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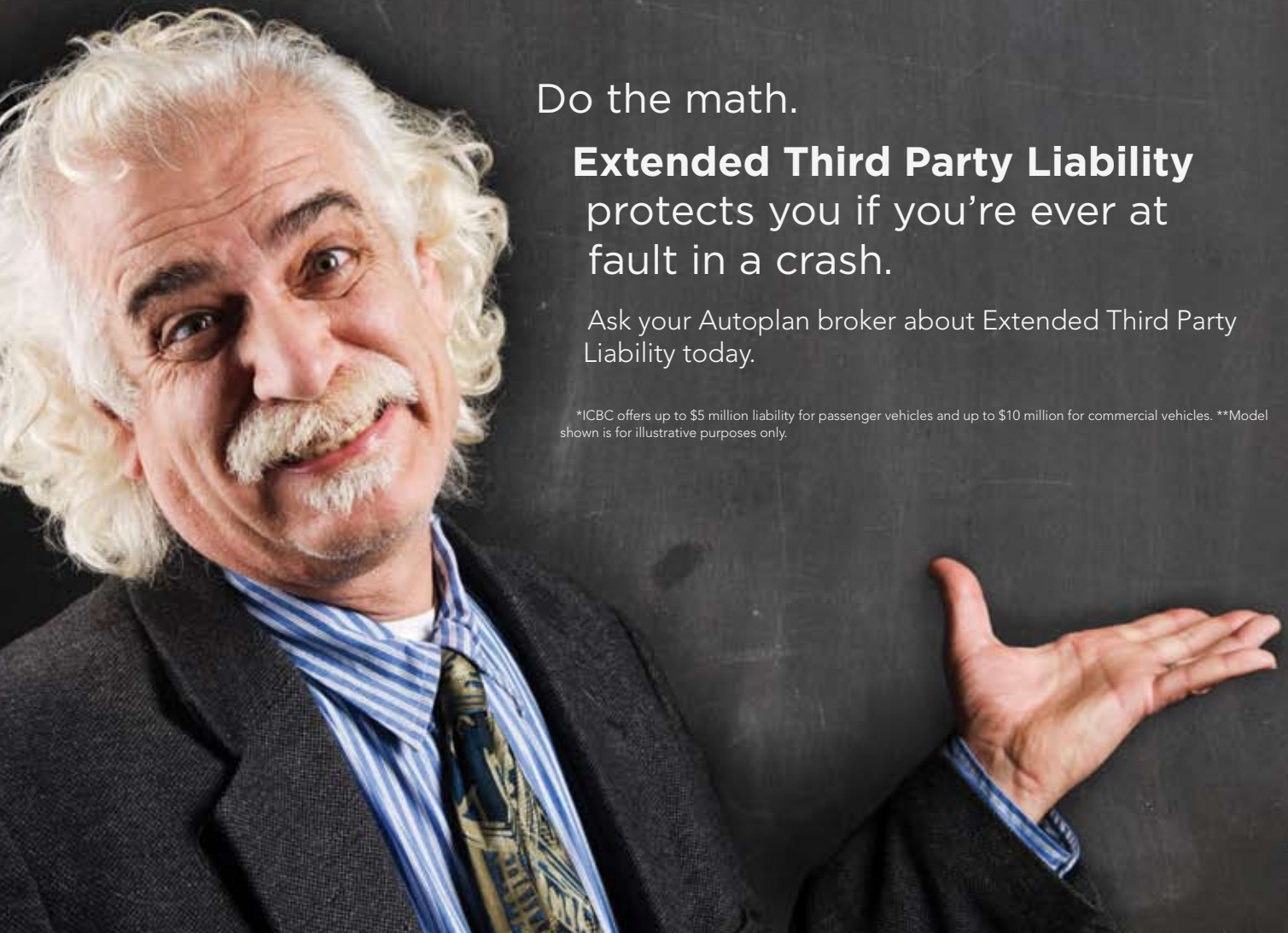
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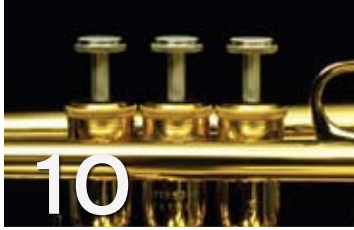
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*Okanagan Life* is published by  
Byrne Publishing Group Inc.

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*Okanagan Life* is available at several newsstands  
throughout the Valley. For a full list, please visit  
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## The paradox of CAUSE and EFFECT

I played lacrosse in Alberta back in the 70s with a good friend who taught me a lot about cause and effect. Johnny was an exceptional player that led the league in scoring.

One year, two young men that didn't make the team asked the coach if they could stay on as team managers. They offered to purchase 35 trophies so they could choose and award the three stars at all home games. Unbelievably, despite the fact that Johnny led our team and the league in scoring, he was not rewarded with any three-star trophies that year. Apparently, the statistics proving he was one of the leagues best players did not matter. His cause and effect was obvious and of the highest order, yet the managers did not choose him once.

The human brain is capable of storing 10 trillion bits of information so one might think that it should be easy to measure cause and effect in sport. With only two teams, hundreds of spectators to witness the game and paid referees to record the statistics— in real time—it should be easy.

Today, neuroscience is helping to explain how lacrosse managers and the rest of us are woefully dismal at determining cause and effect. It is about the way our brains work. Research taken from various brain scanners reveals that the emotional or reptilian brain is in fact, the decider-in-chief—the ultimate source of accuracy when it

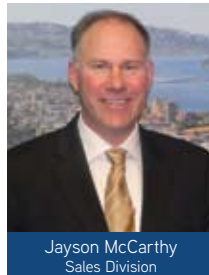


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comes to causality and effectiveness. Piles of research indicate the brain takes a bottom-up decision making approach, where the emotional brain weighs the risks and rewards, makes a decision and then—tells the conscious regions later. Instead of recognizing the brilliance of the emotional brain, we have actually cognitively over-ridden it for centuries with fuzzy, left-brain logic. The analytical parts of the brain are like bullies, forcing their logical-but-erroneous views on the emotional brain. We start to see patterns where none exist, we stereotype without accurate information and to cap it all off—we display excessive confidence in our own, irrational decisions.

Because there are so many media choices today, marketers are expected to buy media that is supposed to deliver ROI (return on investment). I call it CTA (cover their ass). The true reality is they do not understand cause and effect, so they buy media they think will work. Imagine a hockey game with 15 teams, all playing on the same rink, at the same time, with no referees. Imagine trying to find the three stars with 15 teams on the ice at the same time?

Back in 1704, when the first newspaper advertisement appeared in the *Boston News-Letter*, it was easy—you either saw it or you didn't. The answer to the 306-year-old question of, "what works and what doesn't" is not what the marketing world has taught us. The answer lies in the brilliance of the reptilian brain.

Neuromarketing is showing us what causes consumers to take notice and the effect is a much healthier bottom line. The dictionary definition of "cause" is a person or thing that gives rise to an action, phenomenon or condition. "Effect" is a change that is a result or consequence of an action or other cause. Find your stars.



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For more information refer to page 29.

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## events



### NUNCRACKERS

**Summerland: Nov. 11-27, 2010**

A show for the holiday season, the nuns of Mount Saint Helen's are putting on their annual Christmas program, but before the lead singer, Sister Mary Leo, can make her grand entrance she is hit in the shin by one of the children's batons. What to do? This play will have you laughing and singing to your favourite carols. Presented by the Summerland Singers and Players at Centre Stage Theatre, tickets available at Indulgences and Sweet Tooth in Summerland; Dragon's Den and City Lock Works in Penticton.



### GETTIN' DIZZY

**Okanagan Symphony: Nov. 19-21, 2010**

Mike Herriott, lead trumpeter, jazz improviser and a musician of great versatility, and his band join the Okanagan Symphony for an evening of swinging jazz favourites from the likes of Doc Severinson, Harry James, Louis Armstrong and more. Kelowna performance Nov. 19 ([www.ticketmaster.ca](http://www.ticketmaster.ca) or 250.860.1470); Penticton Nov. 20 ([www.ticketmaster.ca](http://www.ticketmaster.ca) or 250.770.1470); and Vernon Nov. 21 ([www.ticketseller.ca](http://www.ticketseller.ca) or 250.549.7469). For more info visit [www.okanagansymphony.com](http://www.okanagansymphony.com).



### ASPECTS OF LOVE

**Vernon: Nov. 20, 2010**

Ballet Kelowna presents four uplifting, Canadian choreographed ballet works: *Romanza* is a flirtatious care-free ballet set to composer Frederic Chopin; new work by Vancouver choreographer Simone Orlando, in collaboration with Penticton composer Stu Goldberg is sure to move you; new work by David LaHay explores the tragic love and passionate interplay of Shakespeare; and *Peasant Pas de Deux* from Act I Giselle (1842). Vernon and District Performing Arts Centre. Tickets at [www.ticketseller.ca](http://www.ticketseller.ca) or 250.549.7469.

## MORE CHOICE HAPPENINGS

### GOODBYE PICCADILLY

**Penticton: November 11–December 4, 2010**

A new play by Canadian playwright Douglas Bowie, this nostalgic and hilarious tale of mystery deepens as the layers are peeled away and we discover a touching story that reaches all the way back to the difficult days of the Second World War. Presented by the Many Hats Theatre Company. Show runs Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights at 8 p.m. with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m., at the Cannery Stage. Tickets available at the Wine Country Visitor's Centre, in Penticton, phone 250.493.4055.

### DUCKS UNLIMITED FUNDRAISING DINNER

**Penticton Golf & Country Club: November 13, 2010**

Last year Ducks Unlimited raised \$20,000 towards the purchase and maintenance of the South Okanagan Wetlands, this year's target is \$25,000. Come out and support this worthwhile cause. For tickets phone 250.495.4434 (\$55 each or \$385 table for eight).

### BANFF MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL WORLD TOUR

**Vernon: November 15 & December 29, 2010**

The World Tour is produced by Mountain Culture at The Banff Centre, and features award-winning films and audience favourites from about 300 films entered in the annual festival. Screening at the Vernon and District Performing Arts Centre. For more info and tickets visit [www.ticketseller.ca](http://www.ticketseller.ca) or phone 250.549.7469.

### PETER PAN

**Kelowna: November 26–December 5, 2010**

A classic tale, Wendy and her brothers join Peter and the Lost Boys in an exciting life—free of grown-up rules—that includes a face off against Captain Hook and his bloodthirsty pirates. Presented by Theatre Kelowna Society at the Kelowna Community Theatre. Tickets available online at [www.selectyourtickets.com](http://www.selectyourtickets.com) or phone 250.762.5050.



## LUNCH PROGRAM CANNED

### Wanted, lead volunteer for West Kelowna seniors' lunch program

■ Looking for a team leader who knows how to cook. Earlier this spring Alvina Friesen, lead volunteer and soup chef of the Thank Goodness It's Friday (TGIF) lunch program for seniors in West Kelowna, gave notice that she is moving on.

For six years Alvina and a team of some 15 volunteers have been feeding about 50 seniors soup, sandwich and dessert every Friday from mid-September to the end of May.

Alvina was in charge of menu planning, grocery shopping, assigning volunteers their tasks, phone registration and cooking the soup, a huge responsibility. Every six weeks she made a trip to Costco for staples like napkins, tea, coffee and pickles. One time she bought a different brand of pickle, which didn't go over well with her clients. She learned her lesson.

Thursdays Alvina would be busy shopping for fresh produce, cooking eggs for egg salad sandwiches and chopping vegetables for the soup. Sometimes she'd take the extra time to bake a carrot cake, ice it and slice it ready for serving the next day.

In all those years she only cancelled twice, once due to bad weather and once to attend a funeral. Sometimes volunteers called in to cancel but she always found a sub. "I never had to look for volunteers," she says.

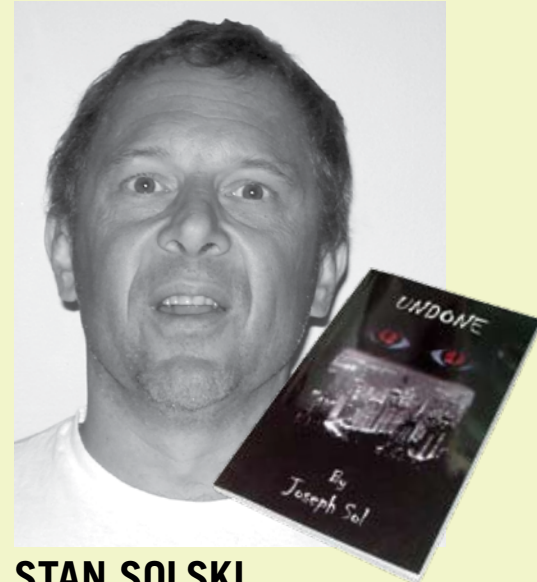
The volunteers were mostly seniors, three couples set up the tables and chairs in the morning, another volunteer set up the soup station, one more dished out the pickles and dessert, another manned the registration table, two people served soup and another

served tea and coffee. At the end of the meal some of the seniors helped take down the tables and more volunteers washed dishes, mopped the floor and took out the garbage.

The program ran like a professional operation on Alvina's watch. The reward for her efforts was the "big smiles on their faces" as clients came in the door.

She and her team offered seniors a chance to socialize and eat a hot meal, all for only \$3. It was a steal of a deal and amazingly, there was money left over, so twice a year the program made a \$300 donation to the church and an equal donation to the West Kelowna food bank. In addition, to show her appreciation Alvina treated the volunteers to a dinner out once a year. Alvina says what she'll miss most is the people, the volunteers and the cooking.

If anyone is interested in resurrecting the lunch program give Alvina a call at 250.768.5670 for details. —Karen Slivar



### STAN SOLSKI a.k.a. JOSEPH SOL

Author, *Undone*

**WHAT GOT YOU STARTED WRITING?** Since I was about nine years old I wanted to write excellent fiction, although I did not feel confident enough to pursue it in my younger years.

**WHAT WAS YOUR MOTIVATION IN WRITING *UNDONE*?** I was and still am somewhat frustrated with the apparent shortcomings of our legal system. Also, I was trying to reflect back to the world my perception of our current times and current events.

**WHAT WAS YOUR PROCESS IN WRITING THIS BOOK?** I tried to take my experiences and combine them with local and world events. I wanted to produce a very frightening but enjoyable, readable story line. And I wanted to produce a work of fiction that would provoke deeper thought.

**DO YOU BELIEVE THAT HUMANS ARE INHERENTLY GOOD?** Yes, I strongly believe in the kindness of humanity—that we usually mistreat other people out of ignorance, frustration or fear, or a combination of these things.

**DO CHARACTERS IN THE BOOK REFLECT YOU OR PEOPLE YOU KNOW?** The characters are composites of people I have met and people who make the headlines. I can't really say that they reflect my personality specifically. I may have infused some of my opinions into the main character, Shane Larchmont.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF?** I try to be an open-minded person and not become too entrenched in my beliefs and ideals. Having fun in life is important to me as well as things like family values, as these are areas in our lives that may be somewhat lacking. Responsibility in life is a given, yet we all need to relax more often.

**WHAT DO YOU DO BESIDES WRITING?**

When I'm not writing I work part-time at a fast food establishment and I also serve as a substitute instructor at Okanagan College. —Lucas Wiseman



## INSPIRATIONAL SINGER

■ After a concert this summer in the Maritimes, a woman approached country/gospel singer Dianne Wirtz and told her that she had been preparing to kill herself that night, but a friend dragged her to the concert. “When I heard your words,” she said, “it gave me hope.”

That’s what Dianne and her music are all about, “Giving love to people that are hurting.”

Guided by a deep faith that grew from personal tragedy and a harrow-

ing, life-altering incident, Dianne is constantly reaching out to others. She is deeply involved with prison ministries and works to get young girls off the street. A portion of the sales of her Nashville produced debut CD *I’m Your Child* goes to the Elizabeth Fry Society and the Kelowna Women’s Shelter.

Dianne’s considerable musical talent began to surface when she was just five years old, singing with her dad’s band as they practiced

on weekends. An Air Force brat, she moved with her family to Germany, New Brunswick and Cold Lake Alberta where she got the chance to sing with *Prairie Fire* at a base concert. They invited the 17-year-old to join them for a Variety Club telethon in Edmonton.

Dianne’s solo CD is making her an “overnight success.” *I’m Your Child* has won the Gospel Music Association of Canada’s Covenant Award for Country/Bluegrass Album of the Year. —Laurie Carter



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# Taste of Thailand

Local eateries are the place to get acquainted with Thai culture

by Portia Priegert

Traditional food—whether enjoyed with friends or served to other Canadians—is a common denominator for the Okanagan’s small Thai community. Probably fewer than 100 Thai people call the Valley home, but there are at least eight Thai restaurants—five in the Central Okanagan, two in Vernon and one in Penticton.

Many Thais work in the food industry and their restaurants are popular gathering spots. “The Thai restaurants are where Thai people come to socialize,” says Luke Sumpantararat, who was born in Thailand to a Canadian mother and Thai father. He spent his childhood in both countries, but has chosen to live in Canada. “When you’re born

in Thailand and you don’t have much, it’s hard to get much,” he says. “You’ll never see someone that was raised on a farm able to have his own company at the age of 30. But here that is not a dream out of reach.... I moved here with \$600 and opened a restaurant in five years.”

Luke’s friend, Lila Chuaydam, worked in a bank for several years but now has a restaurant job. “Banking was not my passion,” she says. “I find food is more what I enjoy doing.” Lila moved to Okanagan Falls in 1992 at age 12 with her mother and stepfather, a Canadian. “There was no Thai food here,” she says with a laugh. “I thought I was going to die.”

Despite strong ties to homeland cuisine, the community does little

to celebrate traditional holidays and has no specific Buddhist temple. “We don’t really do anything traditional, unfortunately, just because it doesn’t feel right when you’re not in the place to do it,” says Luke. “We think about it, but it’s not home to do it, so we don’t bother. We just talk about it.”

Lila stays in touch by listening online to Thai music and news. She has visited Thailand as an adult but prefers Canada. “I like my lifestyle here. I have my car and my condo. It’s just the convenience. It’s really busy there. I like bigger cities than this, but I don’t like it to be too busy and polluted. For me, I find Canada has better opportunities for everybody really—it’s just up to you to go out and grab it.”

**“Thai culture is really big with food. If you ever go to Thailand, you find food everywhere, 24-7. People eat constantly over there... I enjoy people enjoying their meal and leaving happy. I think you get happiness from seeing other people happy.”**

—LILA CHUAYDAM



**thailand** is renowned for its scenic beaches and fascinating culture. An independent country that was never colonized by a European power, it lies in the heart of Southeast Asia and is bordered by Burma, Laos, Cambodia and Malaysia. Politically, the country is a constitutional monarchy with an estimated population of 63 million, including some six million in Bangkok, the nation's capital.

Thailand is one of the world's largest exporters of rice. It industrialized rapidly in the 1990s but many people are poor, which helps explain the country's thriving sex industry.

Visitors should remember two cultural taboos: pointing with your feet or touching a person's head. Feet are thought to be the dirtiest part of the body while the head is the most sacred.

1. Phad Thai is a main dish in many Thai restaurants.
2. Friends Atchara Nilprasoet, Luke Sumpantararat and Lila Chuaydam (left to right) gather outside Kelowna's Siam Orchid restaurant, a popular meeting spot for the local Thai community.

## names

Thai is spoken by more than 60 million people. It is a tonal language with an elegant flowing script that scholars link to the Indic family of languages. Thais typically have long names and often adopt shorter nicknames—sometimes even several, which can make it tough for outsiders to follow their gossip.

Westerners are typically only told the nickname of Thai people they meet casually with the assumption that they will not remember the long names.

**cuisine** Thai cuisine emphasizes fresh stir-fried ingredients and a bold range of aromatic spices. Cooks blend five basic tastes—sweet, spicy, sour, bitter and salty—into appealing soups, salads, curries, seafood and noodle dishes.

The cuisine has many regional variations and has been influenced by neighbouring culinary traditions, particularly Chinese cooking. Rice is a staple of the Thai diet and common ingredients include garlic, chili, lime juice, lemon grass and fish sauce. Dishes are typically cooked in a wok. Meals feature several complementary dishes served at the same time and shared by all.

A common appetizer is sa-tay—marinated chicken on a bamboo skewer that is served with peanut sauce and cucumber salad. A main course in many restaurants is Phad Thai, a dish of pan-fried rice noodles topped with chopped peanuts, bean sprouts, tofu and shrimp or chicken. But more exotic dishes attract those with a daring palate. Gaeng Goong, for instance, features prawns in red curry with coconut milk, peppers, fresh basil leaves and bamboo shoots. Gang Mus-Sa-Mun is a southern style curry of potatoes, peppers, onions, peanuts, tomatoes and coconut milk.



## JAMJIT AND KITTI KARUNYASOPON

Chef/owners, Boa Tong restaurant

Jamjit (pictured left) and Kitti Karunyasopon came to Kelowna from Thailand 10 years ago hoping to build a better life for their two sons. They spoke little English when they arrived, but today own and operate a successful restaurant, the Bai Tong, which means banana leaf.

Their move was sponsored by Kitti's family, who opened the Water Street restaurant, the first Thai eatery in Kelowna, 20 years ago. "We learned about the business from them," says Jamjit, who taught school in Bangkok. "They taught us how to deal with customers and how to solve problems." She cooks and manages the kitchen while her husband, who has a university degree in marine science, runs the front of the restaurant.

Jamjit initially dreamed of returning to teaching, but realized she couldn't afford to take time off work to retrain. Instead, she focuses on making the restaurant a success. She has been working to expand the menu and adapt Thai recipes so they appeal to Canadians.

The couple displays letters they receive from happy customers. "When I read them, I am so happy," says Jamjit. "I like to serve good food and give good service so when you leave you are happy and would like to come back."

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# LANG

# on life



As BC native languages slip toward extinction, Okanagan First Nations people work to revive their dying tongue

# OKANAGAN LANGUAGE support

by Karen Slivar

A language dies with its last speaker, a troubling fact for Okanagan First Nations whose fluent speakers are mainly elders.

“An elder once told me that if he was the only fluent speaker left in our land he would be very lonely,” says Wilfred Barnes, native language teacher at Sensisyusten elementary school, in Westbank.

Fluent speakers of Nsyilxcen (a.k.a. the Okanagan language) make up about four per cent of the total Okanagan First Nations population, according to the 2010/2011 Language Needs Assessment from the En’owkin Centre, in Penticton.

Sensisyusten is an independent school (junior kindergarten to Grade 6) operated by the Westbank First Nation and open to all students both aboriginal and non-aboriginal. Daily Okanagan language lessons

are complemented by cultural teachings in all subjects.

Today, Wilfred is working on translating a list of words for a science class. This year the school appointed three language teachers, Wilfred is the elder although he refers to himself as an elder in training. Helping him are one of the certified teachers (Maynard McRae) who is learning the language and culture, and a language trainee (Krystal Lezard).

Wilfred aims to make learning fun for the children. With scarce resources, it is up to him to translate English nursery rhymes into Okanagan. He waves a well-worn photocopy of an Okanagan to English dictionary that he is adding words to. Bilingual signs decorate the school walls and include things like basic colours, days of the week, months of the year and classroom names. Street name signs near the school are also bilingual.

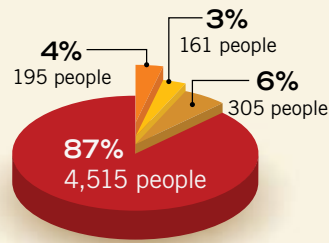
The languages of native peoples hold a wealth of history, tradition and culture. To learn to be as one with the land and all creation, Wilfred leads school fieldtrips to enhance cultural learning. Later this sk’ay (fall) he plans to show students how to dry deer meat in the traditional way. Giving thanks to the animal for giving his body to feed the people and honouring him at a feast.

“To be an elder you share your knowledge, otherwise you

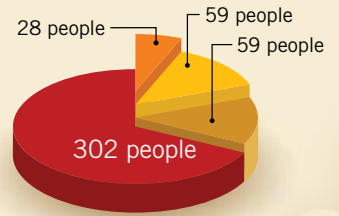
# Okanagan language by the numbers



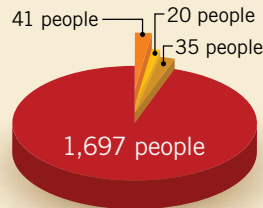
Total population (5,176)



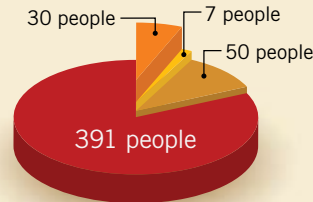
## Lower Similkameen Indian Band (Pop. 448)



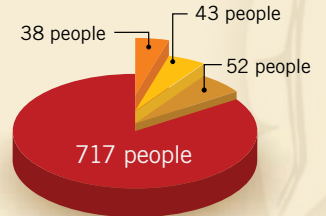
## Okanagan Indian Band (Pop. 1,793)



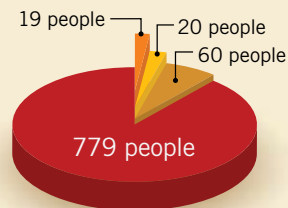
## Osoyoos Indian Band (Pop. 478)



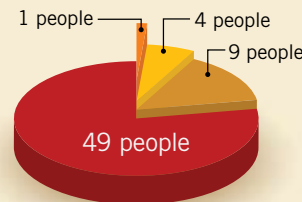
## Penticton Indian Band (Pop. 850)



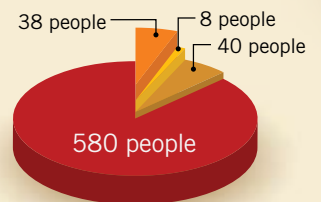
## Upper Nicola Band (Pop. 878)



## Upper Similkameen Indian Band (Pop. 63)



## Westbank First Nation (Pop. 666)



are just an old person,” says Wilfred. He admires an elder he knows who is in her 80s and despite pushing a walker, gets out and about to share her knowledge of the Okanagan language and traditions with the younger generation.

Inspired, Wilfred’s goal is to teach all his “10 grandchildren and more coming” the Okanagan language and culture. He does not profess to be an expert, he too is learning from the elders.

Today children are taught to be proud of who they are. “If you don’t know where you come from then you don’t know where you’re going,” says Wilfred.

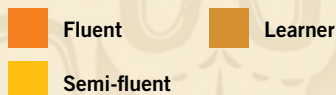
Near the end of the school day, he sits in on Maynard’s Grade 5/6 class and listens to them as they play the hand drum and sing the *Okanagan Song*.

Learning a language, any language, requires practice. Unfortunately, there are few opportunities to use the Okanagan language outside of the classroom. The goal at Sensisystem is to provide the children with a solid foundation for language speaking, says Joanne De Guevara, the school’s xatus (principal). It is hoped the children will continue on in higher grades and when they have children of their own they will be fluent enough to speak to their children at home and produce new fluent speakers.

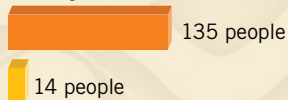
One of the challenges to reviving the Okanagan language is finding qualified teachers. Among fluent speakers of Okanagan, 69 per cent are aged 65 years and older while 31 per cent are aged 45 to 64, according to the En’owkin Centre assessment, and there are no fluent speakers under the age of 44.

From the time Europeans first established permanent settlements in the Okanagan about 150 years ago, they imposed cultural change through education and religion. The government instituted policies to assimilate First Nations people into English-speaking, non-First Nations society, which allowed the Crown to take over First Nations land and resources. In schools and residential schools, First Nations children were forced to speak English, resulting in the eradication of native speakers.

## Okanagan speakers by age group



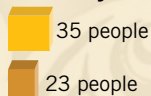
### 65+ years old



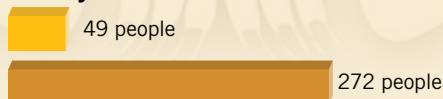
### 45-64 years old



### 25-44 years old



### 0-24 years old



Source: 2010/2011 En'owkin Centre Language Needs Assessment



**Opening Spread:** Metal sculpture by Virgil Marchand at the Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre, in Osoyoos. **This page:** Wilfred Barnes, elder in training, teaches Okanagan language and culture at Sensisysten elementary school in Westbank.

“Language is my passion,” says elder Modasta (commonly spelled Modesta) Betterton whose goal is to “bring it back.”

“The language has been handed down generation to generation,” she says. Born in Osoyoos in 1935, Modasta learned Okanagan at home. She didn’t go to residential school where children were separated from their families, forbidden to speak their language or practice their traditional ways.

It was her k’ik’w’a? (maternal grandfather) who told the creation stories to the family after dinner, repeating the tales of coyote over and over. Coyote features in many traditional Okanagan stories; a powerful force and yet the brunt of humour, coyote is a terrible role model and an example of what not to do. Without benefit of

a written language, stories and traditions were handed down orally, and repeated to help memory.

“You can’t separate language and culture, is one and the same thing,” says Modasta. “If we are going to pass on the language and culture it should be a truth.” One of those truths is coyote is a trickster and not to be revered.

For the past three years she has been teaching the same six adults twice a week (plus others who come and go). They came to her never having heard or spoken the Okanagan language. So far she has taught them 2,000 to 3,000 words. “It’s still gibberish in their mind,” she says.

Modasta teaches conversational Okanagan. When she began to teach the language she got together with Andrew McGinnis, from the Penticton Indian Band, to

“To be an elder you share your knowledge, otherwise you are just an old person”.



## Language 911

The En'owkin Centre, in Penticton, is dedicated to reviving the Okanagan language. Beginning with a dream to revitalize the language and culture, it has evolved into an indigenous cultural, educational and creative arts institution, which offers university and college transfer diplomas and programs. This year the centre is celebrating its 30th anniversary.

In 1985 language speakers from all seven bands of the Okanagan Nation got together and formed the Okanagan Language Association. One of the first projects was to standardize the writing system. Okanagan was an oral form of communication until the late 1800s when linguists began to transcribe it into word lists, dictionaries and grammar. The language was first written using the International Phonetic Alphabet.

Enter linguistics professor Tony Mattina, who has spent his career transcribing the words of Salish languages—Okanagan among them—for future generations. He helped standardize the Okanagan writing system by modifying the International Phonetic Alphabet. In 1987 he published the *Colville-Okanagan Dictionary* and he has developed a suite of courses for the centre in reading and writing the Okanagan language.

Tony was instrumental in making sure the language speakers at the time could read, write and understand the basic grammatical structure so they could go on to become teachers.

While sitting in on one of Tony's classes elder Modasta Betterton couldn't contain her laughter. Tony asked what she found so funny. "You are teaching the Okanagan language with an Italian accent," she said.

Although Tony's slight accent betrays his Italian heritage, he in fact speaks the language fluently and Modasta enjoys taking him out to lunch whenever he is in the Valley, conversing in Okanagan over a meal.

In 1989 the En'owkin Centre started to train fluent speakers to be teachers, and in 1992 steps were taken to certify language speakers as teachers under the BC College of Teachers. The First

“You can't separate language and culture, it is one and the same thing.”

write a curriculum. For learners of the language she first teaches the words, emphasizing correct pronunciation by having her students watch her mouth as she speaks.

“The language is in the pronunciation,” she says. It has a subtle guttural sound that flows. Once pupils master the words she moves on to transition words and from there sentence making. “You have to crawl before you walk.”

A linguistics professor and friend who studied Okanagan, Tony Mattina, once told Modasta that it takes 10 years to become fluent in the language.

Her own critic, she says that after the second or third lesson one of her adult students told her she couldn't continue with the classes. The student was having trouble wrapping her tongue around the new sounds (the Okanagan language has over 40 separate sounds), but Modasta convinced her to give it a few more weeks.

“I had a good talk with myself,” says Modasta, who realized she was going too fast and had to slow things down. The same linguistics expert friend also told her, a 12-year-old's tongue is still pliable, after 12, a tongue gets stiff so it's hard to pronounce new sounds.

**Above:** Elder Modasta Betterton of the Osoyoos Indian Band is a fluent speaker and teacher of the Okanagan language.

**Following page:** Instructor Richard Armstrong's language class at the En'owkin Centre in Penticton.

PHOTO BY KAREN SLIVAR

Nations Language Teacher Certificate requires individuals to take language fluency courses, if they are not already fluent, and education courses. The goal is to have certified language teachers in each of the band communities.

The centre is currently working on the final stages of developing a standardized language immersion program. Also in the works is a modern dictionary of terms for words like computer and ghetto blaster.

Through collaboration with universities and colleges the centre offers a number of certificates and programs including Aboriginal Language Revitalization (accredited through the University of Victoria); college readiness and Okanagan language fluency courses (accredited through the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology); and Developmental Standard Teaching Certificate in Okanagan (in cooperation with UBC Okanagan).

Over the years the En'owkin Centre has trained over 20 language teachers. Many of them work at band-operated schools and some in the public school system where Okanagan language and culture courses are offered.

En'owkin Centre executive director Jeannette Armstrong says, if the Okanagan language is to survive, "we need a lot more young people to get that fluency and get teacher training."



PHOTO BY VICTORIA BAPTISTE

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Modasta has learned to use whatever teaching tools work for her students and not to limit herself. "I switch from one thing to another." Pronunciation. Alphabet. Syllables. Phonics. A collector of language curriculum, she has taken teaching classes and sat in on many a seminar.

In the past she taught at a number of schools in the Valley including Sen\*pok\*chin and Tuc-el-nuit elementary schools in Oliver, and as a sub at Sensisyusten elementary and Constable Neil Bruce Middle School in Westbank. Today she is happy teaching adults who want to learn.

The Okanagan language is picturesque, "I have to paint the picture in my students' head." Just like she did when she wrote the children's counting song Raccoon Berry Pickin Song. Picture a mischievous raccoon dancing around with his basket pickin berries, taking them back to his home to wash them, counting them as he puts them in his mouth, washing more berries and, when he's done, going to the river and jumping in to wash himself.



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Modasta repeats, over and over, the tales she heard as a child to her students in a hope that they too will remember and in turn be able to tell the stories to their children.

At age 74, she advises them to, "Learn as much as you can in as short a time as you can," because she doesn't know how long she will live. Her students don't like to hear that. But she finds herself "forced to stay" because of her commitment to teaching them the Okanagan language and culture. Her willing audience is as dedicated as she is and won't let her miss a day of class.

Her goal for her students is to have them become teachers. "If I can put two of them through to be teachers, I'll be doing great," she says.

When a language is lost, we all lose out on the knowledge held within it and the unique way its speakers view the world. **OL**

Sensisysten House of Learning in Westbank teaches children junior kindergarten to Grade 6 traditional Okanagan language and culture as part of its curriculum.



PHOTO BY KAREN SLIVAR

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# Myths and Legends of the Okanagan



By Maureen McEwan  
Illustrations by Mishell Raedeke



## Valley Lore

The Okanagan Valley is known for the obvious—wine, fruit, lakes and beaches. But the less obvious also make the Okanagan unique—legends and tales passed down through generations, stories found among old newspaper clippings, historical books and diaries that paint an alluring past.

Valley lore is intriguing and it offers more than just entertainment. Many stories tell the history of the First Nations, going back in time far beyond the arrival of European settlers.

Richard Armstrong, who is a member of the Penticton Indian Band and language instructor at UBC Okanagan, has been chosen by his band elders as a knowledge keeper at the En'owkin Centre in Penticton. It is now his role to keep the legends and native history alive.

“From the time I can remember, elders have been filling my head with stories,” says Richard. These stories go back to a time when there were no people, just plants, birds and animals. The legend of Turtle

Island explains how his people came to be.

“There were four kingdoms of animal people on this island—the four-leggeds, those that lived in the water, those that used air for travel and the plants,” says Richard. “Our people came to be when the Creator took something from each of the four groups and made an ideal being. If this legend is true, then the animals, plants and birds are like our parents, and if so, are obligated to give us our best chance of survival, just like any good parent would. That’s why, when we hear the words Mother Earth, they mean something to us.”

Not surprisingly, many aboriginal legends involve nature and are often linked to Turtle Island. Take the story of the monarch butterfly.

“The monarch butterfly is one of the most important creatures to our people. It was the monarch butterfly that flew over Turtle Island and showed the people where the elk and the deer were and it showed the four-leggeds that the two-leggeds had a right to hunt them for food.”



The white imprints on the edge of their wings clarify the story, says Richard. “If you look carefully at the white strips on the monarch, you’ll see footprints of the four-leggeds and the two leggeds—and where the two wings meet you’ll see their footprints come together.”

## Legendary Lake Monster

Many native legends have helped to shape local history, but one in particular has made an enormous impact on the entire Okanagan. The story of Ogotopogo, which has been the driving force behind marketing campaigns, promotions and logos, is actually derived from a native legend.

Originally named N’ha-a-itk by the Syilx people, which means lake monster or lake demon, Ogotopogo is said to live between Squally Point and Rattlesnake Island, across the lake from Peachland. Numerous stories exist, but the original legend began with the murder of Kan-He-Kan, a local wise man who was killed along the shores of Okanagan Lake. As the story goes, the gods caught the murderer and as punishment, turned him into a serpent who would remain condemned to the lake forever. It is said that sacrifices of food were made whenever people fished in the area or travelled across the lake. N’ha-a-itk could churn the waters suddenly, taking the lake from calm to stormy. More than once he claimed the life of man and beast.

It wasn’t until 1926 that N’ha-a-itk became popularly

known as Ogotopogo, thanks to an English song and play that was making the rounds at the time. The song referred to a creature called Ogotopogo, whose mother was an earwig and father was a snail. Sung at a Vancouver Board of Trade meeting by the local Kalamalka Players, the song was such a big hit that the name Ogotopogo stuck.

Throughout the years, hundreds of sightings of Ogotopogo have been reported and many believe the legendary creature exists.

“Someone who has seen it and someone who hasn’t seen it, their opinions will differ,” says Richard. “If a person has seen it, he will never forget it.”

## Spanish Invaders

A 500-metre-high rock cliff, found halfway between Oliver and Okanagan Falls, is one of the most dramatic features in the entire Valley. The history of McIntyre Bluff, teeming with First Nations legends, is as compelling as its magnificent stature.

“If a person has seen it, he will never forget it.”



It is believed that a bloody massacre took place here involving the Shuswap and Okanagan peoples. Although the story varies, one version says that a Shuswap war party set up camp just south of the bluff's base. When the Okanagans found out, they surrounded the Shuswaps and forced them to the top. It's not known if the Shuswaps purposely jumped to their death or if they were just unaware of their surroundings. However, an article in the July 4, 1974, issue of the *Oliver Chronicle* refers to several skeletons being found during excavations for a dam on the river at the foot of the cliff.

Another legend is the black horse and rider. When the sunlight hits the cliffs just right, you are supposed to be able to see the pair on the rock face. A poem preserved in the Oliver and District Heritage Society archives, tells the story of a time when a wild herd of horses roamed free. The lead horse, never ridden and feared by many, was caught one morning by a group of men. When a young man jumped on his back, horse and rider disappeared amidst a cloud of dust. The men searched the Valley for weeks, finally finding the big black

horse grazing freely — but the young man had been turned to stone. It wasn't until years later when the horse died that the two could be seen, the rider astride the horse as a permanent fixture on the cliff face.

Other legends, like that of the lost Spanish Column, have left traces of truth in the most unsuspected places throughout the Valley.

Randy Manuel, the retired director and curator of Penticton's R.N. Atkinson Museum and Archives, says a group of Spanish soldiers is believed to have travelled through the Valley between the late 1600s and early 1700s. Their intent was to explore and secure territory for the King of Spain.

Upon leaving California, they made their way up to the Osoyoos area, where they took prisoners from the Similkameen tribe. They wintered in Kelowna and explored as far north as Vernon and the O'Keefe district. The following spring, they returned to the south of the Similkameen Valley where they were ambushed and killed by the natives, who released their captive family and friends.

Because all the Spaniards were killed, there is no written record of the expedition. However, several items found in the area may be evidence proving the story true: a sword found at O'Keefe Ranch in the late 19th century (and now in the Vernon Museum); a huge log barn found in the Rutland area in the 1860s, rotting into the ground back then and big enough to have housed a large group of men; a pictograph in the Similkameen that could quite possibly represent the invasion; and a story told to Randy by an elder years ago.

"She told me that as a little girl playing near her grandmother's house she found a knife that looked like a cross. She showed it to her granny who said that it was bad medicine and to take it back where she found it and not to tell anyone. The little girl asked why it was bad, whereupon her granny said that it belonged to the Turtle People of long ago who killed and stole their people. Turtle people referred to the hard armour that they wore — clothes that were as hard as turtle shells."



## Lost Treasure

Stories like these are as compelling as persistent legends of lost treasure—like the one about the missing gold bricks, stolen from the Cariboo Mine at Camp McKinney in 1896.

An article in the Okanagan Historical Society's 37th Report, tells an interesting tale of Matt Roderick, an employee of the mine, who was accused of stealing three gold bars as they were being transported to Midway.

Roderick promptly left the mine, claiming illness, and headed home to Seattle. A detective agency discovered that once there, he got busy spending money and paying off debts. Rumour has it that he cashed in one bar worth \$1,600 and planned to return later to retrieve the other two bars which he'd hidden near the mine.

Roderick did indeed return, with \$100 cash and a canvass harness outfitted with two pockets, perfect for transporting the two remaining gold bars. Unfortunately, so the story goes, he was killed before he recovered the hidden gold, which remains missing to this day.

## Ghostly Tales

Vernon appears to host an abundance of ghostly spirits—enough that self-styled paranormal story collector Gabriel Newman organizes a ghostly walking tour every summer in conjunction with the Vernon Museum. Gabriel has become something of an expert on haunted buildings and wandering spirits.

"The most commonly told ghost story is of the woman in white in the old Victorian House at O'Keefe Ranch," says Gabriel. "Many people lived in that house, but it's believed it's the old governess who stayed on to care for the O'Keefe children."

Visitors have reported seeing a woman, always dressed in white, peering out from an upstairs window then suddenly disappearing. Others have heard children crying, while still others claim items have disappeared then mysteriously reappeared. Some staff members say they have also felt a presence walk by them when they were in the house alone at night.

Other "haunts" include the Caetani house, numerous homes on East Hill and the dental clinic on Pleasant Valley Road, which was built in 1897 for the Moore family.

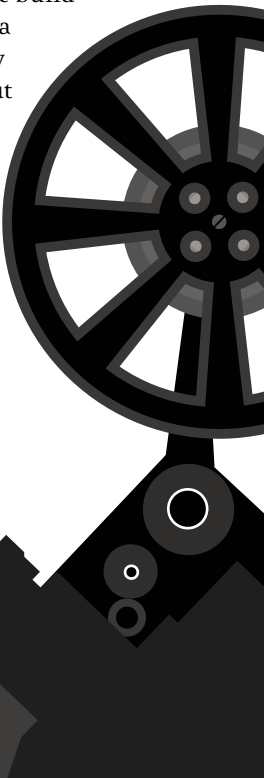
"Over the years there has been a constant stream of experiences here," says Gabriel, the most common being the vision of a girl in the upstairs part of the building. "It is true that one of

the Moore girls died here of blood poisoning after she had five teeth removed." The fact that the bottom half of the building is now a dental office is pure coincidence, but the fact that the top half is an apartment that is often for rent — may not be.

"A woman who lived in the upstairs apartment about 10 years ago called me all the way from New Zealand," says Gabriel. He recalls how, a decade later, she was still fixated on the house and wanted to know more about it as she too had witnessed some peculiar sights.

Ghosts can also inhabit buildings other than houses. Many stories have been told about the ghostly projectionist who wanders Vernon Towne Cinema. Barbara Smith recounts a variety of occurrences in her book *Ghost Stories and Mysterious Creatures of British Columbia*, such as how employees have felt the floorboards "shift" in the projection room as if someone is walking on them, or how the doors have been locked from the inside, even though there was no one there with a key. And there was the time when workers who were hired to clean the theatre seats enjoyed listening to music playing through the sound system — which was never turned on.

All of these stories add character to the buildings as well as a hint of mystery to the town. But are these locations really haunted? Or is it just local lore? The answer is up to you. **OL**



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# Tuscan touches in wine country home

by Laurie Carter

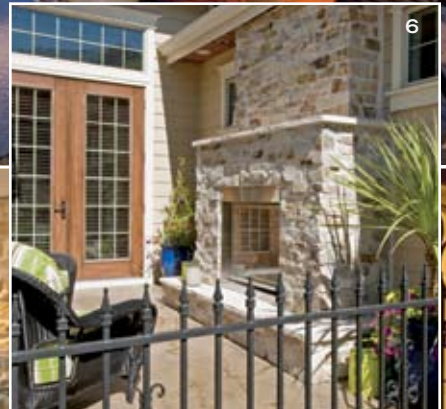
Old world style and local wine culture inspire unique features in custom home

- For their personal residence in The Ponds development in Kelowna's Mission area, Wine Country Custom Homes owner Pat Hayko and his wife wanted a taste of Tuscany seasoned with the distinct look and lifestyle of the Okanagan. Outdoor living spaces play a major role in their 4,800-sq.ft. two-level dwelling, which features three bedrooms, two-and-a-half baths, an executive den and dedicated wine parlour. Designer Lee Mullins of Mullins Drafting and Design harmonized natural stone, stamped concrete, robust beams, travertine, hardwood and hand-crafted wrought iron details to achieve their vision. The open-concept level-entry home incorporates Lutron Lighting to reduce the number of switches on limited wall space. Seven control stations, indoors and out, operate the Nuvo sound system, while heating and cooling is provided by a heat pump and ultra high efficiency furnace. **OL**



3







9



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11



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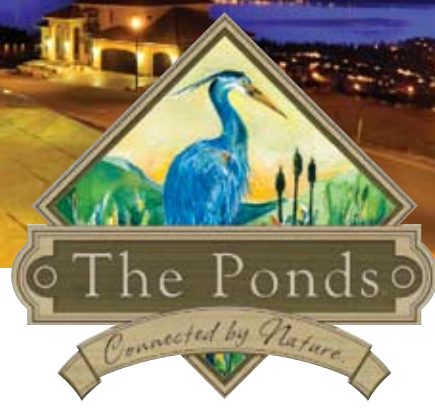
**1.** Wrought iron gates by Kelowna Ironworks and stamped concrete courtyard add a taste of Tuscany to the entrance of a home that fits comfortably in the Okanagan landscape.  
**2.** Natural stone from Kettle Valley Stone Company complements maintenance free HardiPlank cement board shingles and siding.  
**3.** Front and rear elevations of custom home designed by Lee Mullins of Mullins Drafting & Design in Kelowna and built by Wine Country Custom Homes.  
**4.** One of three outdoor living spaces, the deck off the main floor great room takes advantage of the 270-degree view from this elevated lot in Kelowna's Ponds development. A stone fireplace out of frame to the right separates the seating area from a casual dining space.

**5.** Dark stained Brazilian cherry hardwood flooring and cozy area carpeting delineate spaces in the expansive lower level games and family room.  
**6.** A second outdoor fireplace is the focal point for a seating area in the entrance courtyard. Like the main level deck, the flooring is stamped concrete. A third outdoor living space is reached from the lower level games and family room.  
**7.** The master suite features a double-sided fireplace that warms the sleeping area and adds elegance to the adjoining bathroom. The 12-foot recessed ceiling and window wall create a sense of light and space.  
**8.** The temperature controlled wine room off the family room provides space for 750 bottles.

**9. & 10.** The great room features a 12-foot high coffered ceiling and maple flooring. The fireplace surround, by Hun-Can Home Decor, is made of the same concrete and plaster cast as the range hood in the adjacent open-concept kitchen. These details, combined with travertine flooring and granite countertops contribute to the Tuscan flavour created by Cucina Del Re cabinetry.  
**11.** The owners personally designed this wine parlour to highlight their wine country theme. Comfortable club chairs invite conversation in an old world room warmed by dark wainscotting and hand-applied suede paint, separated from the foyer and great room by hand-crafted ironwork grilles.  
**12.** Even the master bath is oriented to benefit from the view.

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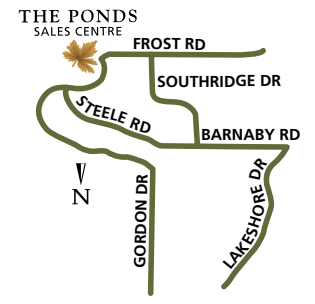


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# Pushing the northern limit

by Michael Botner

**North Okanagan and Shuswap winemakers exploit micro-climates beyond conventional geographic boundaries for wine grapes**

■ The area from Vernon through the North Shuswap has attracted some of BC's hardiest, most determined winemakers.

North of Armstrong on Gulch Road, Edge of the Earth Vineyards is set in a peaceful hollow along bubbling Deep Creek. On a gently rolling, southwest facing hillside, the three-acre vineyard acts "like a heat sink, drinking up the sun," says owner Russ Nikes.

Ovino Winery recently opened on Yankee Flats Road in the Salmon Valley between Vernon and Salmon Arm, with Mount Ida looming to the east. In 2007, former dairy farmer John Koopmans, a native of the Netherlands, planted a four-acre vineyard on the crest of a hill that he describes as "a good heat bench."

Two years later he added a part acre of experimental varieties. After the harvest, he allows his small herd of sheep to graze among the vines.

Two of the Shuswap's best known wineries are located a short distance away in Tappen. New owners at Recline Ridge, Graydon and Maureen Ratzlaff, are determined to take this highly regarded winery, with its eight-acre vineyard facing Mount Tappen, to a new level.

At the head of Tappen Valley, providing a warm reception at Granite Creek Estate Wines is a high priority for the Kennedy clan. Granite Creek's 10-acre estate vineyard is planted with cool climate varieties including BC's most northerly Pinot Noir.

Celista Estate made history as

BC's most northerly grape winery when it opened this summer on the north shore of Shuswap Lake. Owners Margaret Baile-Ootes and Jake Ootes say the south-facing five-acre vineyard enjoys plenty of sunshine. The 160-acre family farm also offers cozy rental cabins, an art gallery with "the best from the Arctic," Icelandic horses and a tasting room with a unique pine beetle wood counter.

South of Salmon Arm, Larch Hills tops a hill overlooking Enderby. Owners Jack and Hazel Manser extend a warm welcome in the quaint wine shop. Overlooking the nine-acre, non-irrigated vineyard, which produces intensely flavoured grapes, Larch's patio is an excellent place to end the tour. **OL**



## ROGER WONG

Winemaker,  
Gray Monk Estate Winery  
and Intrigue Wines

Vancouver native and cartographer Roger Wong left Natural Resources Canada to work at Tinhorn Creek Vineyards. After volunteering to pick grapes in 1995, he started full-time as a vineyard labourer. "I switched to cellar work and took courses at UC Davis, before transferring to sales for a stint," he says. In 1998, Roger joined Pinot Reach Cellars in Kelowna, where Old Vines Riesling became the shining star. Starting his own label, he produced Focus Riesling four years later. In the aftermath of the 2003 Okanagan Mountain Park fire, Pinot Reach's grapes were unusable because of smoke damage and the winery was sold the following year. With experience producing sparkling wine at Pinot Reach and a sparkling cider at Raven Ridge, Roger moved to Gray Monk as sparkling and red winemaker. He and his wife Jillian purchased a little farm in Oyama with hopes of starting their own winery and planted the entire six acres, primarily with Riesling, in 2008. Their plans moved forward when Roger's father, Gerry, passed away during harvest and friends Ross and Geri Davis stepped in to help. The two couples launched Intrigue Wines in 2009, using contracted grapes and the Wong's garage. Meanwhile, the new winery and tasting room are under development at the Davis vineyard on Ocoala Road in Lake Country.

## highspirits

Showcasing wines of the North Okanagan and Shuswap, the tasting notes list name, price, and region or country. The five-star rating system stresses value for price.



### OVINO WINERY 2009 PINOT GRIS

*Shuswap, Silver Creek*

★★★★ \$14.90

Sourced from estate and North Okanagan vineyards, richly flavoured Pinot Gris shows succulent peach, pear and tropical fruit flavours with notes of orange/grapefruit peel and mineral, and a slightly off-dry finish. Pairs with pork: roasted, grilled or curried.



### CELISTA ESTATE WINERY 2009 ORTEGA

*Shuswap, Celistia*

★★★★ \$17

Showing spritzig in the glass, the intense flavours suggest Granny Smith apple, grapefruit and apricot, hints of mineral and fresh dough, and crisp, racy acidity balancing a note of softness on the finish. It pairs with antipasti and spicy fish, poultry and pork dishes.



### LARCH HILLS WINERY 2008 MARECHAL FOCH SPECIAL RESERVE

*Shuswap, Salmon Arm*

★★★★ \$19.40

The result of malo-lactic fermentation and aging exclusively in French oak, impressive old vines Marechal Foch delivers a smooth, round palate with black cherry/blackberry jam overlaid with smoke and vanilla. Partners roasted beef and game dishes.

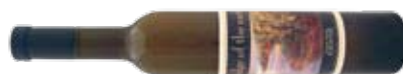


### RECLINE RIDGE VINEYARDS & WINERY 2008 SIEGERREBE

*Shuswap, Tappen*

★★★★ \$16.90

Flagship wine features incredibly aromatic nose and intensely rich flavours of tropical fruit, peach, orange peel, exotic spice and honey. Fresh, lively balance adds a note of delicacy. It partners curried beef or pork and creamy fish, poultry and pasta dishes.



### EDGE OF THE EARTH VINEYARD 2008 PINOT NOIR ICEWINE

*Okanagan Valley, Armstrong*

★★★★1/2 \$34.90/375ml

From grapes grown in West Kelowna, delectable Icewine exhibits aromas of caramel, fig and strawberry syrup, and an exquisite palate suggesting tropical fruit, dried apricot and crème caramel, livened by bright acidity. Serve with dark chocolate, dried fruit and nuts.



### GRANITE CREEK ESTATE WINERY 2008 VIOGNIER

*Shuswap, Tappen*

★★★★ \$19.90

So seductive you can lose yourself in the exotically perfumed nose and creamy, richly textured, opulent palate. It shows flavours of succulent tropical fruit, apricot, melon and orange peel. Pair with fish, poultry in a cream and nut sauce, and spicy Asian cuisine.

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BOTNER



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PHOTO BY BRUCE KEMP

by Bruce Kemp

# Senior helping seniors

When Olive Fielding was named one of the Top 25 Canadians by the Canadian Association of Retired People, it was no surprise to the Peachland seniors she helps every day

■ It's every Canadian's worst nightmare—to arrive at the gates of old age without close family or enough money. Yet it happens time-and-again. In response, Olive Fielding, a Peachland senior herself and coordinator of Aging In Place, has made the concerns of seniors in this Central Okanagan community the focus of her everyday efforts.

You could call Olive Mrs. Fix-it. Working out of the Peachland Wellness Centre, she spends her days helping seniors find affordable housing; making medical appointments or simply arranging rides into larger centres. Peachland is the senior's capital of Canada, so there's strong demand for social programs geared specifically to them.

Olive is modest about what she does. You can see from how she addresses questions that she thinks before putting her mouth in gear. Yet she has a lot to crow about if she ever decided to blow her own horn.

"I did get an award for my work through CARP (Canadian Association

of Retired People) in January—the Top 25 Canadians Award. They give it throughout Canada for people helping in the community and they have one or two people from each province."

The CARP award was the reason for this story, but she seems reluctant to talk about it. With a little more prompting she does, then drops a bomb. "Oh, I also received another one (award) on Canada Day this year and it's called The SS Beaver Medal. That one is given by a group of naval veterans for community service."

Being coordinator of the Aging In Place program is one of those part-time positions that are often mistaken for full-time employment, but Olive doesn't complain. She enjoys the work and the people and it keeps her busy.

During our interview, people pop their heads in, half out of curiosity, but mostly to say hello. Olive is popular among the users of the Wellness Centre and greets them in turn with a smile.

"The Wellness Centre and Aging In

Place are kind of together as one," she says. "We provide all these services to seniors, but we also provide them to anybody of any age who needs them."

Aging In Place is a program designed to keep seniors in their own homes as long as possible. Most seniors can manage their affairs pretty efficiently, but for a variety of reasons they can't handle everything their home requires from them. It's not only maintaining the house that generates concern. The elderly become lonely—especially if their immediate family lives far away.

"We have a breakfast club that was started when this place (the centre) was opened in 2000. That has been such a success—especially now there seem to be even more people using it. This place is just full."

Attendance at the breakfast club is a mix of singles (widows, widowers) and married couples. But she finds there are more married people coming. These would be older seniors and they come as a couple.

Another aspect of daily life where ▶



Arrive at Peachland Wellness Centre and chat over coffee with seniors who need help or advice.



Arrange a ride for an elderly woman to visit doctor in Kelowna. Many seniors need a ride because they no longer drive or use their own car unless the weather is good.



Return phone calls from clients or from any of the 50 Wellness Centre volunteers. Do paperwork. "I spend a lot of time on the phone either from the office here or from home."



Visit senior in home to do needs assessment to determine how much help is needed. Make arrangement for an overnight visitor to stay with senior in his home.



Give the course: Falls Prevention. Falls are one of the biggest problems seniors have when living alone.



With no evening appointments today, head home to see husband and deal with phone calls not answered during the day.

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## whoamongus

seniors often need assistance is meals. "It's a big help if you go into supported living, at least you can get your meals," says Olive. For many this becomes a major reason for leaving their homes, but Aging In Place offers a home delivery service as an alternative.

"We have a very good service here where we get frozen meals from the Penticton Hospital. They're really good meals, not too salty or spicy. I just got a new hip so I've sampled some. They're pretty good for \$6 and there's enough for two meals.... So by doing this simple thing, we really help seniors stay in their house."

Olive comes to this work by a roundabout route. Born in a small Sussex village in the UK, she trained as a nurse. In 1971, she and husband Keith (now mayor of Peachland) moved to Bermuda with a pile of suitcases and a new baby.

From there, instead of returning to Britain, the couple — now with three kids in tow — moved to Oakville, Ontario, where she returned to nursing and undertook a psychiatric specialty. While working in the psychiatric unit in the Oakville hospital Olive developed an interest in geriatric nursing. When retirement time came, the couple took to the road in an RV. They intended to travel continuously, but ended up in Peachland.

It became apparent that they would be staying here year-round so Olive started volunteering and eventually became involved with bereavement counselling. She caught the attention of folks at UBC Okanagan who were setting up a seniors program (People Reaching Out To Seniors — PROS) and it went from there.

When new clients approach Aging In Place, on their own or referred by other agencies, Olive begins by performing a needs assessment to determine how the program can best help. Out of these assessments, a number of pressing issues emerge. Chief among them is the lack of close medical care in Peachland.

"We're a half-hour to 40 minutes

**AGE:** 69

**FORMER PROFESSION:** REGISTERED NURSE

**FAVOURITE SAYING:** I'LL KEEP GOING AS LONG AS I CAN

**REGRET:** "WE HAVE A LIMITED NUMBER OF TEEN VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE MAINLY GIRLS....I'D LIKE MORE BECAUSE THAT'S SOMETHING PEOPLE DO TALK ABOUT. THEY DON'T THINK THE YOUNGER GENERATION WILL VOLUNTEER."

**BIGGEST CHALLENGE:** FUNDING. "IT IS ALWAYS A CONCERN. SOMETIMES I THINK 'WHEW WE'RE GETTING NEAR THE EDGE,' THEN SOMETHING COMES ALONG."

**WEBSITE:**

WWW.PEACHLANDWELLNESSCENTRE.CA

away from a hospital here and there's no emergency clinic in Peachland," says Olive. "There are only two doctors and a third one that comes in and does relief sometimes, but they just have office hours. When I first came there was only one doctor. There's some talk about opening an emergency centre in Westbank but I haven't heard what stage that's at."

Along with medical services, affordable housing is another major concern. There is seniors' housing in Peachland, but not enough. Olive would like as many as 50 more subsidized apartments. These could be small like they have in supported living facilities with no nursing care.

"We had a gentleman we needed to get into something where meals were provided and that took about a year." Olive says that's about average.

Public transportation is another issue. The centre has a handicap-accessible van and provides rides to medical appointments, shopping excursions and social events. But to take public transit anywhere from Peachland rivals Homer's *Odyssey*.

Olive is also a centre user. She takes part in social activities like the choral, the Monday morning coffee club and a tai chi group.

Olive Fielding through her work at Aging In Place and the Peachland Wellness Centre is a model of seniors helping seniors. **OL**

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# Blame game

## A pinch of common sense for the public pot

- It's a sad sign of our times that the more choices we have, the less likely we are to make good ones.

I'm the kind of person who can spend 10 irritated minutes in the supermarket aisle, twisting tins and boxes on their sides to compare sodium content between products. So it follows naturally that I might spend even longer philosophizing over the delicate balance between personal accountability and the public good.

Salt is a perfect example. Canadians, we know, are eating way too much salt hidden in the most unlikely guises: breakfast cereals and bread. I'm dutifully leaving the salt shaker in the cupboard, but it strikes me I'd have a better chance of reducing my risk of heart attack and stroke if government regulators were simply to step up and set limits on how much salt our food manufacturers were permitted to load into their products.

Other countries did this decades ago. In Finland, authorities worked with the food industry to reduce sodium content in the 1970s: over 30 years, salt intake dropped by one-third and voila! Deaths from both stroke and heart disease have fallen by more than 75 per cent. Twist around as many tin cans as you like, if someone isn't cramming salt into my basic foodstuffs, it's going to be a hell of a lot easier to cut back on the stuff. I, personally, can only do so much.

The flip side, of course, is that faced with any ethical, cultural or ecological quandary, impotent regulators and politicians provide a handy scapegoat. I'm concerned about global warming, but it's pretty darn easy to run errands in my car when my gas is subsidized and lawmakers waffle over emissions targets.

I can try to resist buying yet another cute, cheap T-shirt made in overseas sweatshops by school-age children (ooh! it comes in coral pink!), but heck, if the government isn't going to slap restrictions on manufacturing practices, I can't get too bummed about it.

Sometimes acting accountable can feel like pushing a boulder up a melting glacier, on a planet with no other sentient beings.

The crazy thing is, most of us stop doing the things we

shouldn't be doing — texting while driving springs to mind — when the people elected to babysit our democracy decide to put rules in place and enforce them. Which begs the question, shouldn't we have quit smoking/worn seatbelts/stopped hitchhiking at night on dark roads, of our own accord, before laws were enacted... because it was a smart thing to do?

Me, I'm hoping a little likemindedness will help us all pull together and make the right choices, with a boost from the big guys. I'm inspired by two French villages, which noticed in the late 1990s that *leurs petits enfants* were getting fatter and fatter. Recognizing that the best efforts of parents or children themselves would not be enough, the community opted to act as one. Playgrounds and sports facilities were built, media took up the message, bakeries and supermarkets got on board, walking routes were publicized and families were offered cooking workshops. (Imagine the French needing cooking lessons!) In five years, the prevalence of childhood obesity had fallen to nine per cent, whereas it had risen to almost 18 per cent in a nearby town that hadn't undertaken a public/private intervention.

I'm not asking for big government, just smart government, thoughtful lawmakers and some savvy citizenry. Yep, I personally, can only do so much. But if anyone wants to join in, look out for me: I'm the one in the pink T-shirt, pushing the big rock. **OL**



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