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Dr. Craig Crippen discusses: Treating Unwanted Hair

There are a wide variety of treatments for unwanted hair. I will outline all of the most common and effective treatments available today.

The most common approach to removing hair is by shaving the hair off at the surface of the skin. Many people also choose to bleach darker hair and make it less noticeable. Since these treatments do not deal with the hair root, hair will continue to grow.

Other common treatments include plucking, waxing, sugaring or depilatory creams (usually cause significant skin irritation). Because the hair root remains intact, the hair will eventually grow back after a few weeks.

Electrolysis is another popular method that works by using electricity and a tiny metal probe to either heat each individual hair follicle or create a toxic solution near the hair follicle to permanently destroy it to prevent future hair growth. Its advantages are that it can be permanent, is only minimally painful, and will work with any hair colour. The largest

disadvantage is that a large number of treatments are required which requires a great deal of time.

Laser Hair Removal is a more modern approach to the same goal. This time, light energy is delivered to the skin and the dark hair absorbs that energy which causes the hair root to heat up and become permanently damaged. The hair will not regrow if the heat is sufficient. The advantages to laser hair removal are that large areas can be treated relatively quickly and no hair growth is needed to perform the treatment. The downside of this method is that a number of sessions are necessary, not everyone is a candidate due to darker skin or lighter hair, and complications like blisters and burns can occur if too much heat is delivered by an inexperienced operator.

The main message here is that none of these treatments are guaranteed to be permanent although electrolysis and laser hair removal are pretty close to achieving that goal.



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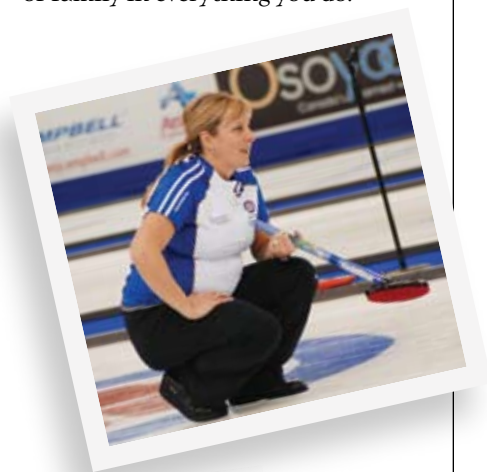
■ Sister Sledge is belting out *We Are Family* in the back of my head as I peruse the pictures of Sasha Carter—curler and Okanagan hero. Sasha has just returned from the Canadian Women's Curling Championships in Charlottetown where she played 10 games while 33 weeks pregnant with soon to be Lil Baby Carter. "Curling is all about family," she laughs. "My teammates, my club, my husband Greg and all of our family are part of this amazing circle of love and support." Greg even kids her that the baby might kick her out of the hack—cue *You Must've Been a Beautiful Baby*.

As Baby Carter "rocked" alongside mom throughout the tournament, Sasha describes how the locals cheered her on with, "great sweeping Mama" and "way to go Baby-Lucky." I hear Elvis singing *That's Alright Mama* as Sasha draws to the button. Curling's obsession with rocks and guards and sweeping takes the mind to music—can't you hear Steve Millar singing *Keep on a Rockin' Me Baby*? Curlers also love to yell and as the chorus of "hurry, hurry-hard" deafened the crowd in PEI, Baby Lucky was probably thinking *Hold on, I'm Comin'*—in my own good time!

Delivering rocks is second nature to Sasha but very different from delivering babies. The same "hurry-hard, hurray-hard" screams might be heard at Kelowna General in a few weeks when Baby-Lucky arrives. (Your Song).

Sasha and her teammates (*We Are The Champions*) have won the Canadian Championship twice and juniors once. Sasha plays in a sport where competing at nationals seven-and-a-half months pregnant is possible; not true for most. "Curling clubs are all about family—everybody knows you," she says. "I have made friends throughout the world, people are doing extraordinary things for us." When told that she was going to be featured in this magazine, (*On the Cover of the Rolling Stone*) Sasha expressed what a big fan of *Okanagan Life* she is. "Your magazine draws attention to all that is great about the Okanagan. The sense of community and the stories you tell are powerful...I see it everywhere." James Taylor sums up what it means to belong with, "shower the people you love, with love—show them the way you feel."

The sense of family, community and generosity abound in this Valley—the cheerleading need never stop because we are all connected. If you feel this way, be a cheerleader too. Call or email Sasha (sasha@peacocksheridan.com), her teammates or any other Okanagan champion to congratulate them. Let your family know they are loved and appreciated, and never stop trying to build a sense of family in everything you do.



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events



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ACTIONS CONSEQUENCES

Ballet Kelowna: Apr. 29-30, 2011

Mixing bold, innovative modern dance with the timeless beauty of classic ballet. *Negotiating Shifts* (2008) is known for its passion, intensity and lyrical physicality; *Lignes et Pointes* (1975) is a masterful interpretation of the music of French Canadian composer Pierre Mercure; *In Stride* (1999) is a light-hearted, effervescent and joyfully physical romp; and *Dvorak Dances* (2006) choreographed by Ballet Kelowna's artistic director David LaHay. For tickets phone 250.860.1470 or visit www.ticketmaster.ca.



TAPCO

Summerland: Apr. 3, 2011

Children (and adult) theatre at its best, don't miss this show-stopping performance by the youth ensemble of the Vancouver Tap Dance Society. Jam-packed with high-energy hopping, flapping and musical taps, this award-winning troupe will have you standing on your feet applauding for more. Performance at Summerland Centre Stage. Showtime 2 p.m. Tickets at the door or in advance at Tumbleweed Gallery (Penticton) or Sweet Tooth Cafe (Summerland). For more info visit www.childrensshowcase.org.

MORE CHOICE HAPPENINGS

DANCES WITH DAVID

Okanagan Symphony: Apr. 1-3, 2011

Renowned for both his baroque interpretations and his Cape Breton fiddling, David Greenberg joins the Okanagan Symphony to perform *Postcards from the Sky* (Mozetich) and *Concerto for Four Violins* (Vivaldi). Penticton April 1 (www.ticketmaster.ca or 250.770.1470); Kelowna April 2 (www.ticketmaster.ca or 250.860.1470); and in Vernon April 3 (www.ticketseller.ca or 250.549.7469). For more info visit www.okanagansymphony.com.

CHOR LEONI MEN'S CHOIR

Vernon: Apr. 2, 2011

"Chor Leoni has a polish, a sound, a spontaneity and a style that is unequalled by any male choir I have ever heard," says Bramwell Tovey, conductor of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. The choir's music ranges from rollicking to heart soothing, from salutes to world song and proud celebrations of Canada. Performance at the Vernon and District Performing Arts Centre. For tickets visit www.ticketseller.ca or phone 250.549.7469.

OKANAGAN FEST-OF-ALE

Penticton: Apr. 8-9, 2011

For beer aficionados, this festival features all the stout you can muster, from small brewpubs to regional breweries. And what's a Fest-of-Ale without a little entertainment and some munchies to swallow down with the brewski. Advance ticket sales only. Get tickets and more info online at www.fest-of-ale.bc.ca.

VETTA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Kelowna: Apr. 17, 2011

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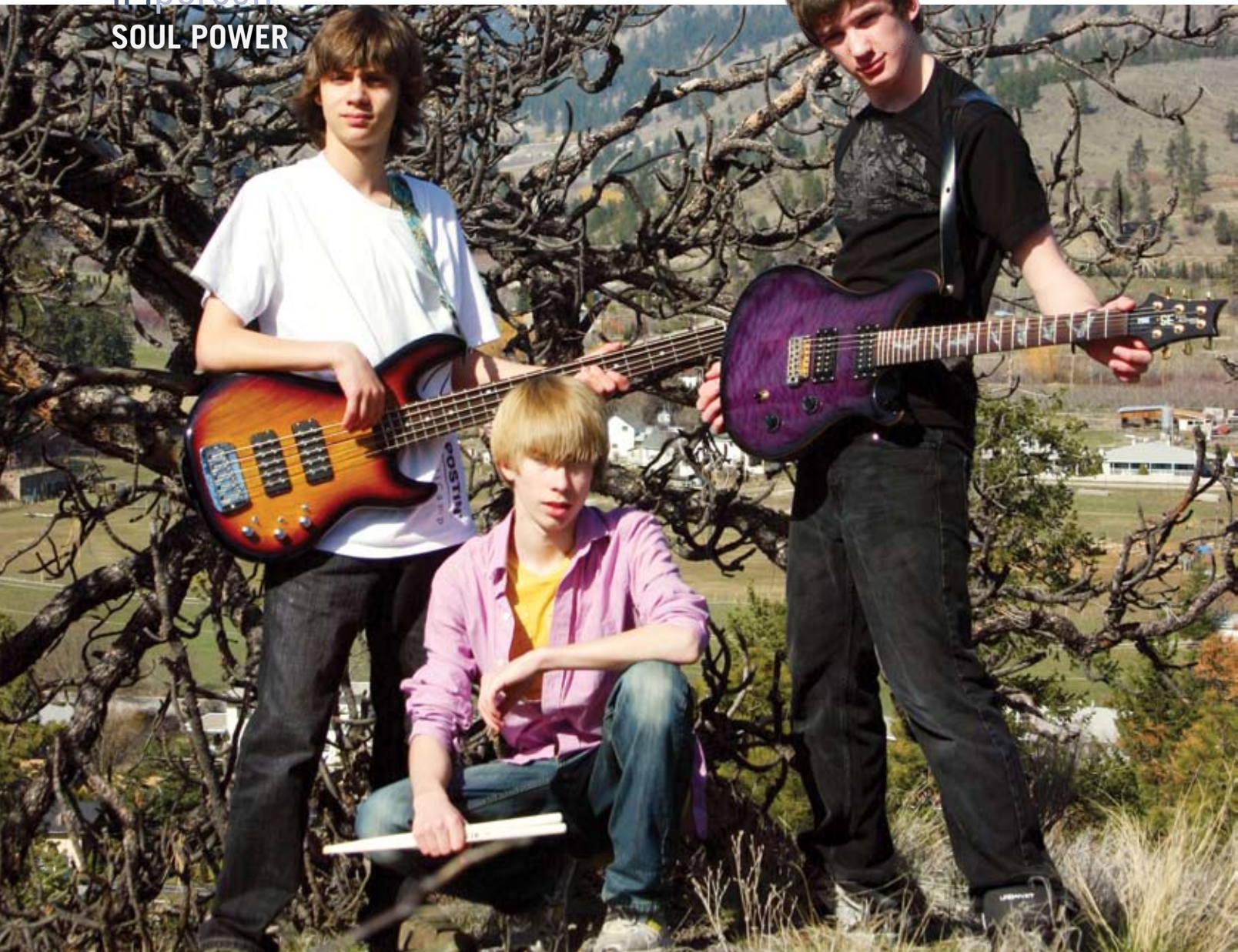
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SOUL POWER IN SUMMERLAND

■ Ryan Bonanno, Steve Cogbill and Bobby Shaw, three Grade 9 students from Summerland Secondary School got their start two years ago. “We would stay at the end of jazz band and just jam together,” says Bobby. The group’s musical talent and creative song writing has taken them from playing school assemblies to gigs at wineries, bookstores and farmers’ markets.

Soul Power’s music ranges from jazz to funk rock. Saxophonist

Bobby Shaw’s fingering skills and improvisation techniques, followed closely by his guitar riffs, make him a crowd favourite. Bassist Ryan Bonanno plays a five-string in his search for greater range and versatility. Ryan also mans the keyboards, while Steve Cogbill keeps the rhythm. His goal is to be a session drummer for top name performers.

Song writing is a group effort. “We work on stuff at home and then bring it to the table,” says Ryan. “We see

what works together and what doesn’t.” While jazz is their bread and butter, the band is testing its flexibility. “We want to write songs that appeal to people our own age instead of people who are older than us,” says Ryan. “(We want to) try and bring back funk rock.”

With requests already coming in for restaurant gigs in 2011, Soul Power is in for a busy year. Hear songs and follow progress on their initial CD at www.myspace.com/summerlandsoulpower. —Rick Cogbill

PHOTO BY RICK COGBILL

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LEONNE WILSON JONES

Author, *Define Your Own Simple Luxuries*

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF?

I have a curious nature, lots of energy and love writing. I also love entertaining, often crash-testing new recipes on long-suffering and mostly appreciative friends, and there's the "ladies' chopsticks club" and my love of travel, where I'm always looking for an impromptu cooking lesson from a willing teacher. A special interest is the SPCA and a wish to be involved in a kids breakfast to go program. I'm currently working on a nutritious and portable breakfast recipe.

WHY DID YOU WRITE THIS BOOK? I saw a need for knowledge about daily organization, along with basics about food, wine and entertaining for triple taskers — people with children, jobs and households to manage. *Define Your Own Simple Luxuries* (with emphasis on "simple") evolved into an unofficial handbook covering those topics, along with others that perhaps our working moms had no time to teach us, all delivered with a little inspiration and spicy wit.

WHAT SECTIONS ARE MOST POPULAR? The food and wine sections seem to evoke the most "I love that!" responses, and the Attitudes and Just Because section because it addresses what most of us already know but just need to have validated.

WHICH TIP IS YOUR FAVOURITE?

The Rules of Seven on page 32, which I believe are fundamental and from which I've received a lot of reader feedback. One of my friends uses them in a work-to-rule manner. When exhausted, she works for seven minutes and then rests for seven minutes until her tasks are done.

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW? I'm currently writing another book with a working title; *Simple Luxuries, 365 Days a Year*. Of course it's about food and wine, life's lessons, observations and inspiration — my favourite topics. — Laurie Carter



The Keremeos Grist Mill began operations in 1877. Now it needs a steady stream of visitors to stay in operation.

DOWN BY THE OLD MILL STREAM

Tough battle to save Keremeos heritage site

■ A lot of water has flowed past the old grist mill in Keremeos. So have a lot of people. Around the turn of this century the Grist Mill and Gardens saw some 17,000 visitors annually, says Walter Despot, the town's mayor and one of the site's champions. "That's down to about 4,000." Efforts are underway to get that stream flowing once again.

In 1877 the water-powered mill and onsite general store provided goods and services to the Similkameen's burgeoning agricultural community. Eventually, steam-powered mills located nearer to major transportation routes took over the flour market and the store was converted to a residence. In 1979 the Province of BC took the historic property under its wing. By the late 1980s restorations had been completed and the mill was home to a busy interpretive program. But in 2003,

the province turned the site over to a management society and after a few years of financial difficulty, it closed.

Enter Jim and Brenda Millar. "My wife and I saw a request for qualifications (for the property management contract)," says Jim, a volunteer in the heritage field for as long as he can remember. He was delighted when his application was accepted, but when he pointed out that the budget would only be "enough to run it on weekends" his point was missed. "They said, 'That would be fine.'"

The first summer Jim commuted every weekend from his job as manager and curator of the Port Moody Station Museum. Last summer, the museum's own budget was tight; meanwhile, the Grist Mill's groundskeeper was temporarily unavailable. Jim took a leave of absence and set up digs in one of the Grist Mill's buildings from mid-May through mid-September, taking a grand

total of one-and-a-half days off.

Jim has heard that the only other applicant for the management contract had proposed using the property for medieval armour production. He feels it's important to keep the site as "real" as possible. Prior to 2003, one of the mill's popular attractions was the schoolhouse, complete with schoolmarm. "She was very good," he says, but he doesn't have the money to hire someone to play the role and the old desks are gone. Still, there was never a school on the property. Even if he could afford to bring the schoolroom back, Jim admits he has mixed feelings. Where do you draw the line between encouraging the public to view an authentic heritage site and creating a tourist attraction?

Keeping both authentic and afloat on a shoestring budget is tough. While a tea room and farmers' market may help pay the bills, Jim is cautious about competing with local restaurants and fruit vendors. He is trying to capitalize on the Grist Mill's apple house. Over the past few decades, fruit trees have grown progressively smaller and many orchards have given way to vineyards. "I want kids 50 years from now to see what a real apple tree looks like," he says. Jim and his brother have grafted 18 apple trees onto root stock, ready for planting alongside the one old Mac.

Many visitors expect a bit more flash for an entrance fee. Grist Mill Heritage Club volunteers are working toward "putting some shine on the mill" but Jim also needs staff to take care of and entertain visitors—and enough visitors to support the staff. Canada Day celebrations, antique auctions, outdoor quilt shows and festivals can help bring people, but the facilities can't handle too big a crowd. Upgrading would be nice, but emergency restoration is a priority. Government funds are tight and the Grist Mill needs a steady stream of visitor fees to keep its wheel turning. How about planning a visit this summer. —Dawn Renaud

PHOTO BY DAWN RENAUD

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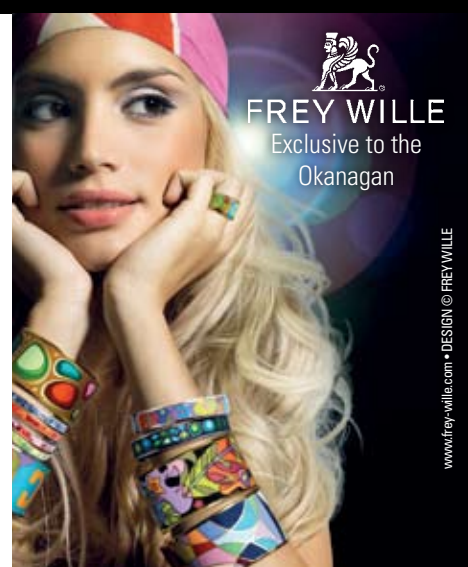
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COUNTRY STYLE

■ A couple of blocks from downtown Kelowna lies a country retreat with sights you'd expect to see in an old time farmhouse. After crossing a bridge over the pond and stream in the front yard of this colourful heritage house, you're immersed in a space filled with crafts, candles, fresh baked pies and handcrafted furniture. Fit for any cowpoke looking to find that one thing to feel right at home on the

COUNTRY COTTAGE GIFTS & DECOR 763 Bernard Avenue, Kelowna

plains while living in the Okanagan, the store offers a cozy feel. Right from the pages of country magazines the decor features wooden birdhouses, the ever popular tin stars and beautiful cabinets. Scents like honeydew, watermelon and cinnamon drift through the air around the candle display. "We try to cater to our customers and give them an experience like no other," says Dwayne Habuza, whose

wife Charlene had long dreamed of opening a store like this. With a Facebook presence and hopes of developing a website to allow people who can't make it into the store to shop from home, the future seems bright. Dwayne adds, "If you look at the house, we've basically created a fantasy world for people to shop in and give people a good feeling even after they leave."
—Lucas Wiseman

PHOTO BY LUCAS WISEMAN



Hair loss on the scalp is most frequently caused by hormones.

TOO MUCH? TOO LITTLE?

Hair problems worry both sexes

- Even though hair serves no vital role for humans today, it is of great psychological importance and can be a significant source of stress if medical illness affects its growth.

Each individual hair follicle undergoes what is called a "growth cycle" where hairs will grow, rest and then fall out. One hair growth cycle can take many years. There are about 100,000 hair follicles in the human scalp and we normally lose about 100 hairs every day.

For both men and women, hair loss on the scalp is most frequently caused by hormones (androgenetic alopecia). It is not known at this time what causes male or female pattern hair loss but it has been suspected that the condition is more prevalent in men due to their XY chromosome pairing. This condition can be slowed but not reversed by a topical treatment using Minoxidil (either two per cent or five per cent in solution). About half of people using the treatment will see some improvement in their hair fullness after a few months of use.

Finasteride is another drug that

works by blocking the hormones that cause the hair to fall out. A dose of one milligram per day orally works very well to at least stop hair loss, but women who are or are planning on becoming pregnant cannot use it. Hair loss can also be caused by a wide variety of medical conditions and is beyond the scope of this article.

Excessive hair growth on the body of a woman is called hirsutism. It can be caused by hormone disorders and may be a sign of polycystic ovarian syndrome in women if it is accompanied by irregular menstrual cycles and abnormal blood tests. A combination of medications with lifestyle changes can help improve the condition although the hair will remain. In order to see cosmetic changes it will need to be removed. Hirsutism is quite a subjective diagnosis because the lack of or the acceptance of extra hair is greatly influenced by the patient's cultural and social upbringing.

— Dr. Craig Crippen, medical director,
Kelowna Vein Clinic @ Aesthetic Solutions



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pulse



Okanagan Olympic athlete Kelly Serwa samples a confection by Edmonton chef Andrew Fung.

GOLD MEDAL PLATES

Kelowna hosts the Canadian Culinary Championships

■ In the Valley we will pair most anything with a glass of wine. So, matching the Okanagan wine region with the country's top culinary talent makes a perfect partnership.

Gold Medal Plates, a coast-to-coast celebration raising funds to support Canada's Olympic team, saw chefs from St. John's to Vancouver converge on Kelowna to compete in three intense challenges. The competitors, crowned at eight regional events, came to wow the judges and capture the gold medal. But the tables turn when crowds of wine lovers and true Valley hospitality wows them.

"I've been treated like a king," says Montreal's Martin Juneau, overwhelmed by the camaraderie encouraged by their Kelowna host, executive chef and past gold medal

plate competitor Michael Lyons.

Okanagan wine features prominently over the two-day event, starring in the first leg of competition where La Stella's Fortissimo 2008 is the mystery wine. Unlabelled bottles in hand, the chefs set out to create a dish to match the bold blend of Merlot, Cabernet and Sangiovese. Each chef has only 24 hours to make his creation—and only \$500 to search the shops in Kelowna for ingredients to serve 300 people.

The result: an amazing rich array of succulent beef striploin, braised short ribs, lamb liver, minced pie and blood sausage. Coupled with wine reductions and hints of cranberry, lemon, cherry, rosemary and even red curry, the chefs strive to pull out the wine's flavour notes.

The mystery continues early the next morning as chefs open black

PHOTO BY YVONNE TURGEON

boxes with secret ingredients. Dungeness crab, smoked wild boar shank, licorice root, beets and Asian kosui pears are transformed in a one-hour cook-off.

The final event draws more than 600 who sip and savour from station to station. Serving 4,800 plates in one night is only possible with the help of Okanagan College culinary school students, who are a key ingredient in the survival of the chefs over the competition.

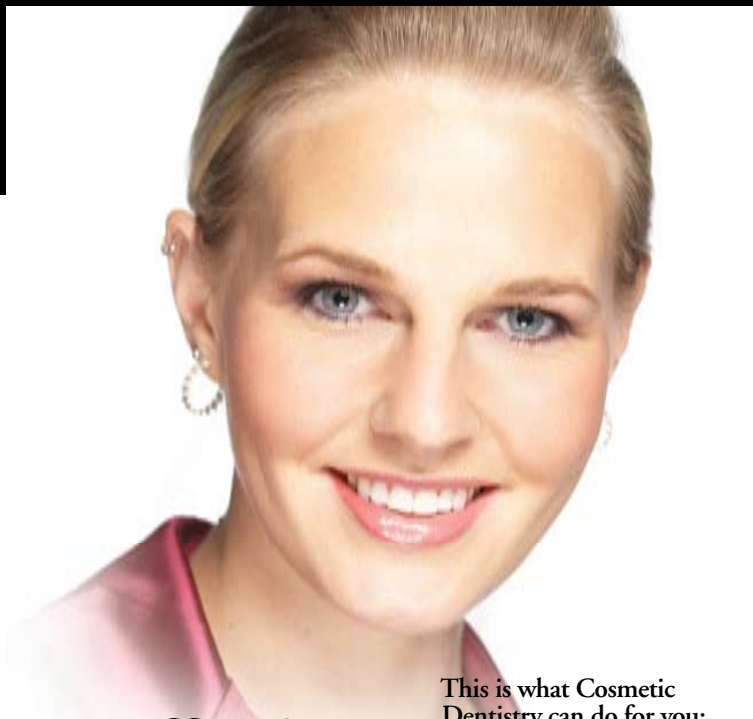
Tonight each chef presents a signature dish with wine pairing. It doesn't take long to find the Valley's finest as bottles of Road 13, Tatalus and Black Hills line the tables. But the real action is tucked into the far corner where one by one, the chefs slip away from their serving stations to present their creations to judges who score each plate on presentation, texture, taste, wine compatibility, originality and wow factor.

"It was a real thrill to be involved," says event organizer and judge Perry Bentley, instructor at Okanagan College. "It is really quite remarkable food. These guys are at the top of their game."

Saskatoon's Dan Walker presents northern pickerel, Jeremy Charles has brought Newfoundland rabbits and Vancouver's Rob Clark is serving citrus glazed Fraser Valley quail breast. Crispy and crunchy, soft and melt in your mouth, the ying and yang of the offerings is best illustrated in Calgary chef Duncan Ly's pairing of salmon with a circle of duck breast woven with foie gras, the dark and light shades a perfect representation of the symbol of balance. Duncan brought the fisherman, who pulled the magnificent coho from the waters off Haida Gwaii, to the event.

"I want to eat what I believe in," says Duncan. "As chefs we have influence on what people eat. We need to take that ability to influence people on sustainability—if we don't push it won't happen." —Yvonne Turgeon

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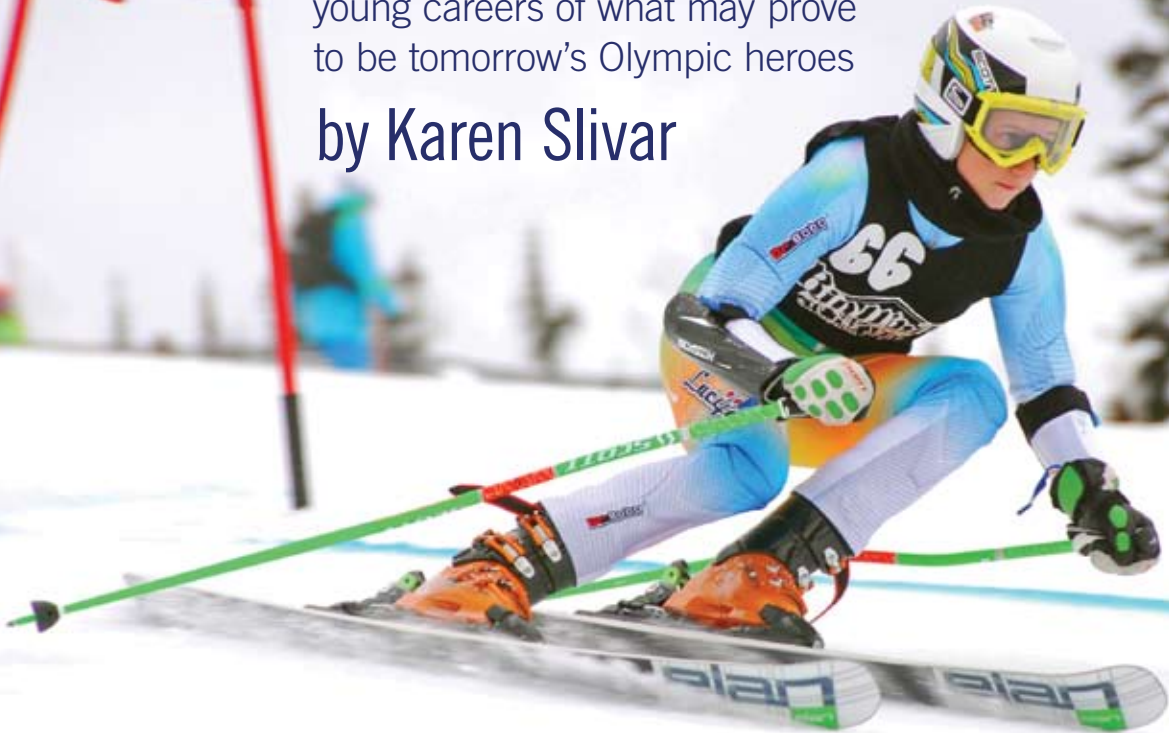


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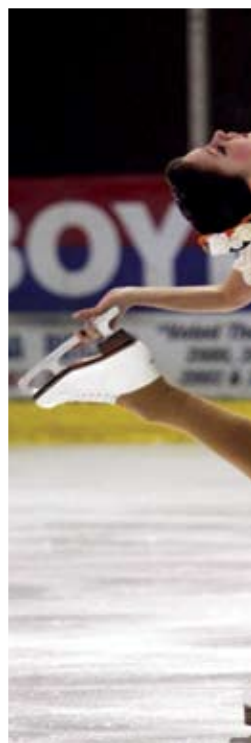
Central Okanagan shooters seize the opportunity to stretch their photographic skills and capture some unforgettable moments in the young careers of what may prove to be tomorrow's Olympic heroes

by Karen Slivar



Children's Games





Concentration is etched on the faces of skaters taking in last minute instructions from their coaches as they prepare for one final practice at the International Children's Games in Kelowna. Competition now just hours away, their every move is captured by the panning lenses of a group

of amateur photographers who have volunteered to record the games. Cameras gripped between gloved hands, members of the Central Okanagan Photographic Society (COPS) are out in force. They've got a lot of territory to cover in the Jan. 26 to 31, 2011, event.

A total of 472 athletes aged 12 to 15, representing 37 cit-

ies and 13 countries, were in Kelowna to compete in figure and speed skating, alpine and Nordic skiing, snowboarding, curling and hockey.

When COPS vice-president Jim Harding learned the games were coming to town he thought it would be a great opportunity for members to shoot some sports. It was also another chance to give back to the community. Over the years members have volunteered their time and photographic skills to such events as the MS Walk, Variety's Boat for





Hope, Help-Portrait and the 1995 Special Olympics Winter Games.

The organization got its official start in 1973 but there are records of a camera club in Kelowna dating as far back as 1960. Formed by avid shutterbugs, the purpose of the club has always been to get together to share an interest in photography and improve individual skills.

All ages and skill levels are welcome and you don't need a fancy camera to join the society, although there is always

a bit of friendly rivalry between Canon and Nikon owners. Inevitably, the first question guest presenters are asked is what kind of camera they use.

Meetings, which are held weekly from September through May, feature guest speakers, educational talks and photo evaluations. Field trips and workshops provide members with a chance to get together, shoot and pick up new tricks.

A significant amount of preparation went into the games including officially registering as volunteers and attending orientation. A total of 16 members took part, a mix of amateurs and seasoned veterans. Avid sports photographer Carl Dubeau was kept busy fielding questions and he delivered a special presentation at one meeting. Hockey fan Tom Witt contributed written instructions on photographing hockey.

Opening spread

clockwise: Kelowna girls curling team wins bronze (KS), girls hockey semi-final Kelowna vs. Kamloops (RM), giant slalom (WO), speed skating (CB), West Kelowna athletes (JT).

This spread clockwise:

Girls speed skating (CD), Korean figure skater (CB), boys hockey (TK), girls hockey (LQ), opening ceremonies at Prospera Place (CB), Kelowna boys curling team (RM), Crystal Prince at opening ceremonies (CD), figure skating (FM), opening ceremonies (FM), boys speed skating (LQ).



When it was finally show time, volunteers armed with shooting tips and long lenses (spare batteries tucked close to their bodies) headed out to their assigned venues. Jim organized the photographers based on individual availability and preferred sporting events.

"Towards end, I felt like an one armed quarterback," he

"All the photographers captured the true essence of the games."

says. When someone phoned in sick he found a replacement. When the games office called looking for coverage, Jim got on the horn and dispatched a photographer. Members covered every event including airport arrivals, opening and closing ceremonies, Mayor's reception, fun night at the H2O Centre and skating gala.

"The club and group of photographers were outstanding," says games communications chair Eric Stansfield. "As the old saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words."



All the photographers captured the true essence of the games.”

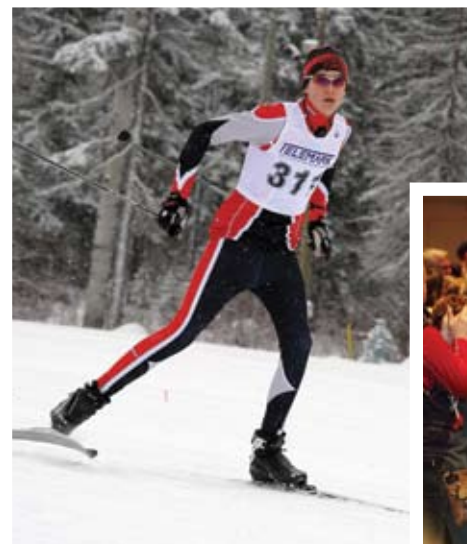
The event produced some great stories like the curling team from Chesterfield in the United States, that three weeks prior to the games had never curled. Their first practice at home was on a hockey rink and with only three players the team had to borrow a curler from Kelowna. How’s that for the spirit of sport. Then there was the boys’ hockey team from Darmstadt, Germany, who had the youngest players (12 to 13 year olds) and took a

beating on the score-board but never gave up.

Eight-hundred and ninety volunteers signed on to take care of the athletes, from feeding to transportation to working at the various venues of Memorial, Rutland and CNC arenas, Kelowna Curling Club, Telemark and Big White.

Although the games were not about breaking records and podium finishes, the top three in each event were awarded medals. Seoul, Korea, took home the most bobbles with 11 (six gold and five silver); followed by Gorje, Slovenia (six gold and four silver), and Kelowna (two gold, three silver and five bronze). But COPS came out way ahead in the numbers game with thousands of irreplaceable photos. **OL**

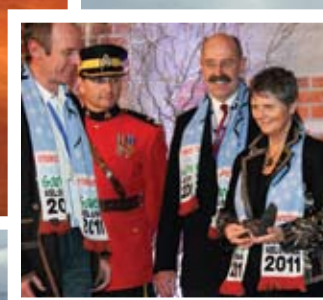
Spread clockwise: Figure skating gala at Capital News Centre (CB), Kelowna skater Kelly Basisty (JT), gold medal curling match (KS), boys hockey (TK), ski cross (SO), giant slalom start gate (WO), snowboarding (SP), Abbotsford curling team (RM), exhausted cross-country skier (RM), girls 3.5K race at Telemark (CR), speed skating (JT), snowcross medals ceremony (WO).



Clockwise: Ski cross (SO), figure skating competitors, 21 girls, 4 boys (CB), speed skating (LQ), boys hockey, Penticton vs. Darmstadt (FM), boys 3.5K race at Telemark (KS), Korean skater Jin Kim wins gold (KS), girls figure

skating (FM), alpine skiing (SO), snowcross (SP). **Centre photos clockwise:** Girls figure skating (CD), Kelowna girls goalie (LQ), West Kelowna skater Phoebe Kemp (KS).

Final wrap...



Top right: Kelowna cross-country ski coach Gillian Warner (JT).

Clockwise: A feast every night at the Athletes Village in the Delta Grand Okanagan (TK), figure skating fans cheer on the Seoul, Korea, team (KS), time off for the Splash Down event at Kelowna's H2O Centre (CB), riding above the clouds at Big White (SO), medals all round for impromptu Nordic

coaches race (CR), parade of athletes, volunteers and mascots during the closing ceremonies at the Grand (TK), Heather Schneider, executive chair of games, at closing ceremonies (TK).

Centre photos clockwise: Enthusiastic coach at the closing ceremonies (TK), volunteers working the figure skating awards ceremony (KS), Mayor's reception at the Laurel Packing House (TK).

PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA BOMBAEK, CARL DUBEAU, TOM KLINER, FRANK MILETTO, SIMON OAKLEY, SHAYNA PUNK, LINDA QUON, CARON RIDGEWAY, KAREN SLIVAR, JOEL TODD



Parent

By Karin Wilson
Photos by
Douglas Farrow

tra

Complex family relationships and hectic lives create serious challenges for today's parents. But there's more help available than you might think

Around 6 p.m. the doors to a downtown Kelowna office building swing open intermittently. Men and women enter solemnly alone, making their way up the stairs, into the offices of the Kelowna Family Centre and a classroom where 15 chairs are set out in three neat rows.

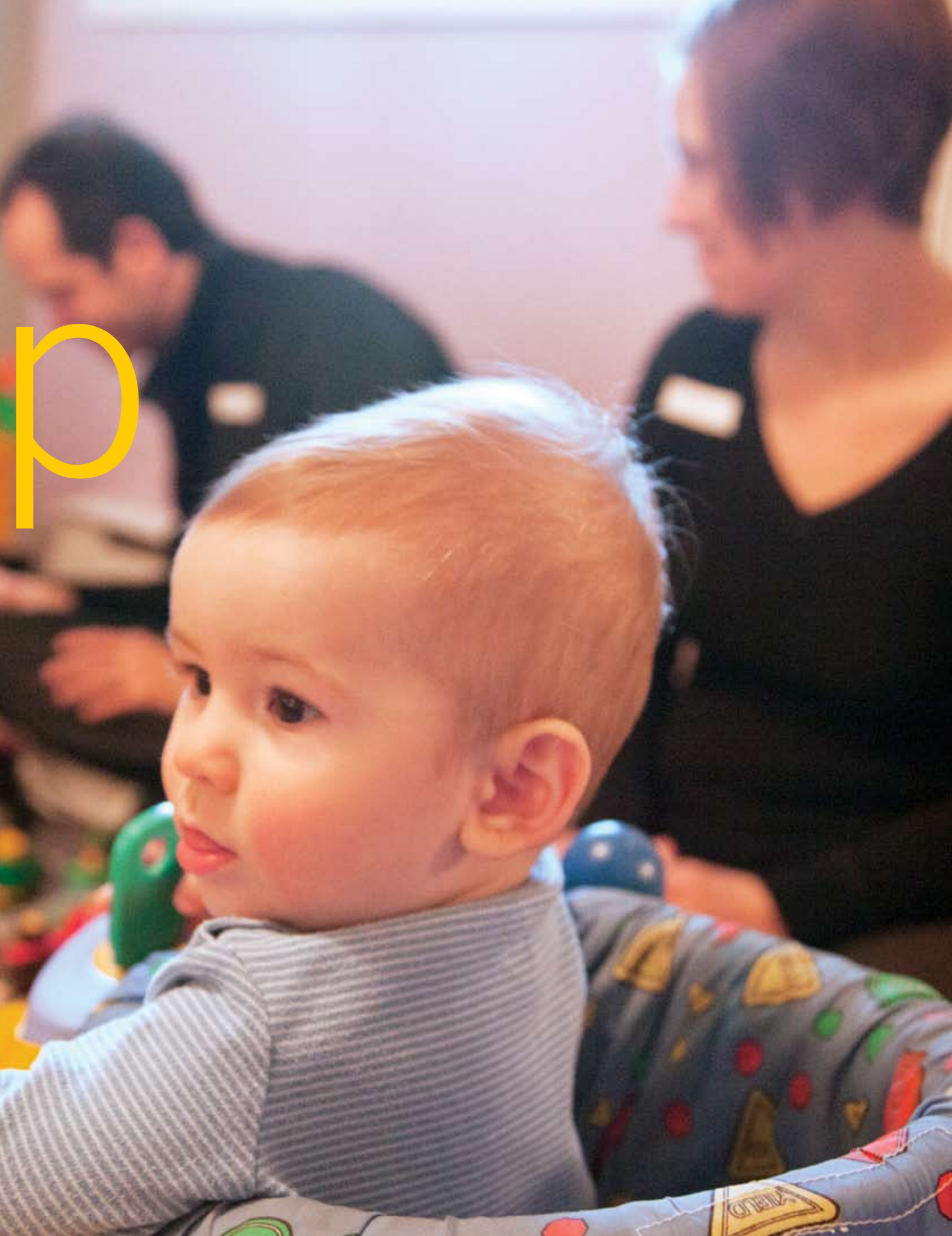
At the front there is a whiteboard and a flip chart. Set out in bold black type are the stark words: parenting after separation.

"You are not alone," counsellor Gaylene DeGruchy tells this collection of 21st century parents. "We hold this group three times a month and the room is never empty. This is about life—what it is, and where you're at. It's reality. Everything here in this office is for you—it's all for you."

Thinking that anything could be "all for me" probably comes as a surprise to the 12 parents here. One is a grandmother fighting for custody of her two grandchildren. Another woman only separated from her husband two-and-a-half weeks ago, leaving her with a five-year-old and 15-month-old. Then there's a widower. In a new relationship, he's trying to regain custody from his former mother-in-law. Others have no custody issues, but they're here just the same—to learn how to "co-parent."

Co-parenting is the new word for how to continue to parent children when the parents no longer live together. Gone are the days when the "custodial parent" got to make all the decisions. Parents are parents for life, and learning how to stay in that role in the midst of physical separation is only the latest twist in the evolution of parenting.

Counsellor Jason McCarty stands up and asks participants to share their losses. The list is long. Their house, their belongings, friends, family, stability, pets. The last thing anyone mentions is relationship. Then Jason asks for emotions, and the words pour out fast and furious—anger, hurt,



p

Previous page:
Kelly Dust and son Lukas (2)

This page top:
Michele Hucul (black top) conducting a program at The Bridge.

Bottom: Maximo Teipel (centre) and Lizzie Sanchez (right) getting in a little water play.

Facing page: Tamera Doyle with her children, Colin (left) and Tristan.

frustration, disappointment, confusion, helplessness. One man discloses how his four-year-old daughter received the Santa gift he sent to her. "I knew it was you. We don't believe in Santa anymore." The room fills with hurt and betrayal.

Jason explains that for every loss, every emotion parents experience, their children feel the same. And it's up to the adults to begin the healing process, so they can help their children — like donning the oxygen mask on an airplane.

"When we don't express these things to other people, we feel stuck there. It's just ripe and ready to be easily pushed by the other person. You can see that this gets in the way of co-parenting and gets in the way of helping our children."

The two counsellors describe the change as a journey.

"You will figure out how to co-parent, but you can't rush yourself there," Jason says. Parents learn how to move from anger and manipulation to negotiation. From using their children as messengers and spies, to direct communication and release. It's a brave new world, for brave new families.



The parents

A day in the life of parents today may look something like this.

8 a.m.

Dad: Marc Arellano, college instructor/filmmaker
Status: married, double-income
Child: age 6

"I'm sick in bed. You need to pick up Camille." The text from his wife Natalie arrives just as Marc's class is about to start. She normally walks Camille to school on the way to her own teaching job. Marc left the house at 5:30 a.m. to play hockey with no idea Natalie was ill. He calls a colleague who grabs the booster seat, puts it in the car, and drives to Marc's home to take his daughter to school.

With no family in town, friends fill in the gaps. And when Natalie stays at school for parent-teacher meetings, he's had to leave early. "It's hard to tell the chair of my department I have to leave early because I've got to pick my daughter up. I know I'm making sacrifices in my career." But he's pleased with how life is going. "We love what we do, and we've both invested an enormous amount of time and money into our education. If both parents aren't self-fulfilled, it's basically game over."

9 a.m.

Mom: Tara White, full-time parent
Status: living together with Jason, blended family, single income
Children: ages 3, 4, 7 and 9

Tara wakes up and gets her two children to pre-school. Her partner Jason's two children are with the other parent this week, so the house is a little more quiet. But Tara's still thinking about them. Later in the day, she'll be back at the school for parent/teacher interviews with both her son's and stepson's teachers. She'll have to carry that load on her own since Jason is out of town. The other mom won't be taking

part. Cross communication between the two families is strained and the teachers don't quite understand the complexities of the two-household lifestyle. "We're trying to get the teachers on email and just try to convey to them that we need the teachers to give us the information. They've got two bedrooms to lose things in and we never know if something is in one house or the other."

She attends The Bridge parent talk program where she gets support. "It's been good to meet the other moms and talk, but there's no one else with a blended family. Even so, it's given us a strong start."

4 p.m.

Mom: Tamera Doyle

Status: single, self-employed hair stylist

Children: ages 2 and 10

The school calls around 2 p.m. asking Tamera to come down. It's her 10-year-old son. He's in trouble. Tamera packs up and goes. Her two-year-old is with his caregiver, so that's OK, she'll pick him up later.

"He got an in-school suspension. He challenges authority a lot and gets bored quite easily. It's definitely a challenge working with the school. They think everything is about what's going on at home. But my kids are my life and I'm fully involved. People still totally judge. They think: she's on her own, maybe she's partying, maybe she works too much. It's hard to get that perfect healthy balance."

She'd like to get her son into counselling, but so far hasn't been able to find a program she can access or afford. Like so many others, her support comes from friends.

"I have very close girlfriends and they're single parents as well. We can vent to each other and we're all going through the same kinds of scenarios. I lean on my friends a lot—not so much any more, now everything seems like a piece of cake. It used to be worse—when I was married. He was amazingly high stress."



5 p.m.

Mom: Melissa Berry Appleton

Status: married, single income

Children: ages 3 and twins 7

Plans for a scheduled meeting at 5:30 p.m. followed by a "date night" get quashed at the last minute despite calls to a roster of eight babysitters. Melissa makes the meeting, leaving her husband Lee to take care of the kids. With no grandparents in the province, Melissa has been taken in the arms of a group of women who make it their mantra to be of service to someone every day. That keeps them on track, keeps them supporting each other, and takes away the shame of asking for help.

"I don't think I ever understood how much of a selfless service it is to be a parent. And it is a selfless service," says the former addictions counsellor. "And I don't think I ever thought I would question myself so much on a daily basis—because what I do affects human being's lives. I remember a doctor saying to me that if I thought getting pregnant was work, I had no idea. I didn't realize how even-keel my life was before. And I didn't realize how blissful it was to be a parent."

Parenting through challenge. It was ever thus. Since the dawn of time, parents have done their job through war and peace, through sickness and health, through family violence and drug and alcohol abuse. They've parented as widows and widowers, survived, succeeded and failed—with or without community support.

And it's that sense of community support that seems to make the difference, especially in cases where there is no extended family available.

Parents are resourceful and a single crisis doesn't usually break a family. Many families today are two-income—either because they need

"I don't think I ever understood how much of a selfless service it is to be a parent. And it is a selfless service."

This page: Michele Hucul working with single parents at The Bridge.

Facing page top: Staff at The Bridge, which offers a range of education and support services for families. From left, Anima Anand, Marla Benabdallah, Michele Hucul, Sheryl Sargent, Amanda Williams.

Facing page bottom: Jason, Chloe, Tara and Kolby Shoemaker.

to be or because both parents want to pursue careers. Add children into the mix and the work/life balance requires a well-oiled machine in order to function efficiently.

Now add in a few more possibilities. Like lack of housing. And finally, the worst possible confluence of events—young inexperienced single parents from impoverished backgrounds, little education, and drug or alcohol problems—a recipe for tragedy as BC's representative for Children and Youth pointed out in her report *Fragile Lives*.

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond's report examined the deaths of 21 children under the age of two. In each case, the families were in contact with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and yet somehow they didn't get the support they needed.

"Some of the most fragile families in our province are slipping through the cracks here. Government needs to take a hard look at this. We need to fix the existing lack

of a coordinated and responsive approach and create seamless coordination among all support services," she said in releasing the report.

Suzanne Harrington is a counselor at Kelowna Family Centre and says the families she works with today are far more complex than those she worked with 10 years ago. And as complexities increase, government services have shifted.

"There has been a change in child protection services from prevention to intervention. Families can't phone a social worker anymore about their child without fearing repercussions. It's hard now to say, 'I need some respite, there's nowhere else for the child to go and I need a break.' It's a real catch-22 for families."

So what do we need? Experts say support systems need to be in place long before any crisis occurs. Establishing a network of family or friends to help carry you through the tough times seems to be the critical factor. And if that hasn't occurred organically, there are now non-profits like The Bridge that can help. Sometimes that's all you need, says social worker Michele Hucul who leads both parent talk and creative playtime programs.

"When parents come here, the issues they talk about are universal. It doesn't matter if they're single parents, rich, poor, educated. They're all dealing with the same struggles and they want their child to be happy. The thing is, parents are overwhelmed 24-7."

The Bridge's parent place facility in Kelowna offers a variety of services, at times today's parents can access—daytime, evenings, weekends—and often with childcare provided. The atmosphere is warm, inviting, and family-focused with the aim to help parents figure out what works for them.

"If we understand our own motivations and reason for our practices, then we don't need a book. And we also need to appreciate our own parenting values—and when we start to get a grasp on what that is, we don't get swayed by five differ-



"It's hard now to say, 'I need some respite, there's nowhere else for the child to go and I need a break.'"



Parenting Resources

The Bridge

offers education and support
www.thebridgeservices.ca

- Family resources program in Kelowna, West Kelowna, Lake Country and Peachland
- Strengthening your step/blended family
- How to talk so kids will listen
- Siblings without rivalry
- Systematic training for effective parenting of teens
- 1, 2, 3, 4 Parents!
a discipline-focused program for one- to four-year-olds

Building Healthy Families Society

www.buildinghealthyfamilies.ca

- Nurturing fathers program
- Self help opportunity for parents
- Parenting through recovery

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- Parents in the know

ent other ways of doing things.”

It's a complex world that requires complex solutions. Parenting is a full-time job and in an ideal world, a lifetime job. But there are only 24 hours in a day. With apologies to John Lennon, parenting is what happens when we're making other plans. We still need the time to make a living, to be there for others and fill our individual lives with joy so that we can recognize the signs when we need to put the oxygen mask on.

The African proverb says it takes a village to raise a child. It's equally true that it takes a village to raise a parent.

Back at the parenting after separation class, more than two hours have passed filled with videos of children describing their journey to healing after divorce. One young fellow recalls feeling like a “package” being moved from one house to another. But others say they remember when their parents started talking to each other like human beings, when they started treating each other with respect, when they started to think about the interests of the child and why that mattered.

This may be the greatest gift to come out of divorce and separa-

tion and the crazy hectic world we live in today. Parenting in the 21st century is about co-parenting. It requires coordination, communication and consideration. It requires seeing our children as individuals.

More and more parents are co-parenting, with dads taking on roles never done before and moms relinquishing. We no longer “have” children like possessions in the past. We are custodians of children and the responsibility now is to raise them to love, honour and protect the next generation.

It's a risk. It's a gamble. And with parenting, it's ever thus. **OL**



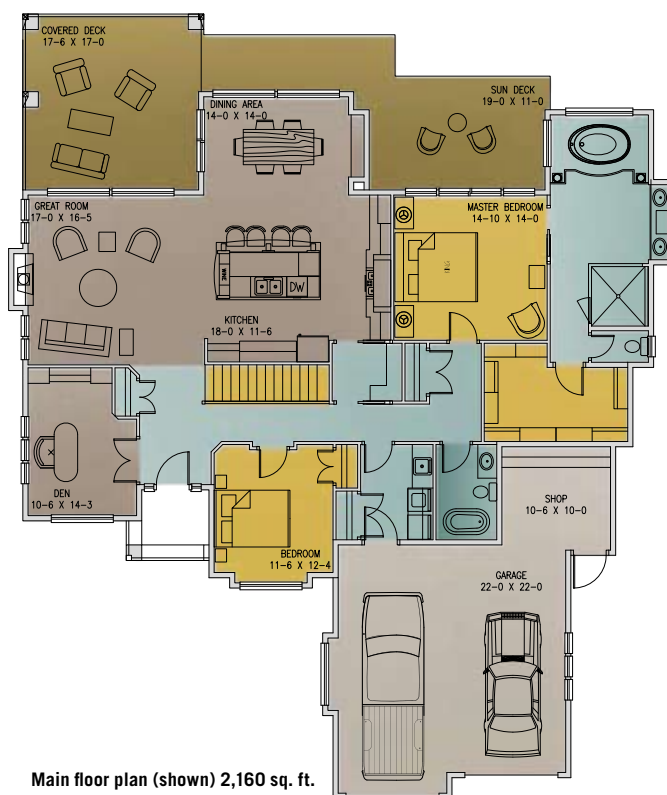


Urban aerie

by Laurie Carter

Valley vistas morph to city sparkle in an ever-changing viewscape

■ Approaching this nest high in Kelowna's Upper Mission, it's hard to keep focused on an exterior that in a more prosaic setting would be arresting. The liberal use of natural stone, cobbled walk and patio, water feature, castle keep-style wooden garage doors and copper accent foreshadow a well designed home. But around the edges, glimpses of a show-stopping vallescape are seriously distracting. Custom home designer/builder Les Bellamy and interior designer Nadine Andrews knew what they were up against and met the challenge with an award-winning package that complements the view with equally eye-catching design features including an array of creative ceiling treatments. With a finished area of 4,000 sq. ft. on two levels, they had plenty of scope in this four-bedroom home. The main floor flows easily, centering on a great room that provides functional separation while



Main floor plan (shown) 2,160 sq. ft.
Lower level 1,840 sq. ft. finished





maintaining an expansive feel, augmented by the view. The elegant old world kitchen is a chef's delight with a massive island, integrated appliances and adjacent pantry. Also on this level, the highlight of the master suite is the bath reminiscent of a Roman-themed day spa, where the soaker tub is sited for such a remarkable city lights panorama that serious skin-pruning is likely. The

lower level is designed for casual entertaining and family relaxation. The family room includes a fully outfitted bar, lounging area with fireplace and a games area large enough to accommodate a pool table. There is a separate exercise room and the media room features a 102-inch projection screen theatre system. Both levels of this home offer multiple access points to the outdoor living spaces, a shaded patio below and, off the main floor, a covered deck where invisible railings protect without detracting from the view. A high efficiency dual zone heating and cooling system and heat pump provide climate control. **OL**

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Pssst... wine loves chocolate

by Michael Botner

Double delight when two of our favourite pleasures pair so well together

■ Chocolate is not wine's bitter enemy. They actually like each other a lot, along the lines of the love affair between wine and cheese. Truth is, just as there are fabulous wine and cheese combinations, like Port and Stilton, some wines work magic with chocolate. The old saw that wine and cheese are always perfect mates is a great myth, so is the idea that combining wine and chocolate is always disastrous.

Consider chocolate as food for a moment. Derived primarily from cocoa beans, making the finest chocolate is a complex art. It starts with sourcing the best quality beans, usually found in South America and Ghana. Chocolate products are defined according to their cocoa con-

tent and added ingredients. For pairing purposes, the flavour elements of certain wines echo the cocoa bean character in chocolate, along with other constituents, whether they be nut, spice or fruit. This may also apply to certain reds like Cabernet Franc or Zinfandel and such fortified wines as Tawny Port and Banyuls.

Much chocolate tends to be intensely rich, creamy and sweet, properties which are sure to turn dry red wines thin and acidic. The key with this type of red is to use dark, bittersweet chocolate and richly structured wines emphasizing fruit and good acidity over complexity and maturity.

For savoury dishes that contain chocolate in the sauce,

like Mole Poblano de Guajolote, Mexico's traditional turkey dish, it is best to use a big, fairly young Cabernet, Zinfandel or Syrah.

Desserts made with dark chocolate need sweeter wines with more alcohol. Try fortified types like tawny port, sweet Madeira, Banyuls, Muscat de Beaumes-de-Venise, Black Muscat or Australian Liqueur Muscat. With lighter desserts using milk or white chocolate, serve a frothy Moscato d'Asti, late harvest wine, Orange Muscat, sweet sherry, ruby port or reds like Pinot Noir. Avoid excessively sweet desserts and work something acidic like fresh berries into the chocolate dish. Strawberries dipped in chocolate demand Champagne. **OL**



GARRON ELMES

Winemaker
Lake Breeze Vineyards

Soon after graduating from agricultural college in South Africa's Stellenbosch wine region, Garron Elmes was at work in Naramata, making the initial 1995 vintage at Lake Breeze Vineyards where total production was 300 cases. Fast forward 16 years and Garron is nursing the 2010 vintage at Lake Breeze, now a 10,000 case a year winery. The Cape Town native credits his stepfather for touting him to Paul Moser, founder of Lake Breeze. Although Paul sold the winery after only a few years, he imparted an indelible South African stamp—hiring Garron, building the winery in white-washed Cape style and planting Pinotage vines. “We started with nothing, making wine in a shed with a little Willmes press,” Garron says. To increase capacity, new owners headed by managing partner Gary Reynolds, added a spacious tank cellar and laboratory with heavy investment in new equipment. Making great wine is not about ego or perfection, says Garron. “I think of myself as a commercial winemaker. My focus is over-delivering on quality and value.” Apart from a fondness for Pinotage, he likes Pinot Noir. “It is challenging to grow and produce at a decent price, but Seven Poplars Pinot Noir may well be our best wine,” he says. Made entirely from Pinot Noir using a state of the art gyropallete for riddling, his 2009 méthode traditionnelle sparkling wine will sell for about \$30.

highspirits

Showcasing a selection of Summerland's finest wines, the tasting notes list name, price, and region or country. The five-star rating system stresses value for price.



BANROCK STATION NV SPARKLING SHIRAZ

South Eastern Australia

★★★★½ \$13.99

Tasty Shiraz bubbly delivers intense plum, black cherry and dark berry fruit, and hints of black pepper and dark chocolate, with lively acidity balanced by a touch of sweetness on the finish. A medium dark chocolate is the perfect match for this wine.



QUADY ELYSIUM BLACK MUSCAT

California, Madera

★★★★ \$15.99/375ml

Made from the black-skinned Muscat Hamburg, little known as a wine grape, this intriguing dessert wine rocks with dark chocolate desserts. Intensely rich flavours suggest rose petal, lychee and candied orange peel, balanced by lip smacking acidity.



RAVENSWOOD 2007 LODI OLD VINE ZINFANDEL

California, Sonoma

★★★★ \$22.99

Richly concentrated Zin displays elegance and complexity. It features supple, densely packed flavours of black cherry, blackcurrant and plum with sweet, toasty notes of vanilla and cocoa. Wine's refreshing acidity counters richness of dark chocolate.



ELEPHANT ISLAND 2009 FRAMBOISE

Okanagan Valley, Naramata Bench

★★★★½ \$19.99/375ml

Dark and delectable, this port-like nectar embodies the essence of intensely fresh raspberries. A hint of tartness counters the luscious richness. Try it with dark chocolate covered espresso coffee beans.



FORBIDDEN FRUIT 2009 CERISES D'EVE

Similkameen Valley, Cawston

★★★★ \$24.75/375ml

Made from freshly harvested sweet cherries and aged in oak, this fortified, port-style wine is superb for sipping with dark chocolate after dinner. Yummy palate suggests cherry liqueur with subtle herb and spice notes, and a splash of citrus.



HOWLING BLUFF 2009 SUMMA QUIES PINOT NOIR

Okanagan Valley, Naramata Bench

★★★★½ \$32

This could be BC's best Pinot Noir. With ripe, rich flavours of black cherry and raspberry, nuances of truffle, mocha and sweet, smoky oak, and finely textured tannins, it is spectacular now, but still a baby. Pairs with classic chocolate truffles.

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BOTNER




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PHOTO BY BARRY HODGINS

Bridging the gap

When women who have been subjected to abuse or violence are ready to move on with their lives, Vickie Roraph is there with hug coupons and the Bridges employment program

■ There are two signs on the door of Vickie Roraph's office: Build Bridges, Not Walls and Attitude + Ambition = Achievement. As I take in the messages, a female student strolls by on her way to the morning coffee break, smiles at Vickie and gives her two thumbs up. Others wander by, echoing the sentiment with comments like, "she's great" and "awesome program." It is only day eight of the program, and already these women are hooked.

No surprise. One step into the office and I am instantly drawn by Vickie's warm smile and direct gaze. Surrounded by positive, calming art, bookshelves jammed with self care books, an overflowing candy dish next to yellow tulips from a colleague, she uses an empathic tone and expressive hands to describe her passion for the job.

"Every day is different," she says, "challenging but hugely rewarding. Sometimes it can be frustrating. You find yourself wanting something more than the client does."

Vickie uses the analogy of a butterfly. "When the women come to the program they are in a cocoon." Her challenge is not to rip the cocoon off before the students are ready for the next step. "I have to let them go at their own speed."

Women come to the Bridges Program via referrals from doctors, psychologists, mental and physical health workers, alcohol and drug counsellors or transition houses. But the best marketing tool is informal; former grads eager to share their success with others.

"I ask them to bring two things to the program on day one," says Vickie. "An open mind and a lunch. Many of the women are not used to eating a healthy breakfast and lunch. They need to put gas in the tank," she says. "We focus on life-management skills, career exploration and educational planning."

"This program is some of the best spent provincial dollars. It has a ripple effect, helping women to make positive change in their lives

and in the lives of their children."

Started in Vernon in 1980 by Penny Clayton as a one-week session called Choices, Bridges has blossomed into 26-week programs held all over BC. Twelve years ago, after the program had been cancelled for two years due to lack of provincial funds, Vickie brought her dedication and expertise as a certified life skills facilitator.

"The first challenge was marketing. Letting people know the program was back," she says. Long hours and persistence paid off. "In Vernon, service providers such as the Family Resource Centre, Gathering Place and Interior Mental Health support each other. It's wonderful, like a breath of fresh air."

Where does she find the energy? Vickie leans forward, her blue eyes intense as she tells the story of strength gained from her childhood spent in poverty. She grew up on a small farm and didn't live in a house with running ►



Breakfast of fruit, yogurt and two cups of coffee in Enderby home with husband Jerry who rises early to be supportive. A good breakfast is sacred.



Travel to Vernon by bus. Spend ride time networking with other professionals in her "bus family" on the one-hour milk run.



Arrive at work. Unload dishwasher, check messages, do photocopying, arrange classroom furniture for the morning activity and prepare the coffee for students.



Counsel a client. Lead classroom session until 12:30 then half-hour quiet time for lunch of salad or leftovers. Unavailable to clients to demonstrate boundary-setting and self-care.



Class until 2:30 then client time discussing goals or work placements; committee meetings and advocacy calls for donated client services such as dental care.



Home for Jerry's Massala chicken and a glass of wine with CHBC news and favourite sitcom, *Two and Half Men*. No phone calls after nine o'clock bedtime.

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water until she got married. The youngest of 11 children whose father died before she started school, Vickie credits her mom with teaching her to have a positive impact on the lives of others. "She was hugely respected by all in the community," Vickie says.

Born in Maple Ridge, Vickie moved to Enderby in 1974 and has been a strong supporter of community ever since. She co-founded Enderby Women In Business, spearheaded the acquisition of the first Jaws-of-Life for the town and has been involved with Girl Guides, The Legion, Lions, Learning Disabilities Association and literacy groups. In 2000 she was coordinator of Children's Day where almost 1,000 youth walked in a nationally televised parade wearing T-shirts illustrating the developmental needs of children.

Dressed in a no-nonsense charcoal suit, Vickie is a firm believer in teaching by role modelling. "In order to be successful, people need to be honest with themselves and honest with others," she says. With students and in family relationships Vickie's mantra is mutual respect. Her 44-year marriage to Jerry is a telling example of this philosophy. "I'm blessed to be doing what I do for a living," Vickie says.

And the program is lucky to have her. Between 1993 and 2008, 314 women attended Bridges — 81 per cent secured employment or returned

CHILDHOOD: YOUNGEST OF 11 SIBLINGS WHOSE UNDERSTANDING SINGLE MOM COMMANDED AND RETURNED RESPECT

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GUIDING PRINCIPLE: LIVING WITH INTENTION

to school or training within six months. Vickie says with pride, "There's not a girl who goes through the program who does not grow." **OL**



PHOTO BY BARRY HODGINS

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Latter-day learning sparks new start

Grey cells firing and destiny fulfilled

■ Sitting cross-legged on the floor, I'm surrounded by study notes, water bottle and emergency stash of dark chocolate. My MP3 player tuned to yoga music, I try to eat, drink, cram and relax simultaneously. I inhale Buddhist chants and several slow, deep, cleansing breaths. Last few points memorized, I walk the long, lonely hallway to the exam room.

Still mumbling meditation mantras mixed with facts I settle into the desk and stare at the page. Panic! None of the words seem familiar. My generation Y classmates are already writing. A few moments of desperate self-talk and the answer to one of the questions comes to me. My first exam in more than 30 years.

Exams are just one of the trials of returning to school to prepare for a new career later in life. The transition from Vancouver inner city elementary school principal to full-time college journalism student was a huge risk, one I knew I had to take before it was too late, before I was too exhausted to embrace a new challenge.

I couldn't just spin my wheels in retirement. Longevity runs in my family. I knew all four of my grandparents. My paternal grandfather enjoyed good health to 103. So the odds are I still have a few decades to fill in.

But with my husband still working it was a bit too quiet. Canadian statistics citing women as nearly twice as likely to suffer from Alzheimer's disease, and depression as one of the most common mental health problems affecting seniors, cemented my resolve.

Evidence suggests mental stimulation enhances brain activity and helps maintain brain health throughout life. Apparently the goal is to give your cerebral matter a new experience and workout every day.

What to do? At age 10 I announced my ambition to be a writer. Advised by my parents to get a university degree I followed my siblings into education. "You can go to journalism school later," Dad said, "if you still want to write."

As it turns out, at 60, I still did. But first I needed time to regain my sense of perspective. Retired in December instead of June, I allowed myself time to study for the entrance exam, workout at a gym and practice writing something other than a school newsletter.

From the moment I stood in the September lineup to get my student card for the full-time post-graduate journalism program at Vancouver's Langara College my grey cells were firing on all cylinders.

Myopically focused on my role as teacher and principal for 36 years I was woefully ill-prepared, lacking a myriad of skills necessary for news writing, photography, radio, TV and magazine features. Technologically impaired, I wallowed at the base of an extreme learning curve. My 20-something classmates — not to mention my lifelong obsession with CBC radio — pulled me through.

Now meeting fascinating interview subjects, searching for the precise bon mot to express my meaning and battles with my computer keep my cerebrum sparked. Just as well I didn't go to journalism school earlier. I didn't have much to say back then. No problem now. My fingers should be limber for the next 30 years. Brace yourselves. You haven't heard the last from me. **OL**



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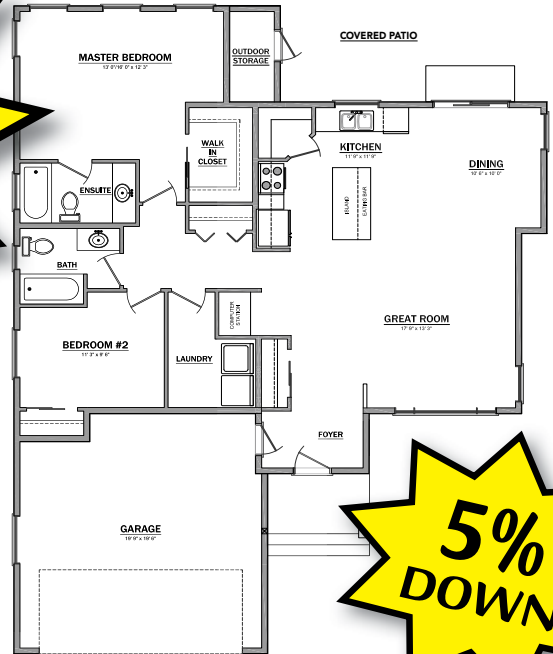
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