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SCRATCH magazine is sponsored by the Columbia Basin Trust. It is published for and by youth aged 15-29 living in the Columbia Basin region. SCRATCH strives to provide a forum for youth to exchange ideas, information and opinions in a thought provoking, informative and entertaining style.



Art by Arin Ringwald, 22, Kaslo

Fact

Canada may have become a country in 1867, but it wasn't until 1918 that women were allowed to vote in federal elections. In many cases, it took even longer for women to get the provincial vote.

Terrorism isn't new. In 1970, the FLOQ (Front de Liberation du Quebec) wanted Quebec to separate, by any means necessary. Pierre Laporte, a Quebec Cabinet Minister and James Cross, the Senior Trade Minister, were kidnapped and held hostage (Laporte was killed). The War Measures Act was implemented and armoured vehicles were deployed. Jacques Lanctot, the FLOQ ringleader, went to jail for the kidnapping, though today he is a successful Montreal publisher.

Lester B. Pearson became the first Canadian to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957 for the creation of the United Nations Emergency Force. UNEF was created to act as a buffer between Egypt and the allied forces of France, Britain and Israel, who were in armed conflict over plans to nationalize the Suez Canal. Pearson became Prime Minister in 1963.

Front and back cover photos by Crystal Smienk, 23, Balfour



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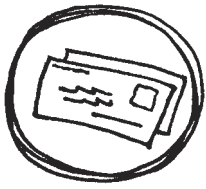
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Check out
www.scratchonline.ca

Check out the art gallery



Gallery on Page 9 & 25



Editorial

By Joe McDonald,
16, Nakusp



As I was planning the editorial for this issue, I was constantly aware that even the slightest mention of a political group could be seen as propaganda, or support for a single party. Indeed, there is little of anything you can say on the topic of politics without getting... well, political.

Of course, I have my political views. I see the world in a certain light, a light that only I can truly understand. I'm pretty sure everyone does. So, how can I write an editorial without any of my bias influencing it? Could I go ahead and write with my personal biases intertwined in my writing? Did I really need to tread on eggshells when writing content for this issue?

Throughout this whole issue, the hardest struggle seems to be in weighing the matter of personal bias. Content, art, and enthusiasm will pour in but, this time it isn't just a question of which piece is the best written. We need to weigh in who it seems to be in favour of. We cannot have too much support for any single party's platform and general ideals.

The POLITICS of Publishing a Politics ISSUE

While selecting content for this issue, we need to make sure that this equality is upheld in this issue of SCRATCH. How do you put out an informative issue on politics without biasing people in the process? Where is the line between information and propaganda? And, how do you tell when you've crossed this line?

Unfortunately, there seems to be no definite answer. This question, like everything in politics, is a matter of opinion. It's a matter to be debated back and forth between each other. The irony of the matter is that the only answer to the question of where it's appropriate to display personal opinions... well, that's a personal opinion!

So, throughout this magazine, you will see many things. You will see profiles of some of the major political parties. You will read other peoples' opinions pertaining to certain issues. You might learn something about Canadian politics and why they matter. Of course, we haven't kept this magazine totally unbiased. That would be impossible. So, I leave you with a single piece of advice while reading this magazine: do not take any opinions presented here for granted. Take everything in this magazine in, and make up your own mind and then go vote! ☺

By Rebecca
Withers, 29,
Revelstoke

Canadian Politics eh? They matter!



A very interesting trend emerged when we were putting together this issue of SCRATCH. The majority of the submissions focused on the politics of the United States rather than on the politics of Canada. Youth wrote in to slam George Bush and to make fun of the war in Iraq. Nobody submitted anything about Paul Martin, the legalization of marijuana or the privatization of medical care. All of this made me curious to know why we are more interested in the politics of the United States than the politics of our own country. Think back to the recent presidential elections in the United States.

All of the US networks were covering the election (as should be expected) but all of the Canadian television networks also had full coverage of the election in the States. I seriously doubt that the US networks made any mention of the Canadian election, let alone give extensive coverage to it. It seems as though Canadians are more interested in US politics than the work that our own politicians are doing. Many important political decisions have recently occurred in our province including the new training wage for youth and increased tuition fees. Not one of the submissions we received dealt with these issues. I believe that Canadians (particularly young Canadians) should focus more on the politics of our own country instead of worrying about what is going on with our neighbours to the south. ☺

Politics for The Youth

By Caitie Hecker,
16, Nelson

Today, society's youth has become unaware of politics. We have left it to the adults to deal with. In doing this, we have disregarded that we are the adults. We are the adults of the near future, so wouldn't it make sense to plan ahead, learn, and take time to decide what kind of future we want.

Part of the problem with youth and politics is we don't even know what politics are. Politics are anything the government controls, or deals with. Politics are religion, health care, taxes, stocks, bonds, terrorism, job cuts, and a lot more. Why wouldn't something with great significance, not be properly educated, and understood?

Many of the youths answers would be, "why would I," or, "politics is for the people who accept we have a corrupt government who likes to increase taxes to a ridiculous rate." Well I say, stop being lazy, participate in knowledge of what's going on in our world. Stop finding excuses for not wanting to learn about it. Don't be uneducated about politics. Start defining why it would be smart to educate yourself in politics.

We have all benefited from and been mistreated by government. It's more likely though to hear about the mistreatment than the benefits. We take no effort in the knowledge of politics. We like to put the more important things to us before the actual importance, the importance of politics. It is a big part of our future.

We tend to make ourselves too busy to learn anything that doesn't tie in with our social schedule, or activities. We need to take time and relax, and think of our near future, which politics is a big part of.

Parents, you have a big affect on how we see and deal with politics. If what we hear and learn from you are the negative aspects on politics, we generally take it as something negative, and have no interest in it. You have not taught us it is something we all have to learn and take part in. Politics are just plainly a forgotten topic in our beautiful but ignorant youth.

We are the future. We need to take part in it. We need the educational value and proper preparation for our future politics. Don't be ignorant. Learn about your future.



THEPOLITICSISSUE



Hey Politicians!

What are you saying?

By Jordana Jmieff, 18, Castlegar

Politicians today are consistently utilizing and exercising the use of stale clichés and phrases. We may not realize it, but we are surrounded by many forms of nonsense and have become very unprofessional with our choice of words. The numerous amount of slang that has been twisted and created is astonishing, but has come to be unacceptable. Since the use of such jargon is practiced by the leaders of our society, it is often overlooked and disregarded. When delivering a speech, politicians never really say anything at all and seem to be encouraging the loss of our language and our sanity. With their constant use of "gobbledygook" it makes it increasingly difficult to really imagine what they are trying to portray. How can anyone understand the message being delivered? This completely destroys and denies the voter's right to any real meaning or substance. So why is the media still so thrown back with wondering why the youth feel so alienated to vote? It is quite clear that the language used to communicate to the public is brainwashing to believe that they are saying a lot, yet really nothing at all. Politicians are complicated and know how to persuade the people; we don't even realize it. With this continued practice, will the correctness of our language soon be lost? I admit that I catch myself repeating the "gobbledygook," but from the leaders of the world I believe that this continued use should be executed.





WORDS really DO mean something

By Star Cardinal, 25, Cranbrook

As a “mixed blood” native person, I have learned to be aware of how detrimental terminology is to everybody’s understanding. As a student of anthropology, and now as the incumbent Aboriginal Education Coordinator at the College of the Rockies, I am constantly asked to discuss native culture.

This is an elementary introduction to learning the very basic vocabulary that you will need to discuss native issues in Canada.

Let’s start with the term “Indian.” Indian is a socially constructed concept or category, this word was first explained as a mistake by Christopher Columbus, who thought he had found India when he landed on the North American continent. Until this day, however, Indian is used in all Government legislation and policy. It is also interchangeable with Aboriginal, which is increasingly used. Aboriginal is problematic to many First Nations people in because it is commonly known to refer to the Aborigines of Australia. First Nations is a term that is more popular among Native groups, as it acknowledges the fact that all Native groups were sovereign nations at the time of contact, with fully effective institutions and governments. Because the word Indian has been used so terribly in many situations both recorded as historic and not, many have become highly sensitive to its usage- and I suggest you do too.

Learn more about the Ktunaxa Kinbasket people by going to www.kktc.bc.ca. ☺

By Priscilla Barr, 17, Valemount

P
O
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T
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C
S
Politics is, perhaps,
Often of
Little
Importance
To this
Independent
Country-
So stereotypical, unstructure

Spelling
out what
politics
means...

my Little Rant about...

By Zac Cocciolo, 14, Revelstoke

Nationalism.

Definition:

to unite one country against all others.

To step towards fascism,

If one is a patriot,

a nationalist,

they are a nicer sounding neo-nazi.

It is to say, “My country

is the best, always was the best,

will always be the best.

My country has, never had,

nor will ever have any flaws.

Anyone from another country

is lower on the social ladder than me,

if they say that my country is not the best on earth and in the

universe I should have the right to kill them!”

It is to wish for one culture,

one outlook on life,

one people,

total unity.

This eliminates free speech

and destroys right of thought.

There is much, much more to say,

But I am tired,

and it is futile to doubt the majority.

They always win...

Down with Big Brother

Legal answers

you asked for!



Experts have been answering your questions on-line at www.scratchonline.ca. Check out this advice from a legal expert... a lawyer who likes to SCRATCH! Thanks to Robert Brown of Thompson, LeRose & Brown for his on-line advice.

Marijuana Laws

Q. What is the deal with marijuana laws - is it going to become legal soon?

A. The debate relating to Marijuana has been ongoing for years. The fact is that possession of marijuana is unlawful. This law is found in the Controlled Drug and Substances Act. A recent Supreme Court of Canada decision has upheld the authority of the federal government to prohibit the possession of marijuana. However, a person can possess marijuana if he or she has an authorization issued under regulations made pursuant to the Controlled Drug and Substances Act. These authorizations are granted for medical, not recreational reasons.

Cell Phones

Q. I have heard that it is illegal to use a cellular phone while driving. Can you please clarify the laws in Canada regarding cellular phone use while driving?

A. In British Columbia, it is not illegal to use a cell phone while driving. However, if you are involved in an accident you may have committed the offence of operating motor vehicle without due care, and attention if there is a causal link between the accident and the use of the phone.

Bullying

Q. At what point does verbal/physical bullying become assault, and at what point is it considered illegal?

A. Assault occurs two ways. Firstly, it is an assault for you to intentionally apply force to another person, directly or indirectly, when they do not consent to that force. Secondly, it is an assault for you to attempt or threaten (by act or gesture) to apply force to another person and that other person believes, on reasonable grounds, you have the ability to apply that force.

A bully often insults or says derogatory statements to another, but that is not assault. When the bully escalates his utterances or gestures to cause another person to fear for their safety (ie. threatens to "kick your ass"), then the bully has committed assault. If the bully actually strikes a person, without cause (ie. self defence), then the bully has committed assault.

Child Support

Q. A friend of mine got pregnant awhile back and she wanted to have the baby but the father didn't want to keep it. She hasn't let the father see his kid, as she moved away, but she now wants to collect child support. Can she do this since he didn't want to have the baby and she won't let him see the baby?

A. A court will order the father to pay child support to your friend. The fact that the father didn't "want to keep it" and that she hasn't let the father see the child are not relevant to his obligation to pay child support.

Are you looking for advice from an expert? Tell www.scratchonline.ca what kind of advice you want and we'll try to find someone to answer your questions on an upcoming discussion board.



Streeter



By Keya White, 26, Fernie

Do you plan on making your life in the Columbia Basin?



Craig Walker, 31, Fernie

For myself, the Columbia Basin holds boundless opportunity not just in terms of the beautiful venue it provides for all the outdoor recreational activities which brought me to the mountains. There is also opportunity here to influence the direction of industry and development in order to preserve a still for the most part unspoiled natural environment.



Josée Trudeau, 23, Winnipeg

When I moved to Fernie, I never thought I'd stay so long. One ski season turned into three years! There is nothing that I do not love about the Columbia Basin... the mountains, the freshness, it feels so alive and it makes me feel alive. If it were up to me I would never have left, so you can count on the fact that I will be back to start my career and continue my life with my friends in the Columbia Basin. I love British Columbia.



Cliff Razzo, 26, Fernie

I really would like to continue to live in the Columbia Basin, but the economic opportunities are very limited unless you are prepared to work in the service/tourism industry. I love the recreational activities that are available here, such as skiing, hiking and fly fishing. It is also a great place to live. Hopefully, one day I am able to settle in this area with financial security.



Mike Bennett, 26, Fernie

To answer this question is very difficult. I would love to stay in the Basin and make my life here but at the end of the day it comes down to economics and whether it is worth it financially. Factors such as living costs (real estate etc.) and job availability will play a huge role in this decision.

Got an opinion on something you read in SCRATCH? Or something going on in the world? Let us know what you think, about anything. Hit the SCRATCH discussion boards at www.scratchonline.ca. Snail mail opinions accepted too!



Kelly Proctor, 27, Fernie

Yes, I plan on continuing to make my life here...you can't beat the life style! Chill, inspiring, friendly, and magically beautiful.



In Alabama it is illegal to drive a vehicle blindfolded.

It is illegal to name a pig Napoleon in France.

In Michigan, a man legally owns his wife's hair.

In Texas, it's illegal to milk another person's cow.

In Boston duels to the death are permitted on the common on Sundays provided that the Governor is present.

SCRATCH the next issue!

We're always looking for SCRATCH reporters, photographers and artists. Post your original words and images on-line at www.scratchonline.ca or get in touch with Lynne Betts if you are itching to be part of the spring 2005 mind-body-spirit issue: bettsetc@shaw.ca or 1-800-505-8998. We want to hear from you!

Compiled by Joe McDonald, 16, Nakusp

Cartoon by Zac Cocciolo, 14, Revelstoke



Next great target of the War president known only as "Bush"



Art by Tony Hawke, 16, Nakusp



Gallery

Photo by Keya White, 26, Fernie





The politics of female bullies

By Hailey-Jean Dale,
18, Castlegar

“Are you and Melissa in a fight?”

*“Yeah we’re not friends anymore.
Listen. I didn’t want to tell you this,
but Melissa’s been talking about you
behind your back....”*

How familiar this conversation must sound to all the girls who just read it! Probably even the boys have heard similar comments being thrown around if they’ve been around a girl for even ten minutes. The purpose is not to laugh at the humour in this example but to recognize what is actually happening here. The painful relational aggression used by many girls, known as gossiping, teasing, ignoring, or exclusion must be prevented during the early stages of adolescent development in order to ward off the long lasting emotional damage.

One of the primary differences between typical female aggression and male aggression can be noticed in the language used to identify the event. Males tend to say that ‘they fought’ or ‘will fight’ as it is a one time occurrence with a definite starting and finishing point. On the other hand, I’ve noticed that many females say that they ‘were fighting’ or that they are ‘in a fight’ as though it is an ongoing process. Traditionally girls are relational aggressors, meaning that they use relationships as weapons to fight their battles. As a girl, I know personally that becoming friends with other girls means learning each other’s weaknesses. The silent wars engaged by many girls, including the silent treatment, backstabbing, or secretive sabotage, can have more devastating effects on a victim than physical violence alone. Learning to view each other as adversaries, girls lose a valuable support system, their peers, during an important phase of their psychosocial development.

Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me. This overused cliché has never been more incorrect in a time when many brave women, such as Jodee Blanco, author of “Please Stop Laughing at Me...”, are finally coming forward about the long silenced issue of female bullying. No longer is it acceptable for parents to excuse constant teasing and relational aggression as child’s play. Something must be

done now to change girls’ attitudes towards each other before habits form. Generally males are capable of dealing with their problems directly and without hesitation. Why is it that so many women seem to beat around the bush when conflicts arise? It seems to be a recurring trend that many women tend to put themselves at an unfair disadvantage when it comes to achieving their goals because of their inability to interact with other women, as men do with other men. Chris Rock reportedly said, during the commentary of ‘Mean Girls’ that “women would rule the world if they didn’t hate each other.”

“Women would rule the world if they didn’t hate each other.”

Women have long been in the background in a world dominated by men. This may explain the dog-eat-dog attitude that many women have adopted towards one another. It’s hard not to notice how so many girls look at each other as rivals in a life-long competition to get ahead, and they seem to constantly resort to unfair tactics of warfare. But in a time and a country where gender equality is becoming a centralized priority, there is no longer a need to be constantly pitting girl against girl. We can accomplish so much more by focusing our energy on progression rather than worrying about how we compare against her. What may seem like second nature to girls must and can be changed for the advancement of a gender to the point of gender equity. ☺



Percentage of black South Africans who now have a positive view of the way their country was governed under apartheid: 20 [Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Cape Town)]

Source www.harpers.org

It's just an



you



can do it!

Voter turnout among Canadians is at an unprecedented low. In fact, it's been going down for the last 20 years. But that's nothing compared to young voter turnout. In the 2000 federal election only 25% of eligible young voters headed to the polls and marked an X on the ballot. That's all you have to do. Well, you have to be kind of informed and make a choice. So why do 75% of us stay home on election day?

Hit the discussion boards at www.scratchonline.ca and tell us why you don't vote. If you do vote, how come? Is it because you know how to make an X or is there more to it? Here's what you've told the SCRATCH discussion boards so far.

If politicians know that they are not accountable to youth (because we generally do not vote) then what is their motivation to consider our best interests?

Why don't youth vote?

I think many youth choose not to vote due to a lack of information. Many feel that one vote cannot make a difference and do not see the

value in taking time to learn about our political parties to make an informed decision. This isn't necessarily laziness, although that may be another reason, just the feeling that one vote wouldn't make a difference anyway so why bother.

It is a privilege that not every human has access too. We should recognize how lucky we are to have the opportunity to voice our opinion in such a way.

It seems that we feel under-represented, this is a way to be represented.

If every youth that didn't vote, voted, we could have enough votes to possibly change who we have running right now.

You might not think you are powerful as one person, but together we are powerful, we are a strong message and by voting, (EVERYBODY) voting, we can get our message across.


If you don't vote, consider the following:

By not using your right to vote you forfeit the following rights you have now.

- 1) To have a say in who makes the rules.
- 2) To complain about anything that the government chose to do.
- 3) To criticize anyone who is involved in politics.

Do you really want to give those rights up? Do you want to have to always be quiet, angry and regretful? If not, then help yourself out and VOTE!

Q Nobody listens to youth so why should they bother to vote?

A Because if we don't vote, they will never listen! 

POLITICAL Facts

and they're TRUE!

By Priscilla Barr,
17, Valemount

Number of months in jail to which one can be sentenced for discussing politics without a permit in Zimbabwe: 6

Number of warring factions for which the world's estimated 500,000 child soldiers have been enlisted to fight: 72 [Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (London)]

Chance that a Western European has a positive opinion of George W. Bush : 1 in 10



By Genelle
Schmunk,
24, Nelson

Imagine you have traveled to an overseas country on a Student Visa. Imagine this country is known for its belief in democratic ideals. Now imagine, one day in the middle of English class, you are taken off campus in a security van, held in prison without being charged for weeks, and interrogated about National Security because you are a white Christian. Eventually, you are charged with overstaying your Student Visa, so you say, "Let me go home." But you are held for an additional 6-12 months until investigators decide you are innocent of terrorism charges – charges that have never been laid, mind you, let alone the fact that you are supposed to be innocent until proven guilty. In fact, no one will even allow you to see a lawyer, and your family is unable to help you because they do not know what has happened. You are being held in secret and your Immigration Hearing, if you ever get one, is also classified.

Sounds like a nightmare, right? Nothing like that would ever happen in a democratic society, right? But because of the USA PATRIOT Act: "Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism," put into law Oct. 26, 2001, thousands of people are being held in US custody today under similar circumstances. What if you were one of them?

So, what does democracy mean to you? How is it different from dictatorship? These are vital questions in a post 9/11 society. A democratic

Democracy, Dictatorship and the USA PATRIOT Act

Fighting terror with terror



Art by Jasmine Osiowy, 17, Cranbrook

Fact

Number of countries
the Justice Department has
advised since 1981 on the creation of
freedom of information policies: 73
[U.S. Department of Justice]
Source www.harpers.org

government must act in accordance with its beliefs or it loses credibility. We must not fight terror with terror.

The Patriot Act, part of the US-led "War on Terror" violates the rights and freedoms we have come to expect in a democracy. In fact, 60 Middle Eastern men held on

suspicion of terrorism in 2002, were

only guilty of cheating on an English Test. The

Patriot Act poses a threat to western democracy. Under the Patriot Act, these basic human rights are all violated:

- due process (right to a trial, attorney etc.)
- free speech
- association
- equal protection

These rights apply to everyone within the country, including non-citizens, and are set out under the US Constitution, as well as the Canadian Charter. Yet the US Justice Department's own watchdog said that more than 40 immigrants experienced physical abuse or due process violations in 2003 while in government custody. In fact, even speaking like I have here is enough to bar me from the US. ☹

the Calgary Flames



and

voter
apathy ?

amongst other things

By Martina Halik,
18, Invermere

In the last federal election only 20% of all Canadians between the ages of 18 and 30 voted. 20%. So what's up with the other 80%? Uninformed? Apathetic? Why is it that we're so much more likely to comment on the weather or the latest shoe fashion than take an interest in the people that run our country. "Go Flames Go!" We all cry with the utmost passion, for a game we sway no real influence over. Don't get me wrong, I watch the occasional hockey game like any other fan. Yet I can also name our current Prime Minister, something a shocking number of students were unable to recall in a past yearbook survey. Soon enough all of you will be of voting age. Will anything change with the new generation of voters?

In a recent Fernie Free Press survey, 50% of surveyed students in Fernie claimed they knew nothing about Canadian political parties. At least not enough to decisively form an opinion on which party, given the opportunity to vote, they would opt. Another 20% claimed they would choose not to vote at all. However, should I by chance stand on the steps during crowded 15 minute break and shout, "Who will win the Stanley Cup?!" (if there is a playoff this year) What per cent of you would refuse to offer me an opinion?

Does no one else share the irony in madly cheering a game which in the end achieves no more than a feeling of pride for fans, as opposed to an election where the leadership of our country hangs in the balance and every vote counts toward the future?

Then again, how can I blame you. I'm talking about students that need to ask to go to the bathroom, that need to announce any such request in front of thirty or so other classmates. Students ushered from classroom to classroom by a bell, herded into crowded hallways with meek complacency. Students that need to beg an excuse from the "almighty" teacher just to leave a classroom. Sure I'm exaggerating but sometimes I think school bloody well makes us stupider.

I for one, do not see why, if a lesson is ended early, students are

forced to sit and wait inside their respective classrooms until the bell rings. Why? Well because the teachers are "responsible" for us of course. Heavens knows what we young hooligans could possibly get up to with five extra minutes to spend! I for one could easily foresee myself carelessly breaking my neck while tripping over the classroom threshold, or causing a mass riot resulting in a revolution of terror and anarchy. Then, picture all the heartbroken parents tearfully asking, "Why? Why did you let them out early? For goodness sake, they're only seventeen, you can't expect them to act responsibly!" This of course would later be followed by a multi-million dollar lawsuit against the school board.

So what could we possibly do with an extra five minutes? Oh I don't know. How about calmly walk to our lockers without being squeezed in the usual human soup that results every time the bell rings? How about retrieve our books without resembling so many hundred bleating sheep and cattle?

In the next few months many of grads will be of voting age, and others will soon follow. How are we supposed to handle responsibility if we are considered irresponsible? Find a way, we still live in a democracy whether

we make use of it or not, but school is (for me at least) a close example of authoritarian rule. Perhaps not quite so dramatic I admit, but how many of you want a better, freer, more democratic world to enter when you graduate? Don't just vote, stay informed and stick to your values, and if not improve, at least try to maintain the political structure we know today. So watch the hockey game, just tune in to a few minutes of the news after the game and maybe you'll learn something new. Like who your prime minister is. ☹

50% of surveyed students in Fernie claimed they knew nothing about Canadian political parties.



POLITICS Streeter

When it comes to election time,
do you vote?

why or
why not?

By Logan Swayze,
25, Rossland

Sheena
Wolfe,
20, Trail



No, I haven't voted yet. I do feel it is important, but there is no party I feel strongly enough about to support. They don't give me enough motivation to go down there and vote.

Stacey
Swayze,
28, Trail



Yes, I do vote. I feel that if you don't vote, you don't have the right to complain when issues arise. You cannot complain about the party that was elected, because you didn't take the time to vote for or against them.

Mike
Vanness,
29, Trail



Yes, because if you don't vote, you have no right to complain about anything. There are people in this world that die everyday for the opportunity to vote, and I feel it's something a lot of people in North American society take for granted.

Travis
Rhodes,
22, Trail



Yes, but I don't follow government closely enough to stand behind one certain party. It's kind of an uninformed decision when I vote.

Angela
Holmes, 22, Trail



No, I do not vote because I feel the elected candidates do not inspire me to do so. I don't really support any of them.

Jody
Fors,
30, Trail



Yes, I finally found a party I agree with. Before, I thought my vote didn't really matter...it's just one vote. Now I feel each vote can make a difference.

Art by Trevor Bourgeois, 16, Elkford



TOP 10 Political Songs

- By Jessica VanDale, 16, Elkford
- 1 System of a Down: "F*** the system"
 - 2 The Beatles: "Back in the U.S.S.R."
 - 3 Dead Kennedys: "Holiday in Cambodia"
 - 4 Lamb of God: "Something to die for"
 - 5 Neil Young: "American dream"
 - 6 System of a Down: "Mr. Jack"
 - 7 John Lennon: "I don't want to be a soldier"
 - 8 Anti Flag: "Die for your government"
 - 9 Sonic Youth: "Youth against fascism"
 - 10 The Smiths: "The queen is dead"

political

By Brian W. Lawrence,
22, Creston

FAQs

Politics eh? Some of you told us that politics was a theme you just couldn't get excited by. But why not? Is it because politics doesn't matter? That can't be it. Maybe you just need some basic facts.



Q. What's the difference between an MLA (member of legislative assembly) and an MP (member of Parliament)?

A. An MP represents the people living in one of 36 regions of B.C. on a national level, in the House of Commons in Ottawa. An MLA represents folks living in one of 79 regions of the province — six of which are in the Columbia Basin — in the Legislative Assembly in Victoria.

Q. Who's my MLA? MP?

A. That depends on where in the Columbia Basin you live. There are six MLAs in the region: Wendy McMahon (Columbia River-Revelstoke), Bill Bennett (East Kootenay), Blair Suffredine (Nelson-Creston), Sandy Santori (West Kootenay-Boundary), Tom Christensen (Okanagan-Vernon) and George Abbott (Shuswap). The two MPs in the Columbia Basin are: Jim Abbott (Kootenay-Columbia), Jim Gouk (B.C. Southern Interior). To find out who's who in your town, visit www.legis.gov.bc.ca/mla/3-1-1.htm (MLA), canada.gc.ca/directories/direct_e.html (MP) or call Elections B.C. at 1-800-661-8683.

Q. What's a premier?

A. Following an election, the party with the most representatives elected becomes the governing party. If the election was provincial, that party's leader becomes premier.

Q. What's a prime minister?

A. After a national election, the leader of the party that received the most votes becomes prime minister — of which Canada has had 27 since the first, John A. Macdonald, in 1867.

Q. Who can vote?

A. Any Canadian citizen who will be 18 or older on voting day.

Q. How do I get on voters' list?

A. To be added to the National Register of Electors for federal (national) elections, call 1-800-463-6868. To register as a provincial voter, visit www.elections.bc.ca and click on "Voter Registration".

Q. What's a regional district?

A. We all live in one. A regional district is a form of local government that creates a partnership between municipalities (cities, towns and villages) and unincorporated rural areas, which work together to provide and co-ordinate rural and urban services. It also gives rural residents a form of local government. Columbia Basin regional districts can be found online at www.rdek.bc.ca (Regional District of East Kootenay), www.rdck.bc.ca (Central Kootenay), www.rdkb.com (Kootenay Boundary) and www.csr.d.bc.ca (Columbia Shuswap).

Q. Where can I get info on political parties?

A. The best way to do that is to visit www.elections.ca, click on "Political Parties, Candidates and Others," then "Political Parties," then "List of Registered Political Parties." There, you'll find a list of parties with contact information and links to their Web sites.


Q. How can I get involved in politics?

A. While you're still at the Elections Canada Web site, click on the "Young Voters" link, which takes you to several pages showing you how to get involved. It would also be a good idea to check out the provincial Web site, www.elections.bc.ca and click on "Youth Participation."

Q. When is the next provincial election?

A. The next one takes place on May 17, 2005. In this election, voters will determine who B.C.'s next 79 MLAs will be, as well as vote on whether or not to adopt a new system of electing them in 2009.

Q. What is a minority government?

A. A minority government results when the elected party receives fewer votes than the combined votes for the others. Canada's first minority federal government was elected in 1921. 

Think you know your politics?
Check out our contest on-line
@ www.scratchonline.ca
Win a SCRATCH prize pack.



Politics for beginners

By Genelle Schmunk,
24, Nelson

Ever wondered what politics has to do with you? Ever wondered what it was all about? I talked to youth representatives and got the low-down on four major parties in the world of politics. This is just a sampling of the political offerings you'll find on a ballot. Learn more about the political parties that run candidates in your community. Read the full article @ www.scratchonline.ca

What does your party stand for?

The Conservative Party of Canada is oriented toward free enterprise in both business and family. More than any other political party we stand for law and order, absolute fiscal responsibility and minimal intrusion into the personal affairs of individual's lives

The Green Party has 10 key values, but the most important is a holistic balanced view of everything, and things long term.

BC Liberals work for the future and the present. Our party fulfills the hope of citizens in regards to job creation, a strong economy, health care and tax relief. We are a made in BC party with no affiliation to any federal party.

The National Democratic Party stands for social justice, equality, and democracy.

Where do young people fit, priority-wise, in your party's platform?

Youth are extremely important to our party's platform. We understand that, simply put, they represent not only the future of our party, but also the future of Canada as a whole. Not only do we design many of our policies specifically with youth in mind, we also include young people in designing those policies and provide them with an enhanced opportunity to have policies passed at our conventions.

There are two types of people in our party: those who have a family, and those who want a family. Our support base is mostly youth because we speak about the same issues. In fact, of our Provincial Counsel, 25% are under the age of 30.

Young people are our focus. Education is our number one priority.

We have an active youth wing that is involved in all the party's activities. The BC Young New Democrats ensures that young people contribute to platform policies, everything from transportation to women's rights.

Why should youth vote for you?

Youth should vote for the Conservative Party of Canada because our party allows them more input into the shaping of the party as a whole than any other political party. Simply put, we recognize that much of the legislation passed at the federal level will have more effect on the next generation than on the present and, as such, we govern our agenda accordingly understanding that youth should have direct input into the legislation that will ultimately effect them in the future.

For the same reason other people vote for us: because they make an informed choice.

With the Liberal Party in government, youth can be excited about their future in this province: we have a plan to increase education funding over the next three years, as well as health care funding.

Young people can find their voice in the NDP. For youth who are interested in university, housing, and transportation issues, as well as human rights, there is only one choice: the NDP.

How will your party promote post-secondary education?

A Conservative government would stabilize provincial funding and work along side the provincial governments to address challenges such as rising tuition costs, class size and infrastructure. We would work hard at improving the student loan program by eliminating parental income assessment, lowering or potentially even eliminating interest charges on student loans, implementing income contingent repayment on student loans, and transferring the Millennium Program to the student loan program.

Learn more: www.electionscanada.ca or www.elections.bc.ca | www.greenparty.bc.ca

www.greenparty.ca | www.bcliberals.com | www.liberals.ca | www.bc.ndp.ca | www.conservative.ca

Who will you vote for?



Green Party Of Canada
Someday is Now



We are the first major party to say we would like to move to a free post-secondary education, replacing tuition with government funding. Our first priority for new money is education.

We will add 25,000 new spaces to colleges and universities by 2010, which is the largest expansion post-secondary education has seen in 40 years.

Previously, the NDP had a freeze on post-secondary education which kept fees affordable while ensuring institutions were properly funded. If elected, we will implement a tuition freeze again. Personally, I am pushing for tuition fee reductions as long as they are economically responsible.

How will you create more jobs for youth?

In answering this question we must understand that the very idea that government can create meaningful or long-term jobs is a fallacy. Government's duty is to create a climate in which independent business and industry will succeed in creating real jobs. We will work along side the business and industry sectors in an effort to remove the impediments to job creation and ensure that young people will have access to the type of training and education necessary for them to qualify for those jobs.

In sectors such as off-shore drilling, most of the jobs created come from out of the province. Ecological power generating and windmills create jobs that last. Jobs that are good for nature, are good for the economy.

Two ways. One, we will open new sectors in oil, gas, mining, high tech, to create high-paying jobs for young people. Two, we will reduce taxes to create a competitive business environment so people will invest in BC and create new jobs.

We believe a truly healthy economy is one where everyone shares in the benefits.

What advice do you have for young people living below the poverty line?

My advice to young people living below the poverty line is that they seek to improve their education or training, allowing them to qualify for employment or improved employment. They should aggressively pursue and utilize the many employment assistance programs which do exist at the provincial and federal levels.

Reach out. Educate yourself through things like trade programs, to get out of the never-ending minimum wage cycle. Our party supports not placing income tax on anyone below the poverty line, as well as a guaranteed annual income to those who benefit society, like those raising families.

The best way to create a future for people on social assistance and those below the poverty line is to grow the economy so there are more job opportunities available. BC's status as the number one job creating province allowed 87,000 people who were on social assistance in 2001 to move into the workforce. Since 2003, we have also increased funding for the Ministry of Children and Families by \$100 million, so that support is available to everyone who needs it.

The Liberal government's treatment of the working poor is horrible, as evident in the elimination of youth job training programs, and drug and alcohol centres, as well as the new two-year time limit implemented for Welfare. Carole James, NDP Leader, will treat people on social assistance with respect and reinvest in young people.

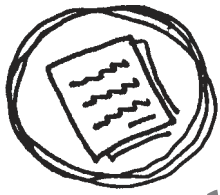
What is your party's most important environmental policy?

The Conservative Party of Canada's most important environmental policy collectively is the development of alternative energy and transitional fuels, identification and protection of Canada's major water aquifers, and the development of measures to prevent and deal with pollution of our land, air and water. We oppose the Kyoto Accord as it focuses primarily on the issue of CO2 while ignoring other more important contaminants such as carcinogens, particulate matter, and other materials which are harmful to our health and our planet. Kyoto Accord measures will be disproportionately devastating to the rural regions of our country.

Protecting our watersheds; not logging them and not building roads through them.

Clean renewable energy. Finding alternative energy sources is our main objective for environmental protection. Our goal is to deliver 50% of new power from clean sources such as tidal, wind, and fuel cell technology.

That the federal government implement the Kyoto Protocol immediately.



By April Cuffy,
26, Castlegar

foreign policy

What are we fighting for?
Don't know this world no more

This place we like to call our home
But do we really know from where we come?

I watch on TV as the enemy infiltrates me
Takes over my thoughts and governs what I see

Where is the truth?
The humanity?
All I see
Confuses me

You see
I must be blind
I muse
Or maybe
I am the only one
who really does see
That the blood in you
Is no different
than the blood in me

But the message is clear if you
read between the lines:

“Your blood is worthless
because it's yours and not mine
you were not born in the land of the free
so you can die and it won't bother me
I am only taught to fight for what I love
Something you will never be a part of
My brother is holy for he wears his
Stars and Stripes
You are unworthy with your trite
pathetic gripes
So I can kill you and it won't bother me
Because you are not a part of the Land
of the Free”

This is what they tell me
As I watch history unfold on TV:
“Don't have a 'Global Conscience'
think only of 'ME.' ”

why?

By Melanie Mendoza,
17, Elkford

Why is politics a cause of discontent and unhappiness?
Nothing satisfies the people of this world.
There are always agreements and disagreements,
Successes and failures.

Can there ever be a time when everyone agrees with each other?

Two candidates in an election.

Only one is victorious.

Half the world is content

While the other half is displeased

Why is there so much opposition?

Is it because no one wants to admit they're wrong?

Why is there war?

Can not war bring about peace?

What is a national flag and why is it so wrong to burn it?

It is but a symbol of a nation, a representation.

It has no feelings it does not affect us.

Why do we need a flag anyways?

Think!

Why does a nation get so mad when their leader makes a mistake?

Can a person not learn from the wrong he/she has done?

Is there no forgiveness left in this world?

What does it mean to be a leader these days when all it does is please one group and displeases another why so much division?

Political correctness, what's the point?

War, why not?

Why hate?

Why all the lies?

Will there ever be world peace?

Is it possible?

Why not equality? Why so many taxes?

Why Discrimination?

Why take away someone's beliefs and rights?

So many questions!

Everyone will always believe what they want.

So is it fair to say someone is wrong or tell them they deserve to lose?

Isn't it fair to respect everyone's decisions and beliefs?

Doesn't everyone deserve to win?

It's debatable but in the end everyone will always think Why?

why?
why?



Photo by
Crystal Smienk,
23, Balfour

Political **savvy** indicator

By Keith Baker,
17, Rossland



Show your friends how smart you are by completing this political quiz of basic homegrown knowledge and obscure worldwide tidbits.

- Former British Columbian Premier Glen Clark awarded a 'friend' a casino license in exchange for what?**
 - \$100,000.
 - A deck for his summer cottage.
 - A rare breed of terrier puppy.
- The British Empire was once brought to its knees by what?**
 - A seemingly anorexic Indian.
 - Nazi general Alfred Rommel.
 - Napoleon Bonaparte.
- Former Prime Minister Pierre E. Trudeau once did what?**
 - Went to jail for hiring a cheap prostitute.
 - Attended Selkirk College.
 - Flipped the bird to a crowd of people from a departing train.
- Ethnic cleansing is occurring presently in which area of the world?**
 - Quebec.
 - The Sudan.
 - Yugoslavia.
- Romeo Dallaire is which of the following?**
 - A now traumatized former Canadian military officer.
 - The guy from Romeo and Juliet.
 - The president of France during World War I.
- Japan's first 20th century war victory came against which country?**
 - China in 1931.
 - Russia in 1905.
 - USA in 1899.
- Hitler was which of the following?**
 - Romantically involved with his niece.
 - The communist dictator of Germany from '33 to '45.
 - 7 feet tall.
- What took place in Quebec in the 1970?**
 - Shortage of poutine crisis.
 - FLQ crisis.
 - NWA crisis.
- The "cult of personality" should foremost be associated with whom?**
 - Charles Manson.
 - Joseph Djughashvili.
 - The band known as Living Colour.
- The longest reigning Prime Minister in Canada consulted whom for political advice?**
 - His dog and dead mother.
 - Allah. The god of Islam.
 - Yoda.
- George W. Bush likes to make up his own words (probably because he can't remember the real ones). Which of the following did he make up?**
 - Nondisfunctionalism.
 - Anti-illegalness.
 - Misunderestimated.

Answers

- B - Glen was exposed for this ridiculous scandal and faded into political obscurity. He could've got more than a porch in return for a gambling license and his political career.
- A - Gandhi's the guy. If you like anti-establishment ideology, read up on him and his biggest influence, Thoreau.
- C - This action came in BC, creating what is now known as western alienation, which led to the Reform Party and Preston Manning.
- B - 50,000 people in the Darfur region have been killed, and up to a million more left homeless - the killings have not been stopped.
- A - Romeo was the head of the Canadian forces, peacekeeping on behalf of the UN, in Rwanda in 1994. He summoned the world to stop the

inevitable genocide about to happen, but was not helped and saw over a million people killed.

- B - Japan dominated this war, and would later ally with Germany in WWII against the Soviet Union.
- A - He had time for the Holocaust too!
- B - The 'Front de Liberation du Quebec' (FLQ) was a terrorist group demanding separation from Canada. They kidnapped a cabinet minister and a British diplomat, and carried out bombings and significant acts of vandalism.
- B - Djughashvili is Stalin's real name. He controlled the press and had pictures of himself hung everywhere, so he was the only face his people associated with leadership. This was in an effort to keep his

totalitarian state, and was later copied by Mussolini.

- A - William Lyon Mackenzie King was crazy, but he spent 22 years in office.
- A - No explanation needed.
Award yourself 1 point for every one you got right (including C for # 9, because that's just a sweet band). If you got 12, yahoo, keep on rockin'. If you got between 8 and 11, you're doing your homework, and keeping your ears open. If you get between 3 and 7, study up and discontinue your policy of ignorance. If you got less than 3, you're officially adorable. If you got all the odd numbers wrong, you probably shouldn't vote, unless you get it together and learn something. If you got all the even numbers wrong, you should read more.



By Heather Lea,
30, Revelstoke

Why not

So you had this great idea in your head to go traveling. Maybe along the beaches in Thailand or road biking in Europe. And then your car broke down and you spent your airplane ticket on your tuition for next year. That's pretty rough, but it's no reason to put the axe to your plans.

Rethink your great idea. You might actually be able to earn money while traveling! All it takes is a little work and some insight and next thing you know, you're serving Pina Colodas on some beach in Argentina.

I know because I did just this. Two years ago, I was thinking about going to New Zealand. I almost didn't go because the flight was really expensive and I hadn't saved enough money. There was no way I could pay \$1900 for a ticket and stay for any considerable amount of time on the meager savings I had left. Then a really smart friend said something about applying for a Working Holiday Visa. I asked her what this was.

"Basically," she says, "there is an arrangement between a number of countries, Canada included, where

a young person, usually aged between 18 and 30, can obtain permission to work in another country. It's much easier than going through the hassles of applying at immigration for a regular visa."

So I decided to call the New Zealand embassy. They sent me an application, I paid a fee, filled out some forms, got a passport photo taken and viola, I received a visa in the mail stamped into my passport saying I could work anywhere I wanted to at any time in



Photo by Matt Gibson, 26, Cranbrook
(living in Taiwan teaching English)

You Can afford to travel!

the same place for longer than 3 months. Meaning, every 3 months, I had to leave and find another job. Seeing as I was only there for 5 months and wanted to spend some of my hard earned money actually traveling, this was not a problem. The other catch was; I had this visa in my hand, but no job! Fortunately, I was a certified whitewater rafting guide in Canada. These skills I had helped me when I drove to a small town in New Zealand, walked up to the manager and said, "Hi. I'm Heather. I want to work here. Here is my visa, and my resume." I was working 24 hrs. later.

New Zealand for up to a year. Now, there were some strings attached.

I couldn't work at

wait tables down under?



Maybe you're thinking, "But I'm not a river guide!" No problem! Remember that time you thought it'd be nice to make some fat tips waiting tables? Well, it wasn't so fun when it was at Smitty's in your hometown, but what about waiting tables along the beach in Australia? During the day, you surf. During the night, you tell people the drink special. Or maybe you've always wanted to work in a hotel. Maybe be a manager one day. Well, that resume of yours would look quite impressive if it said you were the Valet Driver at one of the top hotels in Europe. See what I'm getting at? These jobs are a dime a dozen and easy to find. Perhaps your friend just got back from Thailand where she worked as a waitress, 'under the table'. It's true that those jobs are out there, but with an actual Working Holiday Visa, your chances of finding work just increased big time. If you don't end up needing it, great. Be forewarned, though, some of these 'under the table' jobs are starting to cut down on illegal work.

Okay, I've made my point. Now you're excited, you want to ditch that summer job you've had for 3 years, you're wondering what to do next summer after you graduate or maybe you want to see the world before succumbing to your studies. Here's how you do it; go to any one of the websites listed below and start working on your application! Some have limited quotas on how many people they'll take, so don't slack off! Mine was the last one to get accepted!

You can also search under "Working Holiday Visa" and get about 140,000 other sites.

In the end, I spent around \$1500 for a five-month vacation! My flight was \$1900, I bought a van to live in, around \$1200 and of course I bought other things, but working gave me an extra \$2200 to play with.

I have traveled to a few other countries; Alaska, Central and South America, but I have to say that working in a country you are visiting is the best way to understand different cultures. Befriending the locals will get you places you might never see as a 'tourist' and you'll have a place to stay next time you visit!

So get to work and good luck!

More ways to travel..

Still need more information? Try these other youth travel programs for work & travel opportunities.

www.projectvisa.com/workingholidayvisas/workingholidayvisas.asp

www.work2travel.co.nz/new-zealand-working-holiday-visas/

www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/123go/workholiday-en.asp

www.ahc-ottawa.org/visa/whm.html

www.workpermit.com/uk/wh_working_in_uk.htm

Student Youth Travel www.syta.org

Willing Workers on Organic Farms Canada www.wwoof.ca

Action without Borders www.idealists.com

Government of Canada Youth www.youth.gc.ca

Canadian University Services Overseas www.cuso.org

Canadian Crossroads International www.cciorg.ca/west

American (and Canadian) Field Service www.afscanada.org

Youth Challenge International www.yci.org

Canada World Youth www.cwy-jcm.org

Travelcuts www.travelcuts.com

Hostelling International Canada www.hihostels.ca

Katimavik www.katimavik.org 

TELL US!

Tell us your travel stories. Did you have a great adventure? Got some advice for other travel-wannabes? Hit the discussion boards at www.scratchonline.ca



greed

By Randi McDonald,
28, Elkford

Racial discrimination
Global disintegration
As our economy becomes more diverse
The divergence between rich and poor grows worse
We consume our minds with possessions
Materialistic belongings are our main obsessions
We walk into stores buying everything we desire
While the homeless sit by and admire
Greed has become our main ambition
Never thinking of others financial position
Life is too short to spend it all in want
Inner happiness is the only solution
For this never ending taunt
Objects can't accomplish peace and remove fears
You can try forever but money won't dry your tears

Art by Erin
Hascarl, 17,
Elkford



By Jen Wisniewski, 16, Elkford

contention
Hate and terror,
Surrounding the innocent.
Violence becoming power,
To end a dispute.
Devastation and death,
Become the largest outcomes.
Broken families and communities,
Needing all possible repairs.
Poverty and famine,
Spreads through all the distressed.
Violence and hate,
Scars the young and impressionable.
Death and suffering,
Seizes everyone's heart.
Yearning for an end,
To the ruins and deprivation.

The bridge

By Amanda Diakiw,
16, Invermere

A backdrop of tarnished clouds.

My coffee stained mittens grasp sea salt fingertips.
Cool wind from the Red Rock Bridge
passes though your
soft brown hair.
Blows outgrown bangs,
across your face.

Your body is outlined,
mounted on a canvas.

One finger at a time,
you let go of my hand.
Mascara runs.

You turn your back,
climb
the rusted rails of the bridge.
Murky waters rush beneath.

Arms spread,
you stare into the wide open.
A crucifixion

And you jump.
Your skirt
dances in the wind.

I wait for a bungee cord to recoil,
and bring you back.

My eyelids fall heavy,
and it starts to snow.

Grab your GPS!

By Joel Robison, 20, Cranbrook

A high-tech treasure hunt outdoors.



Have you ever dreamed of finding a treasure map and venturing into the forest to find a hidden treasure filled with goodies? Well, now you can. All you need is a computer and a hand-held Global Positioning System (GPS).

Geocaching is a new high tech sport that is becoming widely popular with outdoor enthusiasts who also enjoy technology. If a tech-inspired treasure hunt sounds appealing, Geocaching is for you!

The first step is easy. Log on to www.geocaching.com and create your profile. After you've chosen a screen name, which will be your geocaching identity in logbooks, just click onto the main page and plug in your postal code. A list of nearby caches (treasures) will load. Choose a cache and click on it to read information about it. The cache page will tell you the distance from you, and give you any directions you might need to get to the cache. Look for hints and tips in the logs that the other cachers have left.

Now, put the coordinates into your GPS and you're off! Hop into your car or onto your bike and start the search. Caches range in difficulty and size. You'll find out which size and how hard it is on the cache page. Caches are placed all over, some are located near rest stops on the highways, some are in local parks, some are placed on the tops of mountains.

Once you get near the cache site, keep your eyes open. It's time to begin the hunt.



All you need is a hand-held GPS and you're ready to look for buried (OK, hidden) treasure (OK, it's not much of a treasure, but it's fun to look for!).

Depending on your GPS you can get within a few meters of the cache without really having to look for it. Look around for a possible place where the cache could be hidden. Most caches are in plastic containers, so look for a hiding spot able to fit that.

After you find the cache, it's time to pick your treasure. Caches usually consist of items like toys, ornaments, key chains, and buttons so pick what you like. The rule in geocaching is, if you take something, you leave something, so be sure to bring a trading item. Before you

leave, sign the logbook with your screen name and any comments about the cache. Be sure to hide the cache exactly as you found it! Once you're back at home, go back onto the website and back to the cache description page where you sign the online logbook.

Geocaching is a challenging and fun way to enjoy the outdoors. Many caches take you to places you would never go, or places that reveal amazing scenery. The geocaching community respects the environment and encourages trash removal while on the hunt. There are more than 100,000 caches in 212 countries, so log onto www.geocaching.com and start your modern day treasure hunt!



In Denmark it isn't illegal to attempt to escape from prison, so long as you aren't assisted.

Compiled by Joe McDonald, 16, Nakusp



A Basin full of biodiversity

By Keya White,
26, Fernie

No matter what part of the Columbia Basin you live in it's likely you've come to recognize and appreciate many of the unique characteristics that make the place where you are what it is. On adventures to other parts of the Basin, you may have been somewhat surprised by just how different the landscape and its plants and animals can be, even when you've only travelled a few kilometres down the road. While you might not have put your finger on the scientific explanation or term for what makes things this way, my guess is that as one of the large number of species that calls this distinctive corner of the Province home, unconsciously or consciously,

Northern Leopard Frogs, a red-listed species that used to be the most common type of frog in North America. Although there were previously 8 – 10 known populations in BC there is now only one population living in the Creston area.

Rocky Mountain Tailed Frogs are another red-listed species only found in the Basin. These primitive, almost entirely aquatic frogs were separated millions of years ago from their nearest relative...in New Zealand! In BC, they can only be found in the Moyie and Flathead watersheds.

Mountain Caribou is a red-listed species. Almost all of the world's 1800 mountain caribou live in the southeastern corner of BC or in other words, in our very own Columbia Basin.

Coeur d'Alene Salamanders are found in parts of the United States but within our province only live in the Selkirk Mountains between Creston to Revelstoke and also in an area near Kimberley.

American (East Kootenay) Badgers are a red-listed species of which 100 (40%) of the approximately 250 animals remaining in BC, live in the East Kootenays. A positive example of an ongoing effort to protect critical badger habitat is the East Kootenay Grassland Restoration Project and the effort to acquire and manage land in the 1896-acre Wycliffe Wildlife Corridor near Cranbrook by The Land Conservancy of BC.

RANDOM FACT: Three-quarters of Canada's mammal species are found in BC, and 24 of those species are exclusive to the Province of BC.

biodiversity is a topic you've given some thought to.

There are more complicated ways of explaining it, but essentially what you need to know about biodiversity is that it refers to the variety of plant and animal life found within a particular habitat (or in the world as a whole) and the differences that occur within and between both species themselves and the ecosystems they live in. While BC itself is recognized as having Canada's greatest biological diversity at a level of global significance, it is in fact the Columbia Basin that contains a wealth of these species, several of which can only be found in our region.

Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep are a blue-listed species with a population of 14,000 in the Province Of BC (56% of the total North American population of 25,000.) About 75% of BC's population inhabit the East Kootenay/Columbia Trench area.

Lewis' Woodpecker is a blue-listed species that can no longer be found in much of its former range in southwestern BC but is still present in several areas including the East Kootenay where 85 active nests were identified. Significantly, this region's Bull Mountain is one of the only known winter habitat sites for Lewis' Woodpecker in Western Canada.

Western Painted Turtles are a blue-listed species and are the only freshwater turtle native to BC. Some of the best Painted Turtle habitat in BC can be found in the Columbia Basin, particularly at locations like Kikomun Creek Provincial Park beside Lake Koocanusa where it is estimated there are 800 to 900 turtles.

www.biodiversityatlas.org
<http://srmwww.gov.bc.ca/atrisk/>
www.livingbasin.com
www.cmiae.org/
www.crestonwildlife.ca
www.ekcp.ca
www.conservancy.bc.ca
www.landtrustalliance.bc.ca
www.y2y.net
<http://maps.gov.bc.ca/>



67% of vertebrate species in BC and 48% of total vertebrate species in Canada live in the Canadian Columbia Basin.

gallery



Art by Arin Ringwald, 22, Kaslo

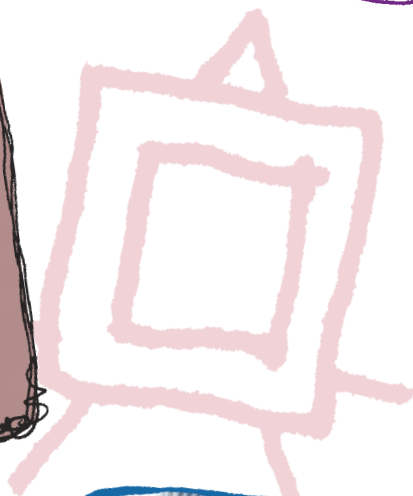


Photo by Crystal Smienk, 23, Balfour



Photo by Jon Dawson, 22, Castlegar

Fact

In Florida you aren't allowed to tie an elephant to a parking meter unless you pay the meter fee.

In Liverpool it is illegal for a woman to be topless in public with the exception of a clerk in a tropical fish store.

Compiled by Joe McDonald, 16, Nakusp



wwwater...
click
Here!

Columbia Basin Trust is working in the area of water education and awareness. The CBT is developing many tools to start working with the people of the Basin so they can better relate and understand local and Basin wide water issues. As part of this process the CBT has developed a new water website.

The new water website includes a number of interactive and educational features including information on the water resources in the Columbia Basin (rivers, lakes, reservoirs and icefields), key facts about the water cycle and live links to all of Environment Canada and the Provinces climate, hydrology and snow station in the Columbia Basin.

You can view this website either through the main CBT website www.cbt.org and clicking the water initiatives link or go directly to it at water.cbt.org, www.wonderofwater.ca to learn more about water.



Shambhala ticket winners!

Katrina Ackerman (left) won a pair of tickets to the 2004 Shambhala Music Festival. She and Brittany Gilchrist, also from the Columbia Basin, won tickets just by completing a SCRATCH survey. You never know what we might give away! Check out www.scratchonline.ca for contests, discussion boards, and an on-line gallery of original art and writing.

By Genelle Schmunk,
24, Nelson

the youth are gathering in circles

Where were you during the 2004 Leaders of Tomorrow Forum? This year, forty-six people between the ages of 21 and 29 came together to brainstorm community projects and find ways to "Get it done!" The weekend event, created by the CBT Youth Advisory Committee, focused on environmental leadership, networking, skill-building, personal commitment and passion.

Even if you missed the forum you can adopt some of the commitments that the participants created for themselves:

- educate yourself about native plant species;
- watch what your ecological footprint is;
- question the norm;
- stay open to people who are different than you;
- conserve water and buy local;
- combat corporate greed; and
- live a more sustainable way of life.

New youth programs Spring 05!

Find out more about youth programs and projects at www.scratchonline.ca or 1-800-505-8998. Watch for new youth programs this spring!

youth Community service Awards

Graduating grade 12 in 2005? Need \$ for post-secondary school? Apply by February 25, 2005 for CBT's Youth Community Service Awards. This award is given on the basis of community and volunteer service. For information www.scratchonline.ca or 1-800-505-8998.

Feeling Itchy?



By Dana Welsh,
27, Rossland

So if you're doing it – let's hope that you are doing it safe. And if not, well... it is your responsibility to be vigilant about checking out what is going on below. Your doctor isn't going to call you up and say "hey, do you feel like getting tested for gonorrhoea?" – it is up to you to get tested if you have been up to any kind of risky behaviour – even doing it once without a condom is plenty enough.

It is entirely possible that when you head into the doctor's office with your nerves steeled that you are going to get the brush off, especially if you are female. For some reason, there are some doctors around the Basin that think that HIV/STIs don't live here – little do they know! There also may be some issues with your doctor around what is a risky activity. If you say that you have a boyfriend/girlfriend that you have had for a while then your doctor may be inclined to say, "Don't worry about it – you are okay" – and you have to stand up for yourself and for your health.

Communication with your partner and regular talks with your doctor can ensure that you are on top of your sexual health needs, and that you are in a power position with your body. Keeping yourself in the know about STIs, their symptoms or lack thereof (yes, it is true some STIs have NO symptoms) and their potential to hurt you is an important part of your sexual activity and your sexuality. A relaxed

and assured partner is way more fun than someone who is unfamiliar with their bits and is nervous or uncomfortable about what is going on down there. It is important for you to be the number one advocate for your body and realize that no matter what you do to it – it is the only one that you have got. So no matter what you look like you should treat it with love and respect. Work from where you are at – try to examine your body and be familiar with where everything is and what does what – this will give you a clear picture. Try that cheesy old adage of self-talk – think about two good things about your body every day, you will begin to see a positive change in the way that you feel, the way that your body acts and in turn the way that you begin to express your sexuality. That positive self-talk can lead to some pretty radical changes in your sexuality. Someone who feels connected and positive about their body is someone who people are naturally drawn to. This confidence will spill over to your sexuality whether or not you are doing it with someone else, alone or not at all. This confidence will spill over when you walk into the doctor's office with a weird bump down below and will force the doctor to take you seriously... and your health as well.

Resources for information about STIs

www.optionsforsexualhealth.org/

www.advocatesforyouth.org/

www.sexualityandu.ca/

www.goaskalice.columbia.edu/

www.scarleteen.com/



OUT JOGGING

By Jesse Schmidt, 16, Castlegar

It is July 2004, and I am with my parents and 24-year-old brother, at a family cabin in the prairies. Getting bored of sitting around doing nothing, I tell my family that I am going for a jog around some of the old country roads. My brother tells me he's coming along. At first I am annoyed that he is inviting himself along, because it is difficult for me to physically push myself when other people are around. I think about it, and decide it's not so bad because I don't often get the opportunity to spend time with him, and I have my whole life to exercise.

We leave the cabin and start to run down the dirt road alongside the cottages surrounding the lake. After fifteen minutes of running, and talking through deep breathing, we reach the road turning out towards the highway. Crop fields stretch far over the horizon in every direction. We slow to a walk to catch our breaths. We are talking about the demise of my sporting career, and his new life in the working world.

I have to tell him.

I start to think that this would be an opportunity to come out to him.

This is my chance.

As we resume jogging, I start to think that this would be an opportunity to come out to him. He is a pretty open-minded guy in some respects, but I still remember him picking on me and calling me fag when I was small. I quickly decide to drop the idea, and wait for a time when I feel more ready and confident.

Over the next fifteen minutes jogging, my mind, critical as ever, is ridiculing itself for having the idea, and then backing out of it. As I go on half listening to my brother talking about his work, half playing mind-games with myself, we are approaching the road distant from, and parallel to the road we began on. That's it, I can't think back about this rare opportunity to have my brother's full attention, and forever think I was being cowardly. I have to tell him.

This is a piece of me that, left untold, leaves much of my life unknown, that allows some of his words to cut so deep.

I hold my breath, and rack my mind, trying to find the best time to bring it up. He asks me if I have a girlfriend. Perfect opportunity...damn, not yet. I'm so nervous. Why is this so hard? It's so much harder to tell family these sorts of things than friends. A negative reaction could mess up a life-long brother relationship. Friends come and go, but you only get one shot at relatives.

Now he's telling me about how one friend of his pretended to assume a man she met was gay to make him mad. My brother comments on what a bad diss that was. This is my chance. In my head I run over what I want to say next: "hey be quiet, I'm gay!" The

I am a 16-year-old male from Castlegar. I told my parents that I'm gay about 6 months ago, and this is my story of how I recently came out to my oldest brother.



words are clawing their way up my throat, and I start to open my mouth. I choke. Okay, that's okay. I just have to try again.

I'll count to ten and tell him quickly. 1...2.....9...(deep breath)..10! All I manage to get out is that my ankle is sore, so we begin to walk again. My mind cringes with the sting of my stupid, second-guessing failure.

We are nearing the road where we will turn down towards the lake. I promise myself I will get this over with by the time we are turning. We are getting closer and closer to the crossroads. I try to collect myself. Okay were there now, here it goes....Shit! I cut myself short again!

We're around the corner and I'm so disappointed in myself. I want to just disappear right now. If someone condemns me for a natural part of life I can't control, why should I care what they think in the first place? My eyes well up with bitter tears which I wipe away as I ostensibly spit to the side of the road. At this point I barely notice my brother running beside me. All my attention has been turned to the battle in my head; to be known as I am, or to hide?

Less than five minutes left on the way back to the cabin, and we begin to talk about old memories out at the lake. He starts retelling the story of how him and my middle brother were caught smoking pot many years ago and reported to my parents by their friend's mother. This particular mother happened to later discover that she was a lesbian, and left her husband to live with her female partner. My brother, still bitter about being ratted out, called her a "dumb dyke".

A warm flow of adrenaline shoots through my body and I freeze. It's now or never. My nagging thoughts finally shut off.

"You know, I'm gay."

"What!?"

"I'm gay." There! I said it!

His foot digs sharply into the gravel as he halts. I look at him. His eyes are wide and he is looking directly at me.

"Are you serious?"

"Yeah."

"I never even considered that!" he says.

"How long have you known?"

He asks me a few more questions that I answer, but I'm having trouble looking him in the eyes. He sounds surprised, but tells me it's okay with him. After more discussion he tells me that his opinion of me hasn't changed, in fact he says, I even earned some respect for being brave enough to tell him. I laugh at the part of me telling myself that I'm a coward.

By the time we reach the cottage our conversation has lost it's awkwardness. Now I'm in my room, thinking about everything that just happened. I am still hot and sweaty for an hour of running, but a cold shiver of relief runs through my back. I feel like I could get up and run a marathon.

OK, so it's probably not that interesting to read, but it was a very significant event in my mind. All I can say is that I hope all of my coming out experiences will be as positive as they have been so far. My only remaining family member to tell is my other brother. ☹

Gay Youth

By Genelle Schmunk, 24, Nelson

Need some answers? Support? Or someplace to just relax? Kootenay Safe Spaces offers safe, confidential places for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and questioning youth to get together. You can access information and services, and meet other gay youth.

Contact info:

Trail (Cindy) 512-9001

Castlegar (Jessica) 365-2104 ext. 27

or 1-800-342-6502

Nelson (Julia, Stacey) 352-5656

Creston (Gaylene) 428-3353

Kimberely (Rhonda) 426-3383

Cranbrook/ Fernie (Liana) 421-3172



YOUNG have rights! WORKERS

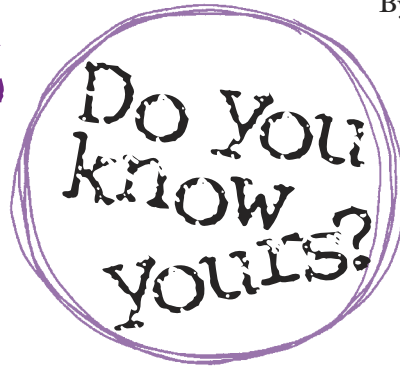
By Willem Betts,
23, Queen's Bay

Working previously to your first job, you've likely found yourself under the watchful eye of your parents and school teachers in an environment where safety is prioritized. As you enter the world of profit-driven workplaces, however, you'll notice a profound change. Supervisors under pressure can easily forget safety as their attention becomes fixed on requirements like speed and efficiency. Often there won't be people looking out for you, and if you don't look out for yourself, you'll likely end up injured.


- Workers under the age of 25 have more injuries than any other age group in BC.
- Today 34 young people will be injured on the job,
- This week five will be permanently disabled.
- This year, five will lose their lives.
- Over half of these injuries occur in the first six months of employment.
- If you are a young male, you are 70% more likely to be injured than any other group of workers.

Most people believe injuries, especially the more serious ones, only occur in manufacturing or forestry jobs but in fact most injuries occur in "safe" workplaces: restaurants, supermarkets, and retail stores. Falls on slippery floors, burns from stoves or deep fryers, and overexertion while lifting or pushing heavy objects can permanently injure an unlucky worker as easily as an accident on a construction site or in a lumber mill. So how can a new worker remain safe in the workplace and avoid becoming a statistic?

Refuse unsafe work. It's every worker's right to refuse to do any task they believe is unsafe. Often new employees will unwittingly expose themselves to danger out of fear of seeming incapable of doing their job, but it is illegal to fire or discipline anyone for refusing to do work out of a safety concern.



Know the safety procedure. Ask questions and acquaint yourself with the workplace's safety features. Locate the eye wash stations and fire extinguishers. Find out who the first aid attendant is and where the first aid equipment is stored.

Keep an eye on your employer. The company paying you has a number of obligations to the safety of its employees. These include posting the health and safety rules where they can be read, creating an atmosphere where employees are encouraged to ask questions, and giving the workers all the training needed to do their jobs and recognize hazards. 

Learn more about your rights and your employee's obligations by logging on to the WCB Young Worker Health and Safety Centre at <http://youngworker.healthandsafetycentre.org/s/home.asp>

To anonymously report a work-related safety issue to the WCB phone toll free 1-888-621-7233.

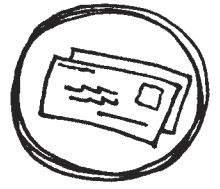
*if you don't
look out for
yourself, you'll
likely end up
injured*



Number of deaths in 2001 that the Japanese government classified as having resulted from overwork: 43 [Embassy of Japan (Washington)]

Source www.harpers.org

What's Love got to do with it?

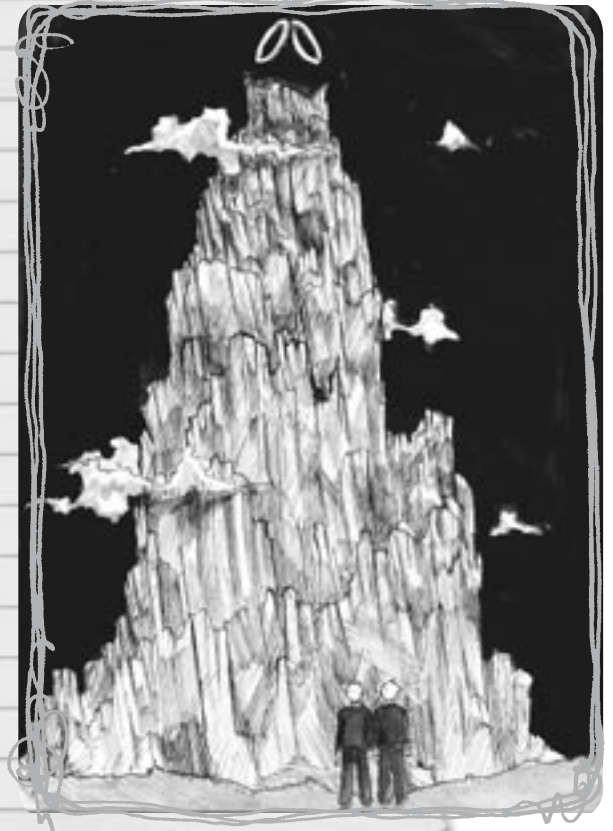


By Teralee Trommeshauser,
21, Castlegar

Same sex marriage is definitely nothing new, but in the past couple years this contentious issue has hit a nerve in a lot of people, even causing the splitting of some churches. In July 2003 British Columbia became the second province in Canada to legalize same sex marriage. But with the cooperation of the provinces and territories, marriage was still left up to the church. Constitutionally in Canada, religious rights are guaranteed and that no one will be required to do something against their beliefs. I find this to be somewhat of a paradox, giving the church the right to deny Canadians to practice their own constitutional rights.

Some churches that still oppose same sex marriage and refuse the right for gay couples to marry are the Roman Catholic Church, evangelical denominations, Eastern Orthodox churches, Muslim organizations, Sikh temples, and most arms of Anglicanism and Judaism. Being a Roman Catholic himself, Jean Chretien clearly has respect for the church, but said on several occasions that it was important that there was a separation between Church and State. As well as Pierre Trudeau who once said, "The State has no business in the bedrooms of the nation."

The fight seems to continue even though today, 80% of gay couples can legally get married in Canada without having to leave their province of residency. The same benefits and rights of a heterosexual married couple are now available to same sex couples, except for one thing. Some religions will still not allow them to marry under their church. And while there is no concrete definition of marriage, I believe the basic idea to be a legal union between two people that love each other. So has this long fought battle for the same rights moved past just being allowed to legally marry? Is this still about life long commitment and an act of love or has it simply turned into a statement of equality? There is nothing that says marriage must take place in a church. I believe that if you are a religious person, you carry this in your heart and that whatever God you look up to will be with you wherever you go, and where ever you choose to marry the person you love. ☸



Art by Tanya Lam
17, Trail

In December 2004, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that same sex marriage is constitutional.

www.scratchonline.ca

