell as a smudge bowl in which you can burn sacred herbs to cleanse the soul of negative thoughts and energy. White sage and cedar smudge sticks are included, along with a feather to brush smoke onto your body.

12. Bio bubble

The Mini is an "on the go" device that forms a protective bubble around you. It covers you with probiotics. This is a full system including the mister, probiotic refill, charger cord, and instructions. Use it to purify: autos, office spaces, computer keyboards, travel surfaces (airplane seats and trays, restaurant seats/tables, etc...) When the mini is open it disperses probiotic mist for several seconds then automatically shuts off. Give yourself a probiotic boost by spraying your face/hands twice a day. Includes 5 oz of New-Gen Biotics. Refills available through **All Clear Mold & Pathogen Solutions** webstore.



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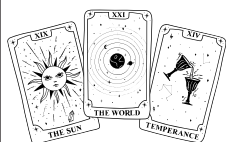
604 485-3211 ext 4349 | 5000 Joyce Avenue, Powell River, V8A 5R3
www.prhospitalfoundation.com

A Thought For The Day

“God has created the world
as one - the boundaries
are marked out by man.”



~ Bahá'í Teachings



Tarot Readings

\$25 for 30 minutes

or \$20 for THS Members

January 30, 11 - 5 pm
Available on Zoom,
Facebook Live Chat, or
over the phone

An Annual Fundraiser for the
Townsite Heritage Society, in
partnership with Powell River's
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To Schedule: 604-483-3901 or thetownsite@shaw.ca



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How to find your intention

Return to Reverence ~ working with elements of the natural world

JULIETTE WOODS offers card readings, shamanic sessions, medicine gatherings, and immersion programs online and in-person. Find her at 3FoldBalance.com and ReturnToReverence.ca

There are times when we are not meant to know the answers. There are times we are called to surrender to the mystery and not force something out of it. There are also times, where the natural world around us guides us toward the first steps of co-creation.

January is filled with calls for Resolutions, Vision Boards, Intention Setting and Manifestation. This is not by chance of the Gregorian calendar, but rather a close tie to post-Winter Solstice. Each day increases in hours with our Sun's vitality and growth energy, and life as we know it is dependent on this light and warmth. It stirs dormant seeds into action. It draws life force from deep within trees and plants until they bloom and fruit. Calls creatures out of slumber and into action.

We too can ride this wave and bring our deepest personal needs, hopes, dreams, and inspirations out from our hidden innermost selves or dark dreamtime of potential and co-create with the natural world around us.

To begin, we need to find what those most personal dreams are. For this, it is easier to work backward from how we think it shows up in life. If one desires to be loved more or differently by their partner, we can step it back to simply the feeling of being loved. If it looks like a better paying job and stable home, at



RETURN OF THE LIGHT: Creativity, action, & intention are coming back.

its root is a need for foundational security.

A trick to finding what may be calling for our creative tending is to look at what is really catching our attention and awareness, currently and over the past month(s). Often it appears in the form of either inspiration or challenge.

A clue to indicate when we have found the root of an intention is that it does not include another person or particular detailed parameters of a situation. Once we have found and refined the essence of what our personal work is, tangible rituals or embodied ways of working to bring it from the unseen world out into our ordinary day-to-day living in organic, naturally unfolding ways is our next step. Ideally this is not a onetime thing, but an ongoing

co-creative working.

Gifted the sight of a falling star? Wish. Making soup? Stir it in. Witnessing a sunrise? Invite illumination on our next best step in life.

Importantly, take every opportunity to offer gratitude, this is co-creation, not forcing. Treat the world around us as a dear friend. We don't only show up when we want something, we ensure they know our love and appreciation.

Lastly, notice doors of opportunity opening and actively walk through those thresholds. We wouldn't dare ask our Great Grandmother for a cookie then turn our nose up and say, "I want a different one."

At www.3foldbalance.com is an online "Seeds of Intention" program to take this deeper if you'd like. PR.L

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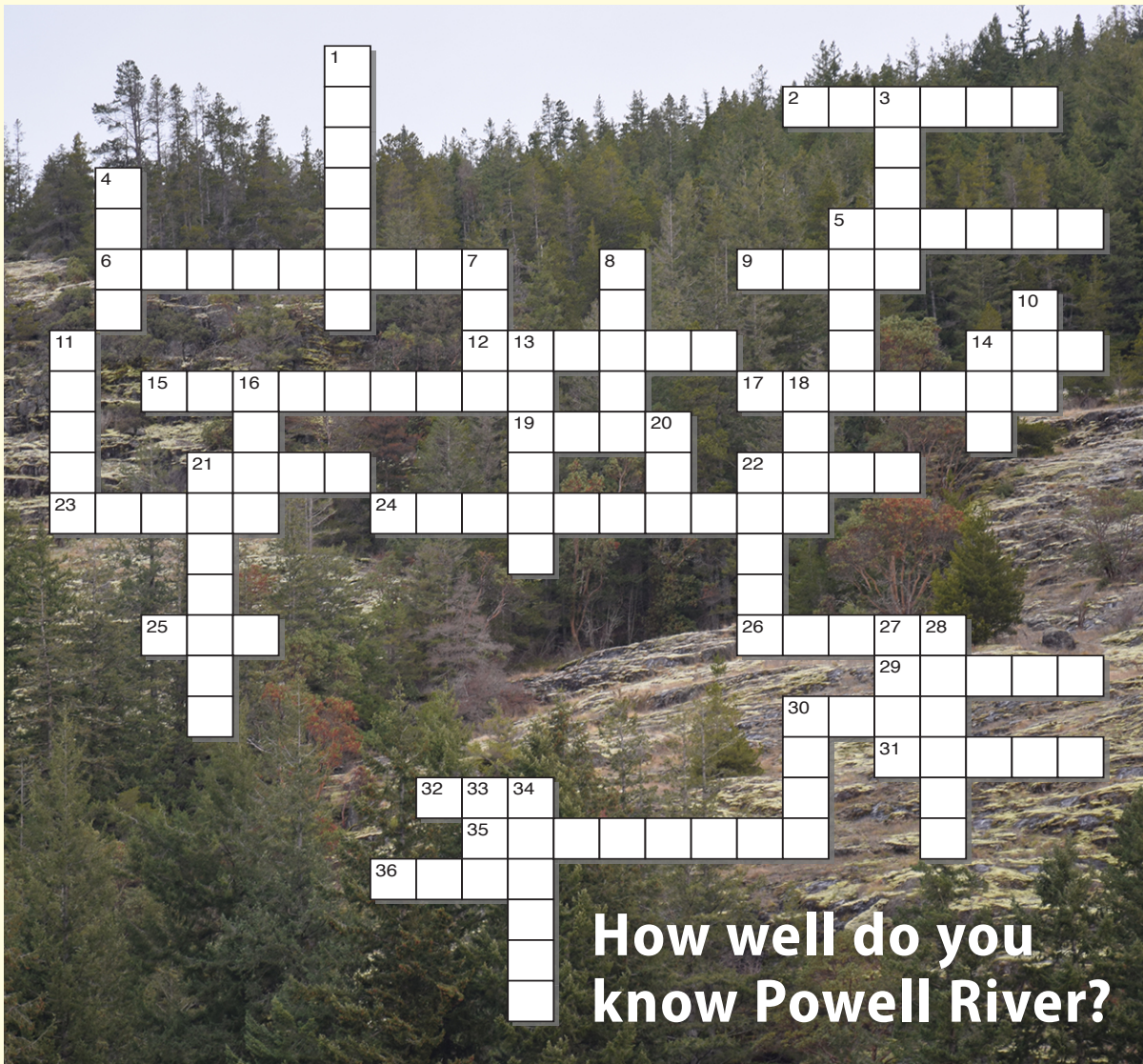
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2021
We got this!
Happy New Year



How well do you know Powell River?

Across

- 2) Second shortest river
- 5) Not the creeks school
- 6) Lilypad lake
- 9) Myrtle's balls
- 12) Logging Lake and Park
- 14) Magazine abbr
- 15) Staired mountain
- 17) Former mayor
- 19) Bill's Island
- 21) PR's raison d'être
- 22) MacGregor VC, or athlete
- 23) Trailer park, ocean moves
- 24) City beach
- 25) Blubber ____
- 26) River, hiking guru, bird
- 29) then Beta
- 30) End of the road
- 31) Pain or point
- 32) Fire remnants, or street
- 35) Paper for change
- 36) ____ to a T

Down

- 1) Steep street, icy
- 3) To the water
- 4) Lang's last lake
- 5) Beyond Lund
- 7) Diver's hulk
- 8) Rope swing
- 10) Area gov't (acronym)
- 11) Lookout mountain (pictured here)
- 13) Team on ice
- 14) Outdoor expert shop
- 16) Driftwood lake
- 18) Inland's old name's a laugh
- 20) Boom mover
- 21) Diver's girl
- 22) Main Ave
- 27) Salmon creek
- 28) Climber's valley
- 30) Not found Lake
- 33) Hiker's route (abbr)
- 34) Water source

Powell River Historical Museum & Archives



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Nicholas Simons

MLA FOR POWELL RIVER-SUNSHINE COAST

Powell River Constituency Office
 109 - 4675 Marine Ave
 604 485 1249
Nicholas.Simons.MLA@leg.bc.ca





Kathy Bowes


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604.483.1633

kathybowes@remax.net
kathybowes.com



Solution for last month's puzzle: December Powell River



Hit me with your best pot

(of tea that is)

Last Word

BY ISABELLE SOUTHCOTT | publisher@prliving.ca

There's nothing quite like a good cup of tea. When I take that first sip, I can feel the tension of 2020 slowly leave my body and my mind say aaah-hhh, and my body begin to unwind.

A good cup of tea starts long before that first sip. It begins with intention, the intention to sit down, have a drink and relax for a moment or two. And maybe, if you're lucky, share it with a friend.

My mum taught me how to brew the perfect cup of tea. "The proper way," she told me and my mum should know – she's English, like the Queen.

"Once the water comes to a boil Isabelle, you warm your tea pot like this," she said. She'd swish the boiling water around the tea pot before dumping it out and adding a tea bag (yes, a tea bag because let's face it, most of us use tea bags these days). Then she'd pour boiling water over it.

The next step is to let your tea steep. How long you let it steep depends entirely on you, as everyone likes their tea a bit different. Some like it strong, some like it weak – almost like (shudder) dishwater! Me, I like mine to be a nice golden brown colour which takes about three minutes. And I like it with a spot of milk. The English way, the same way my mother likes hers.

A good cup of tea can only truly be enjoyed out of a thin bone china teacup or mug. Although I still have a few teacups in my china cabinet, they're a bit small and fiddly for every day so I use a bone china tea mug. Progress, I guess. The milk must go in first, it doesn't taste the same if it doesn't. Then you pour the tea. I'm using a lovely old silver teapot these days that Mum gave me years ago. It is part of a tea service I had tucked away for special occasions but never used. One day, I broke my everyday tea pot and instead of buying another one, I decided to use the one I was saving, the silver one. I polish it every so often and sometimes I think it looks far too nice for everyday use but if I don't use it everyday I will never use it. So I use it.

I was just a little girl when Mum taught me how to make tea properly and I've never forgotten. A good cup of tea is a ritual. An experience, according to a colleague. Unlike drinking a glass of water or something else to just to quench your thirst, a cup of tea will quench your thirst and ground you at the same time.

There's a reason why people say, "There, there dear, sit down and have a cup of tea," when someone is upset. Like a Band-Aid, a cup of tea is healing because it can make (almost) anything better.

We get to know people over a cup of tea. In business, the Afghanistan principle of three cups of tea has been compared to the fact that you have to have three interactions with someone before they will trust, buy or hire you. Here in Canada, we have tea and chat and when we do, we visit. If we like our tea buddy we'll likely have another cup of tea with them.

The late Eleanor Roosevelt mused on the similarities between tea and women many years ago when she said: "A woman is like a tea bag – only in hot water do you realize how strong she is." I like this quote, a lot.

Numerous studies have shown that a variety of teas may boost your immune system, fight off inflammation, and even ward off cancer and heart disease because tea contains antioxidants. In my mind, this is a bonus.

Like the people who make it, every cup of tea is different. To this day, I still believe the best cup of tea is the one my mother makes for me. I've never had a better cup EVER! Maybe it's her secret ingredient – love. I'm not sure why Mum's tea tastes so much better, I just know that tea made by Mum is the best ever.

My Mum moved to Powell River from Nova Scotia when my oldest son Matthew wasn't quite a year old. She was in her late sixties. Mum spent a lot of time with Matt when he was young and one day, she told me that Matthew loved tea!

I was horrified. My son was just over a year and already, he was drinking tea. Wasn't there a law against that?

It's fine, my Mum (a retired paediatrician) assured me. He loves it with a little bit of sugar.

She said she had to teach her grandson to enjoy his tea at a young age.

"Why?" I asked.

"So that when I'm an old lady Matthew will be able to drink tea with me," she replied.

Twenty-two years have passed since Matthew had his first cup of tea with his Grandma and I'm happy to report that Mum was right – Matthew loves tea. And he loves his Grandma. [PRL](#)



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WHAT HAPPENS TO MY RECYCLING?



COLLECTION



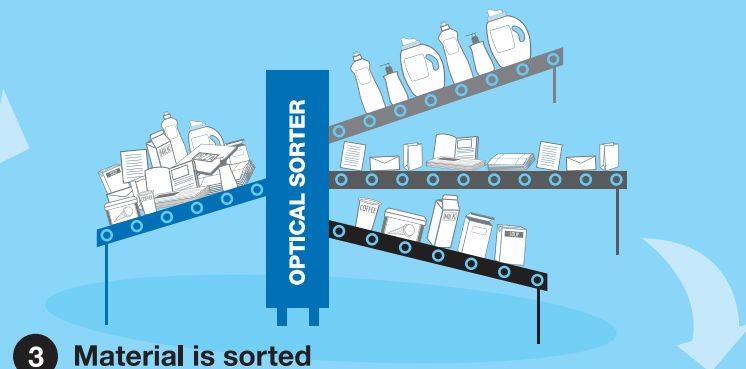
1 Material is collected from homes and depots



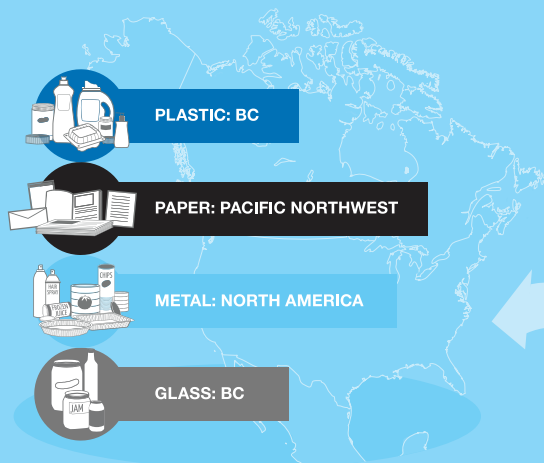
POST COLLECTION



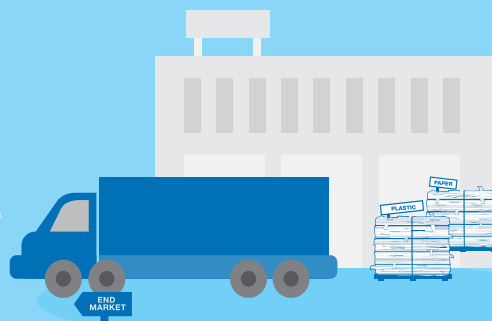
2 Material is delivered to a receiving or sorting facility



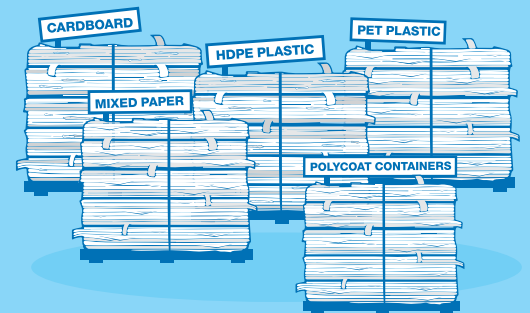
3 Material is sorted



6 Primary end markets (majority of materials)



5 Material is sold to end markets to be made into new packaging or products



4 Material is baled with similar materials

BC 2019 RECYCLING STATS

78.2% of supplied packaging and paper was placed into the system

185,692 T net tonnes* of material was collected

90.3% of collected material was managed by recycling

6.9% or 14,399 tonnes of BC's recycling material collected was disposed of due to contamination

9.9% Powell River's Curbside contamination rate

1.8% Powell River's Depot contamination rate

40.5 kg of recycling was collected per capita in BC

4.2% of recycling collected is processed into engineered fuel

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*Net tonnes reflect the exclusion of tonnes collected by Recycle BC on behalf of other stewardship programs

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Powell River!



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