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VIBE TEAM

MEGAN WARRENDER  
Founder & Publisher  
megan@vibemediagroup.ca

BRAD SCHNEIDER  
Sales & Marketing  
brad@vibemediagroup.ca

Graphic Design  
HOULE PRINTING

COVER PHOTO & DESIGN  
CHRIS POUGET

CONTRIBUTIONS

WRITERS  
Heather Thompson  
Stephanie Wakelin  
Megan Warrender  
Local Event Groups

PHOTOGRAPHY  
Joelle Eriksen  
Dawn Auffery  
Local Event Groups

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Photo Credit Dawn Auffray



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# PORT ALBERNI

# LOCAL EVENTS



# Totem - It's kind of a big deal

Basketball in the Alberni Valley has a long history dating back to the 1950's. Recently hosting Totems 67th year this past January.

Totem founding father and Coach Elmer Matthews started in 1955 by inviting three other teams to seek stronger opponents for the Chieftains. Totem grew in 1979 when Coach Jim Mayo became involved and it then became an eight team tournament. "My passion for Totem began in 1985 when I attended my first tournament as a child and I instantly became hooked on basketball and the entire Totem experience. Since then, I have had the pleasure of playing and coaching in many Totem Tournaments, said Greg Freethy, Totem Director, 18 years on committee, and District Lead - Career Education Programs.

Throughout the years, Totem has evolved to not only showcase basketball, but other skilled performers, cheerleaders, dance team, a live pep music band, spirit contest. An entire week is dedicated to Totem and school spirit in January each year. "It's cool that we're able to help create a shared experience for so many students plus the family and friends that attend. The memories created will last a lifetime," said Neelam Parmar – Career Advisor and committee member for 11 years and previous Coach.

By 2011, Totem expanded to include girls basketball, which has been "a huge positive for the tournament," says long time committee member and Coach Jim Seredick. Totem is the oldest Senior Boys basketball tournament in all of BC, and second oldest in Western Canada.

The event has been spread over 3 days, with 12 teams on average, 6 boys teams and 6 girls. Totem 57, in 2012, was the last tournament played on the original court on Burde Street, with the following year in 2013, Totem 58, Totem played for the first time at the new school on Roger Street.

A tradition of the tournament, which started in the late 90's, is that the Alberni Totem Team is always featured in the final game of the day, despite their finishing status. This was formed to bring in a large crowd, which includes tournament all star presentations, inductions into the Wall of Fame, and the declaration of the Totem Spirit contest winner. Former Coach Jim Seredick stated,

"Totem has evolved from a popular four team basketball event where basketball was the focus, to an inclusive event featuring basketball, skilled cheerleader performers, an entertaining dance team, a live pep music band, a colourful hallway venue leading to the gymnasium featuring a quality concession, a collage of Totem Spirit voting box displays." Students and teachers for generations



would agree that the week leading up to Totem is full of excitement and school spirit, with theme days, jerseys worn, as the athletes, Totem Spirit Candidates, volunteers, and staff prepare for the annual weekend event. "I have been part of Totem since the first dance team performed at it, in 2004. As a dancer, dance coach and Totem committee member, I have enjoyed all facets of this tournament. This basketball tournament brings anticipation, excitement, and camaraderie. The energy in our school during the week of Totem is contagious, everyone wants to be part of it, because it is *kind of a big deal!*" said Jennifer Anderson, teacher and committee member for 5 years. There are very few tournaments anywhere in the province that can match Totem for its school and community appeal, for their collective support and certainly no school in the province can match Totem for longevity. Totem is the oldest Senior Boys' basketball tournament in the province. Only Luther Collegiate in Regina boasts of an older tournament in all of Western Canada, and only by three years. "Totem holds historical significance in our Valley but more importantly by BC School Sports. It is recognized by BC School Sports as not just another tournament. I am helping carry the torch of many others who put a tremendous amount of effort into building what we have today," said Mike Roberts, Athletic Director, Leadership teacher, and committee member for 17 years. "I volunteer for Totem because I personally feel that besides teaching, I have a responsibility to contribute to the school community so that students have the best experience possible during their time here. For me, it's been serving as a coach and participating in Totem, one of the most important events at our school," mentioned French teacher and committee member of 6 years, Jean Contrant.

"Totem's continuance will be dependent on younger people willing to grasp the torch and assume leadership roles that will ensure Totem will carry on for generations to come," said Jim Seredick. "The foundation of Totem was fashioned by and maintained by key people who selflessly worked with diligent dedication to make Totem one of the very best high school tournaments in the country. It is hoped that Totem's star will continue to shine brightly into the future."

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Port Alberni Neighbourhood Welcome



# Burns Supper

Every  
January

Robbie Burns is a famous Scottish poet and songwriter, one of his most famous works was *Tam o'Shanter*. Which was first published in 1791 and tells a story of a drunken Scot who has a supernatural encounter while riding home from a late night drinking session. Burns has many famous quotes from his poem, one is, "the best laid schemes o'mice an' men gang aft agley." A quote that reminds us no matter how thoroughly we make plans things can still go wrong.

Hosted by the Port Alberni Highland Dancers Association for over 40 years. It was originally conceived by dance parent Heather Maloney, and teacher Pattie MacKenzie as a means of raising money to support the local highland dancers and to enrich the cultural experiences in the Valley. Over the years the roast beef dinner, trimmings and haggis has been cooked by a church womens group, the dance fathers, a dance dad who was a chef, the NIC chef trainees and lately by caterer Patsy Wrangler. The event features all the traditional speeches such as the Address to the Haggis, The Toast to the Lassies & Reply and the Immortal Memory. Each year the dancers eagerly await the opportunity to perform both traditional and modern celtic dances and the Pipe Band always leads off the formal festivities. The PAHDA is a small but very active group, sponsoring not only the Burns Supper but an annual Open Highland Dance Competition each spring which draws dancers from all over Vancouver Island, an annual dance recital in June and many other events in aid of the dancers.




Every  
February

## Coldest Night of the Year

[www.cnoy.org](http://www.cnoy.org)

This February marks the 7th year of the Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser in the Alberni Valley. "When putting together our strategic plan in 2017, we had a goal to host an event," said Ellen Froid, Executive Director of Sage Haven, formally ACAWS. "We all agreed we wanted the event to be a walk, or run." Just before Christmas in 2016, the Blue Sea Philanthropy reached out to Sage Haven to host a CNOY event in Port Alberni. The Blue Sea Philanthropy has been hosting this event in numerous other communities with great success. Sage Haven, our local Women's Transition House, jumped on the idea and put together the first official Coldest Night of the Year, and in six short weeks held the first event in February 2017. That year \$29,860 was raised, and 153 people walked! Now, seven years later, \$43,902 and counting was raised, with 113 walkers, and 24 teams. This year's theme was 'Gather for Goodness,' with a goal to raise \$35,000. Each year the funds go towards the Transition House and Drop in Centre to continue to bring people out of the cold.

Each year, with support from many volunteers, walkers, and community sponsors, the route begins at 3082 3rd Avenue (Sage Haven's office), and is lined with blue CNOY signs all along the route. It is a family friendly event with rest opportunities and snacks along the way for all walkers. Each year check in begins at 4:00pm with opening remarks and send off by 5:00pm. Following the walk, a light meal is served and the event wraps up until next February! All proceeds go to support the local Transition House and Drop In Centre, which is a core organization in our community that helps bring people in from the cold each and every day. "The vision of this annual event is to bring the hungry and the hurting out of the cold," said Ellen. "Each year we fundraise, walk, and gather for good."

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# WOUNDED WARRIOR RUN BC



[www.woundedwarriors.ca](http://www.woundedwarriors.ca)

Every  
March

Beginning in Port Hardy and finishing in Victoria, many runners gather together to raise money and awareness for veterans, first responders and their families. The Wounded Warrior Run BC (WWRBC) team travels from Port Hardy to Victoria starting in February each year, in an 8 day, relay style run, stopping in all the communities along the way to collect donations and open conversations about Mental Health. Wounded Warriors Canada is a national mental health charity whose mission is to support Canada's Veterans, First Responders and their families to feel safe, supported and understood. The organization has created an innovative approach to mental health that uses clinical best practices and evidence informed care to create an environment of compassion, resiliency and hope for individual members and families affected by Operational Stress Injuries, such as PTSD.

The Wounded Warrior Run BC was created by two service members eager to do something to help in reaction to a rash of suicides in the Canadian Armed Forces. These two men put to action their combined love for endurance running and the need to bring awareness for Operational Stress Injuries. They set out on a mission to run the length of Vancouver Island with a team of four, to raise funds and awareness for Wounded Warriors Canada.

The team has evolved over the last ten years, the distance covered has grown and the number of people reached and helped has increased, but the mission remains the same. "We bring a sense of hope at each stop to stand up for mental illness and help those people that put on uniforms every day to keep our communities and country safe. We raise money along the way to put towards the programs that are very beneficial to recovery. It is important to note that the money we raise on Vancouver Island stays for programs on Vancouver Island and in fact comes back tenfold from the rest of the country," said Susan Marcotte, WWRBC Support Team, also known as the 'Road Mum.'



Photo Credit John Penner

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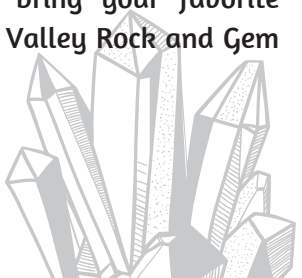
# ROCK & GEM SHOW

Have you ever gone for a walk and suddenly had a pocket full of rocks? You are a rockhound. Do you wonder what to do with them? Lapidary is the answer. The Alberni Valley Rock & Gem Club is a group of individuals who are interested in rocks and gems. Each March the club hosts their "Rock and Gem Show." The AVRGC was founded in 1958. In 1980, the 1st Rock & Gem show was held at Echo Centre. Club members gathered to demonstrate faceting, rock polishing, cabochon making, and kids had fun learning and could even create their own fossils. Members were unable to sell their rock and gem creations at this venue, so in 1996 the 16th Rock & Gem Show went to Cherry Creek Hall.

In 2017 the AVRGC moved the popular event to the Alberni Athletic Hall on Roger Street, allowing more room for displays and sales, growing every year. This year they have added tables upstairs. Vendors come mainly from all over the island and throughout BC. For young rockhounds there is a table of treasure rocks that is available for them to purchase and smash. Every year the Rock & Gem Show has rock sales, silent auctions, hourly draws and a door prize. Vendors sell stones, jewelry, cabochons, crystals, and more, all related to rocks and gems.

For decades it was a dream of the club members to have their own workshop. In 2019 they renovated and built the workshop at the west end of 5100 Tebo in the Jericho Road Church building. Everyone is welcome for anyone interested in coming to meetings. Just remember to bring your favorite rock! At 65 years, the Alberni Valley Rock and Gem Club is young at heart.

Every March





# MCLEAN MILL

# PAPER RACE



In 1982, employees of the paper mill decided to organize a fun race. They called it the Paper Chase, and this race took place for approximately 15 years or more.

In 2017, the Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce brought the popular run back to the Valley. That year it was a 10 kilometre run in Cherry Creek that was part of the Vancouver Island Race Series, which became a 15 kilometre run the following year. But the pandemic brought that Paper Chase to an end.

Chamber CEO Bill Collette was passionate about the race and wanted to bring it back. He put out a call to see if anyone was interested in helping him. Sasha Visona, owner of Ridge View Health and Performance, stepped up. Sasha Visona said, "Our mission is to promote physical activity and fitness in the community, and this seemed like a perfect way to do that."



Photo Credit McLean Mill Paper Race

And so the McLean Mill 10-k Run will take place this year on April 2. This year's focus is to be bigger and better than ever, attracting even more participants from all over. The Vancouver Island Race Association will oversee the race as it is part of the Vancouver Island Race Series.

The organizers hope to create an annual event that promotes physical activity and fitness in the Alberni Valley. The goal is to attract people to running and make the 10-k more accessible to everyone, regardless of their experience. To help with this goal, they have a free learn to run program.

It is hoped this event will draw runners from all over the Island to our beautiful community, therefore benefiting businesses and organizations in the Valley. One of the biggest benefactors will be KidSport Port Alberni. The organizers want to do their part to ensure all kids can play and start to learn healthy habits at a young age. All proceeds from the race and T-shirt sales will support KidSport Port Alberni up until March 12 – get yours in as there is a limited supply, with some available on race day.

If you aren't a runner, find a safe spot along the route and come cheer on the runners on April 2. The run will start and end at McLean Mill. A map and registration can be found at <https://www.islandseries.org/>.

Contact [ridgeviewhp@gmail.com](mailto:ridgeviewhp@gmail.com) or call 250-731-8929 for more information about the race, or to pre-order a T-shirt!

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# AV HOSPICE EVENTS

Every  
June

The Ty Watson House is a heritage home that was gifted to the Alberni Valley Hospice Society from the estate of Mr. A. C. (Ty) Watson in 2007 and became a hospice bed program in 2008. The Ty Watson House has become a staple to our community to be able to create a safe and loving setting for people who need care and have needs that can no longer be met at home. Twice a year the Alberni Valley Hospice Society puts on two events and fundraisers for the society: a Butterfly Release and a Black Ty Gala. The Butterfly Effect is an annual butterfly release that started in 2016 by the Alberni Valley Hospice Society Fundraising Committee, to allow members of our community to release dazzling Painted Lady Butterflies in memory of a loved one. "We wanted to create a more interesting event for the community to honour a loved one who had passed, and to replace a walk fundraiser that we had been running for years," said Blair Knoedler from Alberni Hospice Society. This event allows anyone to release a butterfly in memory of a loved one – or just for fun. With live music and activities for children, the release is a feel-good community event. The 2023 event will be held at the 11th avenue park on Saturday, June 24. All proceeds raised from the release go directly back into the Alberni Valley Hospice Society's services and programs.

The Black Ty Gala, another annual event hosted by the Alberni Valley Hospice Society, has been running since 2009 and is set to happen Saturday May 27, 2023 at the Echo Community Centre. The fundraiser was generously started by a group of local business patrons, Don Ferster, Deb Pearson, and Linda Bowers were the main people to set this annual event into motion, to help raise funds for the Ty Watson House each year. The event is now organized by a Black Ty Gala Committee that includes community members as well as staff and volunteers of the Alberni Valley Hospice Society. The Gala is a fun event that gives attendees the opportunity to dress in cocktail or formal attire, socialize over a delicious gourmet meal and participate in the live and silent auctions. All funds raised go toward the Ty Watson House and the fundraiser typically raises about \$60,000 of the annual \$500,000 operations budget. This is an important event each year to ensure our hospice can run to full capacity. The money raised from both events help to ensure that the Alberni Valley Hospice Society can continue to run their programs and services, including Ty Watson House.



Every  
May

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## Local Dragon Boating Events

Dragon boating dates back approximately 2,000 years as an ancient Chinese tradition full of ritual and pride. Although the sport has only been around 23 years in the Alberni Valley, you can often see two dragon boats paddling to the beat of their drum on Sproat Lake in the spring and summer months.

The West Coast Dragon Boat Society was founded in the fall of 1999 by a group of determined individuals. The idea came after Donna James watched her son paddle in Vancouver. She was smitten by the dragon and came back to the valley determined to start a club at home. When the first team emerged they didn't let the fact that they had no dragon boat hold them back. They practiced on kindergarten chairs using sticks for paddles. With only three practices on the water, the fledgling team entered the Alcan 2000 Festival, the province's largest dragon boat festival. They returned with a second-place plaque, and even more determination to get their own boat.

In April 2001, the group raised enough money and their first dragon boat arrived. The Society now has three dragon boats and two teams – the Die Hard Dragons and the Sproat Ness Dragons. Both teams race in the local dragon boat festival – to be held on June 11 this year at Sproat Lake Provincial Park. Dragon boating is a team effort, and it makes for a tight-knit crew. All 22 paddlers must work in unison to be successful. It is this synchronicity that makes dragon boaters unique and a force to be reckoned with. Come join the local paddlers on April 16 for their annual open house at Sproat Lake Landing, where the boats are moored. Once you experience how much fun it is, you'll want to join us for the season. The season starts in early April and ends in early September. For more information, email westcoastdragonboatsociety@gmail.com.





# Solstice Art Festival

Every June

For the past seven years, the Alberni Valley art community has been coming together every summer to bring the community an arts festival. Each year this festival celebrates art, music, and the community. Many years ago, The Community Arts Council had a vision of bringing all the art groups, artists, and supporters in our community under one umbrella to create an unforgettable weekend. The focus of the event is to be fun for all ages, and to include art exhibits, music, theatre, and street entertainment. "As the years go on, I see the Solstice Arts Festival growing in size and popularity, a big draw for our community. Creating an Arts Festival that will attract people from all communities." said Melissa. The Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley created the idea for this event, and initial seed money from the Rotary Arts District Grant program helped fund the start of this event. Each year there are artisans displaying and selling their work, while musicians play all day. This year's event will take place on Saturday, June 17 at the Harbour Quay. This will make for a safe place to wander and enjoy the beautiful scenery and celebrate arts, music, and community. Looking for more information each year, stop by the Grove Art Gallery.



# Annual Port Day

Every June

The inspiration behind starting the Port Day event was to showcase the importance of the local port to the community and to raise awareness about the work done by the Port Authority. The event provides an opportunity for the public to visit the working port, learn about the different aspects of the port's operations, and interact with the Port Authority staff. "We aim to involve a diverse range of stakeholders, including businesses, and community organizations in the planning and execution of this event," said Kate Smith Communications Director of the Port Authority. "We are excited to bring these events to fruition and look forward to their success," said Kate.

The vision of the Port Day event is to educate and engage the community on the important role of the local port, its operations, and its economic impact. The event is intended to appeal to a broad range of audiences, including families, businesses, community leaders, and tourists. "We work with various community partners and local businesses to organize the event," said Kate Smith. While the event is not primarily a fundraiser, it does provide an opportunity for local businesses and vendors to showcase their products and services and for attendees to have a good time.



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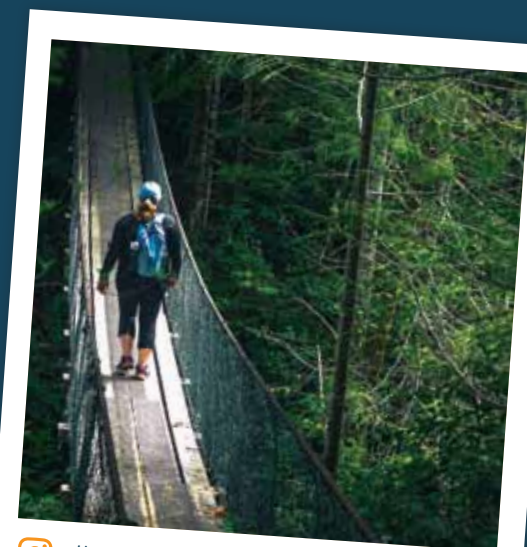


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Valley Vibe Spring 2023 21

# FUNTASTIC

## Okee Dokee

Every  
Canada Day  
Weekend



This year marks the 33rd Annual Okee Dokee Slo-Pitch Tournament held on Canada Day in the Alberni Valley. Running since 1989, the vision of the Okee Dokee has always remained the same – to build a better community through sport. It all started back in the 80's when the Sunday Mixed Slo-Pitch League had just 6 teams; the Somass, Kingsway, King Ed, Beaufort, and The Arlington Hotels. The league ran every Sunday during the slo-pitch season, and Fairway Taxi also had a team and took on the role of driving everyone home after a good day on the field. It was in 1988, Bob Leyland and his team (The Okee Dokes) were sitting around a fire at a tournament in Comox called the Nautical Days and they decided it was time for them to host their very own tournament, which is now known as the Okee Dokee Slo-Pitch Tournament. The first year only 14 teams participated, it has now increased to 80 teams each year. "In 2010 our team didn't go to Funtastic in Vernon and we attended the local Okee Dokee Tournament in Port Alberni. Many of us remember standing in the beverage gardens and talking about how much we missed Funtastic Vernon. The Music Festival, the excitement, the costume contest," said Executive Director Paul Robertson. The idea to get under the Funtastic umbrella was then discussed with Paul and his team.

The launch of the Port Alberni Funtastic Sports Society & Music Festival happened in 2013. It now takes place alongside the Okee-Dokee Slow-Pitch Tournament every Canada Day weekend in the Alberni Valley. Four locations all hold tournaments on the same July Long weekend, in Vernon, Armstrong, Enderby, and Port Alberni. There are close to 5000 players swinging the bat for charity. The vision of the event has always been to have fun, get together with friends, make new ones, play slo-pitch and help support the community. The local event brings in over 1200 players and families each year. The PA Funtastic Sports Society with the assistance of the dedicated volunteers, sponsors, and our community, has donated over \$180,000 over the past 8 years to local charities, sports groups and music programs in the valley. From the start of the Okee Dokee Tournament it has always been run as a non-profit event with all the funds raised are given back to the teams in ways of prizes, and the rest donated. Every year 100% of the profits are donated back to the community. The Okee Dokee is one of Port Alberni's longest running events and it will live on for years to come. Paul said "We all know this event, and all the other amazing events in Port Alberni would not be possible without all the tireless volunteers, sponsors, & participants who attend every year. Thank You to everyone. Here's to another year of "Good Times & Better Memories."

# 33RD ANNUAL OKEE DOKEE SLO-PITCH

# 9TH ANNUAL FUNTASTIC MUSIC FESTIVAL



JULY 1,2,3, 2023

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Back in 2013 Funtastic went to see Tyler at No Frills about sponsorship. Right away Tyler said he would love too. An hour later we received a phone call from Tyler asking what it would take to become a Owner Club Sponsor. The rest is history, our first Owners Club Sponsor, and great supporter ever since. We would like to extend a big thank you to Tyler & Kellie at No Frills and all of our sponsors and volunteers every year. We all share the same desire to give back to those in need. You will be part of the Funtastic family forever. Hats off to everyone.



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PORT ALBERNI'S ANNUAL  
**SPROAT LAKE REGATTA**  
 Every July

The Sproat Lake race started back in 1953 and ran for 10 years with over 100 racers and thousands of spectators. It took a long hiatus before starting back up in 2014 with racing in July each year. This year's event is July 8-9 at the Sproat Lake Provincial Park. There are the F1's returning again this year, along with outboard, jetboat, and V-drive drag boat classes to race in a quarter mile drag strip on the water.

"A determined and enthusiastic group of fast boat owners really wanted to display their boats and skills, while also hoping to grow the sport of boat racing again. We have Mike Nass as one of our members, whose dad raced in the 60's on Sproat lake. Our directors and members include racers young and old, all working together for the love of speed. The event wouldn't be possible without our permit from BC Parks as well to use the Sproat Lake Provincial Park which is an ideal regatta location," said Aaron Weisgerberg, current President of Alberni Valley Regatta Association.

The motivation to reestablish the Sproat lake race came from Peter Wilson, Mike Nass, Bob Maurice and Rick Hebert. They recruited friends and enthusiasts including Joe Vanbergen, Stan Kajula, Pat Nass, Rob Rees and Pete Savignie to create the Alberni Valley Regatta Association and start planning the first race in 2014. "We dedicated our 2022 event to the memory of Joe Vanbergen, who passed away in early 2022," said Aaron. The AVRA was fortunate to have their safety boat, staging and race course equipment and \$3500 donated from the Fraser Valley Regatta Association as they had stopped running events in 2004. "This really enabled us to hit the ground running in our first year back," said Aaron.

The vision of the group and the event is to reestablish the sport of boat racing and show the next generation how much fun can be had on the water. The club is working with the Fraser Valley Drag Boat Association to hopefully get a race established on the mainland this year as well. Each year the club supports the local Boys and Girls club by hiring them to manage parking at our event. Every year in July, Sproat Lake is the destination for racers to come to from all over Canada. Whether you come to race or come to spectate, this is a yearly event you don't want to miss. Just listen to the rip roar of the engines from anywhere on the lake, but if you want a great view the best place to spectate is from Sproat Lake Provincial Park.

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# THUNDER IN THE VALLEY

Every August

In July 23, 2001 a group of seven people gathered together to sign the constitution to begin the *Alberni Valley Drag Racing Association*. This group all had the same vision in mind; to promote safe drag racing (off the streets), to provide a safe place to run drag racing, and to provide financial assistance to secondary schools for drag racing programs. A lot has changed over the years, but the core values of the group remain the same. This group held the first "Thunder in the Valley" event at the Regional Airport in 2001. Races continued at the airport for the next 14 years until the lease was canceled. For the next three years the annual race was held on Stamp Ave, right in the heart of Port Alberni city streets. Hundreds of volunteers, racers, announcers, sound crew, photographer and car enthusiasts gathered every year for a weekend of racing and an annual show and shine. For the many years this event was in operation, it brought countless people, young and old, to the Valley every August to race, spectate, and enjoy the weekend. An event that grew over the years from 150 cars to over 300 in the more recent years. With every year the money raised went towards hosting the annual event, and the overflow was given back to the community to various non-profit groups. With nowhere to host



Photo Credit: JK Photography



Photo Credit: Russ Widdess



Photo Credit: Russ Widdess

the event in the Alberni Valley since 2019, the group every year still "keeps the dream alive" by hosting an annual cruise. Although for events, it is unsure what the future may bring, you can guarantee every August you will see a parade of classic cars on the streets of the Alberni Valley.

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# PORT ALBERNI ANTIQUE TRUCKS & MACHINERY SHOW



The first real "Truck show" in Port Alberni took place in 1997, in honor of the 75th Anniversary of the made-in-BC "Hayes" Trucks. It was held at the Train Station and along the Industrial Road.

"With cooperation between the Alberni Valley Museum and the Industrial Heritage Society, ten years later, The Industrial Heritage Society began hosting the Annual Truck Show in 2007. This event was a place to publicly display the restored trucks and machinery from the City's "Industrial Collection" and to offer a place where local truck enthusiasts could gather to show off their work to the community. For the next ten years, the Show was hosted at the McLean Mill National Historic Site. As the Mill was an active site at the time, with daily steam sawmill demonstrations, and the "Tin Pants Theatre Troupe" offering a variety Show and giving tours in period costume, it was an ideal location to exhibit vintage trucks and machinery. After 2010, the Old-time Logging Shows became an added attraction.



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Since 2017 the Shows have been held at the Industrial Heritage Centre at Recreation Park, in Port Alberni. They wanted the Show to be more accessible to the Port Alberni community and offered Free Admission to maximize accessibility. "We consciously work to make the Event Children friendly by inviting the miniature steam train from Victoria and having the model boat basin," said show organizer David Hooper. Over the years the collection has continued to grow thanks to the ongoing restoration work by the volunteers at the Industrial Heritage Society. The vision of this event and the I.H.S. is to be a place to highlight the history of the Alberni Valley's trucks and machinery that once made Port Alberni the Forestry Capital of Canada. "It is our biggest event of the year," said David Hooper. "It is our way of giving back to the community, and to remind us of our heritage."

**September 2 - 3, 2023**  
**Industrial Heritage Centre Recreation Park**  
**Saturday 10 am - 5 pm \* Sunday 10 am - 3 pm**  
**FREE ADMISSION**

**Hosted by the Western Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society & Alberni Valley Museum**

**Registration Contact Dave Hooper**  
**P: 250-724-5509**  
**E: dshooper@telus.net**

## FIVE ACRE SHAKER

2023 marks the 10th anniversary of the inception of The Shaker. The first Shaker was held as a one-off memorial event for local musician, Zakk Coss of North by Nature, who passed away in 2014. His friend and bandmate, Nick Vance, collaborated with Lance and his brother Jayson to throw the inaugural Five Acre Shaker. Each year since, the event has raised money for Zakk's memorial foundation, The Zattzoo Project Society, which supports local youth musicians.



**Every August**

Originally held at Lance's property out on Beaver Creek Road, The Shaker has moved locations a few different times as it's grown and evolved over the years. Founder, Lance Goddard said, "We've locked in a few big headliners and are building out the rest of the lineup with fun, energetic bands from around B.C.—we can't wait to share it with everyone!" While the main attraction is the live music on the mainstage, lots of festival goers find themselves cruising around The Shaker grounds taking in the full festival experience. Lawn games, delicious food, crisp drinks, and a local artisan market, fill out the festival grounds on what is almost always a sunny summer weekend in Port Alberni.

More information, including tickets and the lineup, will be posted to the Five Acre Co. Events social media pages and on [www.fiveacre.ca](http://www.fiveacre.ca).

## Annual Outrigger Races

The Sproat Lake Canoe Club has been paddling, practicing & racing on Sproat Lake, for the last 20 years. The club first originated when a group of inexperienced, but eager, paddlers reached out to some larger clubs in Victoria for advice on starting up. After purchasing two outrigger canoes and spending some time working with more experienced paddlers in Victoria, the club was up and running. Since then, members have joined for various reasons including recreation, fitness, the peaceful scenery and social connections. The SLCC is part of the Canadian Outrigger Racing Association (CORA) which is an organization that hosts races across Canada, including on Sproat Lake. The events and races generally take place all year round. Races range from 10kms up to those training for the ultimate Hawaiian Molokai Hoe at 66kms. Each standard boat is equipped to accommodate 6 people and SLCC also offers a 4 person boat.



The Klehkoot Marina and Sproat Lake Landing have generously given the club free moorage which allows membership fees to be low and accessible for everyone who wants to come out and try. The club is inclusive to youth and is optimistic for the younger generation to get involved in the sport.

Outrigger Canoeing is a fantastic way to get exercise, enjoy the outdoors and camaraderie of your teammates, and enjoy yearly races with other clubs. The club runs year-round and in addition to scheduled time on the water, there are picnics, social events, and paddles to the Fish and Duck. Anyone interested in learning more or checking out an upcoming event, is encouraged to check out the website [sproatlakecanoecub.com](http://sproatlakecanoecub.com).

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# TOY RUN

www.portalbernitoyrun.ca

The Toy Run is an event held the third weekend of September for nearly 40 years in the Alberni Valley. It all started back in 1985 with just 25 riders who made a pass from the old Alberni Mall to the 1st Arrowsmith Scout Hall on Montrose, graciously deliver a donation of 40 toys to the Salvation Army. By the second annual run, 65 riders participated and were able to donate 400 toys to children and families in need through the Salvation Army. The following year, in addition to toy donations, the Toy Run started collecting monies to be distributed to a variety of different organizations and charities. The Toy Run has grown to be Vancouver Island's largest motorcycle event and the Alberni Valley's biggest children charity fundraiser. The vision of the Port Alberni Toy Run is to support children's charity with generous donations from giving riders. Some of the charities that have received from the Toy Run over the years include the Salvation Army Christmas Hamper Campaign, transition houses, ADSS Breakfast Club, other organizations in our community. Volunteers with the Port Alberni Toy Run make it their mission to also contribute to valuable projects through a legacy fund which has helped a variety of projects including putting in playgrounds at Williamson and Rec Park, building the playhouse at West Coast General Hospital lobby, and most recently purchasing a specialized x-ray machine and two sets of specialized dental tools through the West Coast General Hospital Foundation. Last year 1100 bikers rode in this annual event, but the biggest year to date was in 2010 with 1463 riders. Every year, the third Saturday in September, keep your eyes and ears on the streets as bikers from all over the island ride into town to raise money, toys and awareness for the Toy Run.

# SALMON DERBY

Every Labour Day weekend for over 50 years, the valley comes alive every year as fishers from all over the Pacific Northwest and beyond come to fish in the annual three day derby. The Alberni Valley Tye Club first formed in 1939, it was made up of ardent sportsmen who were interested in sports fishing and the development of the salmon fishery waters in the Alberni Canal.



Every September



Their goal was to promote sportfishing in Port Alberni as a tourist industry and guard against encroachment of commercial fishing in those areas of the Alberni district. But most of all, there was the desire to prove that the best tye fishing in Canada could be found in Port Alberni.

On Labour Day weekend in 1949, fishers of all ages came to compete in the derby, which at this time was only open to members and non members as part of the Tye Clubs season. In 1969, the harbour commission and the City of Port Alberni's council worked out an agreement to develop what is now Clutesi Haven Marina. Its construction and eventual opening changed sport fishing in the Alberni Valley forever – in a good way. In 1971, shortly after the marina construction began, the then Alberni Valley Times editor Fred Duncan approached the Tye Club about taking over the labour day derby to create a bigger festival around their three-day fishing derby. Then a small festival committee formed and the Port Alberni Salmon Festival became a reality.

Although the event has changed through the years, generation after generation head down to the Salmon festival. Some say it is for the amazing salmon barbecue, created by Art Wynans and Tye Club President Bruce Berry, others say it's for entertainment. One thing's for sure everyone made sure to check out the biggest fish competition. The record for the largest fish remains 60 pounds, caught by Art Berlinski in 1982.



In 2010, Port Alberni officially became known as the Ultimate Fishing Town and claimed the title forever as Salmon Capital of the World. In 2017, the festival moved to the newly constructed Tye Landing. Then in 2022, the Alberni Valley Tye Club brought back the derby to its historical roots at the Harbour Quay. This year the Tye Club will again host the popular event, on September 2, 3, and 4. Although it is too early for details, it's guaranteed to attract fishers from all over.

In addition to the Salmon Derby there are two smaller derbies that happen each year. Every April, the Great Central Lake Trout Derby is held on the lake. This is a great opportunity to do some fishing and it is by donation with proceeds going to local charities. You can find out more go to [www.gclsales.ca](http://www.gclsales.ca). For the second year in a row in April, the Bushwacker Fishing derby took place on Sproat Lake. There are lots of door prizes and hidden prizes, so even if you don't catch the biggest fish, you could still go home with a prize. For more information check out the Fish and Duck's Facebook page. The Valley has some remarkable lakes to visit, so why not take advantage of them and take part in the local fishing derbies.

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# ALBERNI DISTRICT FALL FAIR

For 78 years, people in the Alberni Valley have marked the beginning of fall at the Alberni District Fall Fair! When the fair was first established – the Alberni Fall Fair at that time – it was founded by the Alberni Farmers Institute as a way to celebrate fall. It was a venue to showcase agriculture and was held in the Beaver Creek area of the Alberni Valley. In 1945, with the war overseas, there were not enough men home to carry on the tradition, so the Kinsmen Club took over. As a service club, they were not allowed to hold property, so they formed the Alberni District Fall Fair Association in 1946 and hosted their first fall fair.

It soon became clear the Fall Fair needed a place to call home. They were given some land and buildings from the federal government when the army base was dismantled. Over the years they have expanded by buying and leasing land around the fairgrounds from the City of Port Alberni. As they made improvements and added buildings, such as a community centre and the barns, and the Fall Fair grounds started to take shape. Unfortunately in 2022, one of the horse barns was destroyed in a fire, and another one was damaged. Luckily donations came in, and they were able to make repairs to the remaining barn and add new fencing to the horse ring. In 1965, the Fall Fair began to resemble what it is today with the arrival of the first midway. Bingo Hauser's grandchildren continue the legacy he brought here as West Coast Amusement returns every year to the delight of adventure seekers.

Logger sports have been in the Valley since the 1900s, but didn't join the fair until 39 years ago when Alan and Jean Boyko joined forces with the Fall Fair. It has become a standing tradition for many to attend the logger sport every Sunday at the Fall Fair. The Logger Sports timber bowl was recently renamed the Boyko and Morocchi Logger Sports Bowl in honour of its greatest supporters and volunteers.

Today the Fall Fair looks a lot different than in those early days, but its roots remain the same – to entertain and inform. The committee continues to support local agriculture through education displays and livestock shows, as well as highlighting the many artists and artisans around the Valley. At the heart of the Fall Fair is its dedicated volunteers. Some of these people are second and third generation who grew up at the Fair. It is because of the support of these volunteers, clubs, and sponsors that the Association continues to treat you to our own "world's fair" every September.

SEPTEMBER  
7, 8, 9, 10

• LIVESTOCK

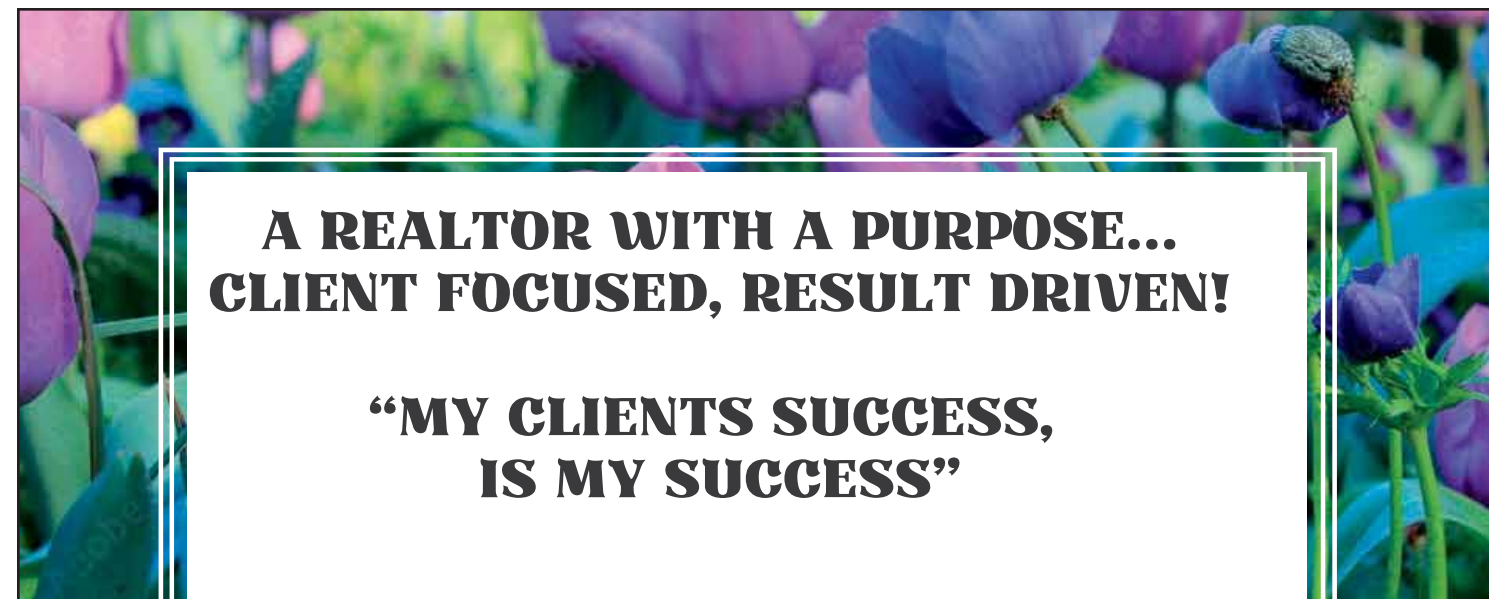
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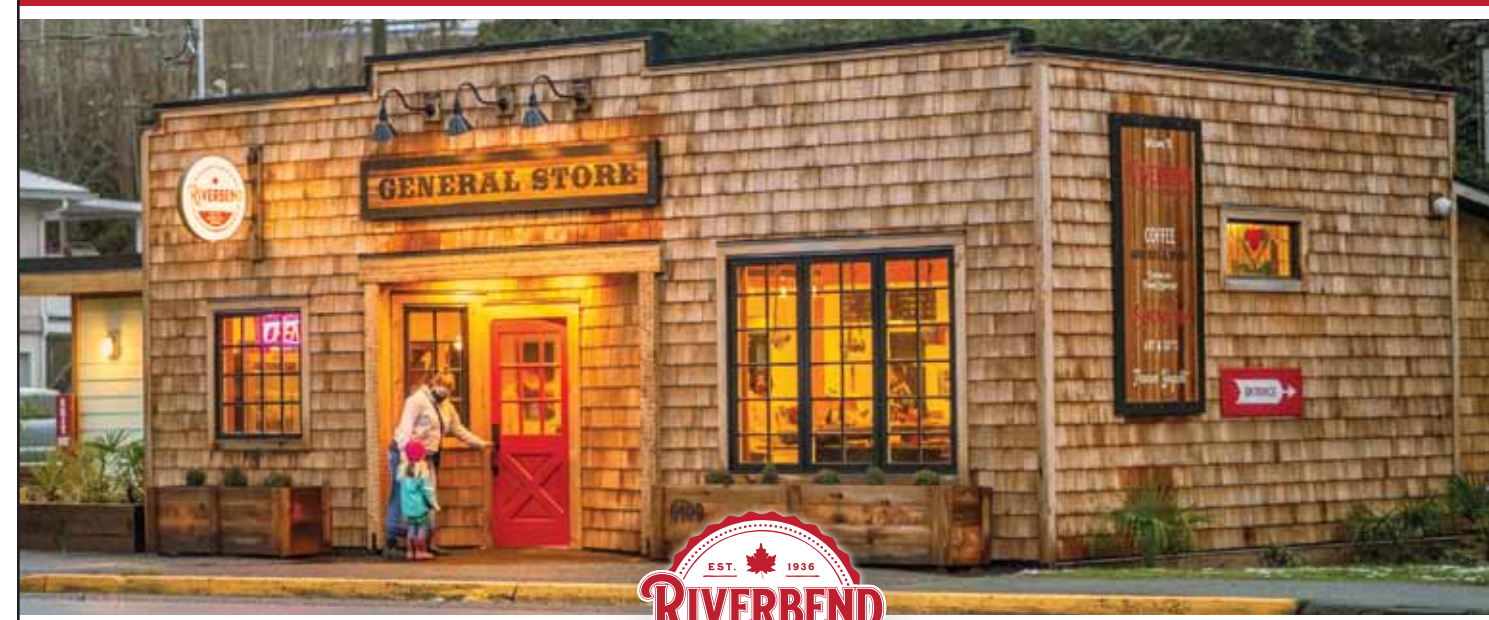
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# TAKE A HIKE

## Weiner Falls

by Stephanie Wakelin



Photo Credit Joelle Eriksen

Chasing waterfalls is a way of life for so many of us on the West Coast. There is an abundance of hikes that take you to these natural, calming phenomena around Port Alberni and Vancouver Island. Weiner Falls is a great local and relatively quick hike that will leave you feeling refreshed, peaceful and in awe of the beautiful slice of paradise we get to surround ourselves in here in the Alberni Valley. Weiner Falls is located on Hwy 4, towards Tofino and adjacent to Sproat Lake. Take the gravel road

across from Sproat Lake Landing for access. The round-trip hike is considered moderately difficult with a steady incline and is best suitable for anyone over the age of 10 and pets who are experienced in backcountry hiking. The trail is located on Crown Land and engulfed in the Port Alberni Community Forest.

Having a breathtaking view to complete your hike is the icing on top of the cake after sifting through

dazzling old growth forest. Weiner Falls offers 2 ways to view this spectacular waterfall:

From the top of the falls: this is the easier and more leisurely option to take in the grand views of this powerful waterfall. Follow the road about 15 minutes, taking in the fresh air into your lungs and noticing the serene surroundings. You will reach the top of the falls, which boasts amazing photo opportunities – bring your camera!

From the base of the falls: for those who are more experienced hikers and seek thrill, there are ropes to help you propel down to the base of the falls. It's recommended to hike with a buddy if you plan on descending down the ropes to ensure your safety. Completing this route takes approximately 40 minutes round trip from the gravel road. Once you reach the bottom, the falls pools into a refreshing swimming hole during the summer months for those who are brave enough to embrace the mountain waters.

Weiner Falls attracts thousands of hikers each year, local Port Alberni Resident Tianna Haider completed this hike in January of this year and here's what she had to say: "I love this hike for a few different reasons! It's secluded and as you are hiking, there is so many interesting nature noises to listen to, it feels very peaceful!" Other hikers would agree that this particular hike has a fairy tale feel. It truly is a magical piece of the world, right here in our back yards. Winding through the fern-lined trails, you are captivated with the smell of lush forest and the comfort of being surrounded by a canopy of century old trees. Those who have made it down to the base of the falls have stated the vibrant green pool of water almost feels a grotto in an outdoor spa. Dip your toes in and view the 50-foot, majestic rush of water amalgamate into a hidden oasis.

Waterfalls are one of the world's most mesmerising experiences. Each one is genuinely different, flowing different, sounding different and offering a completely raw version of nature to those who seek them. Keep chasing waterfalls and don't forget to send us your photos for a chance to be featured in a future issue's "Take A Hike" article!

**STANDING UP FOR COASTAL COMMUNITIES**



**Gord Johns**  **NDP**  
Member of Parliament // Courtenay–Alberni

✉ Gord.Johns@parl.gc.ca  
📍 GordJohns.ca  
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# Hupacasath Welcomes You

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## FOOD BOX PROGRAM


Locally grown produce provides many benefits for the community as well as the individual, through cutting down on our foods carbon footprint, supporting local businesses and sustainable agriculture all while enjoying fresher and tastier food!



The community garden provides the Alberni Valley with locally grown produce at a reasonable cost. The food box program starts in June and run to Thanksgiving. Boxes are available for pick up or delivery every Wednesday. Each box is packed with produce picked that day to ensure the maximum freshness.

**For more information about  
the CSA program contact:**



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